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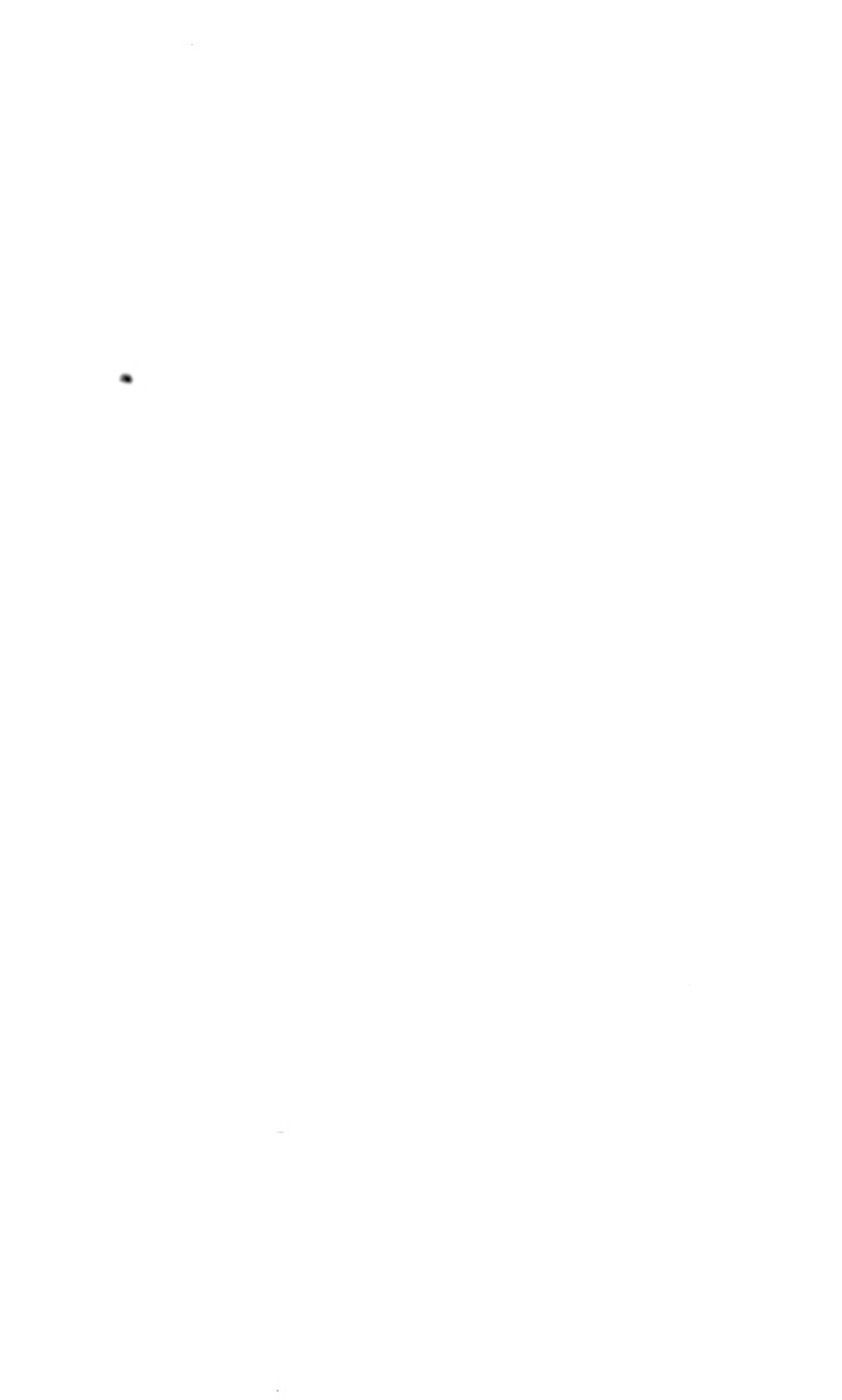
BL 181 .M38 1886

McWhinney, Thomas M. 1823- |
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Reason and revelation, hand
in hand







Reason
and Revelation,
Hand in Hand.



BY
THOMAS MARTIN McWHINNEY, D.D.,
AUTHOR OF "HEAVENLY RECOGNITION," ETC.

NEW YORK:
FORDS, HOWARD, & HULBERT.
1886.

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TO
FRANCIS A. PALMER,
PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL BROADWAY BANK, NEW YORK,
WHOSE PERSONAL KINDNESS HAS BROUGHT THE AUTHOR UNDER MANY
AND LASTING OBLIGATIONS, AND WHOSE CHRISTIAN BE-
NEFICENCE IS BOUNDED BY NO HUMAN CREED,
THIS WORK IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.
THE AUTHOR.



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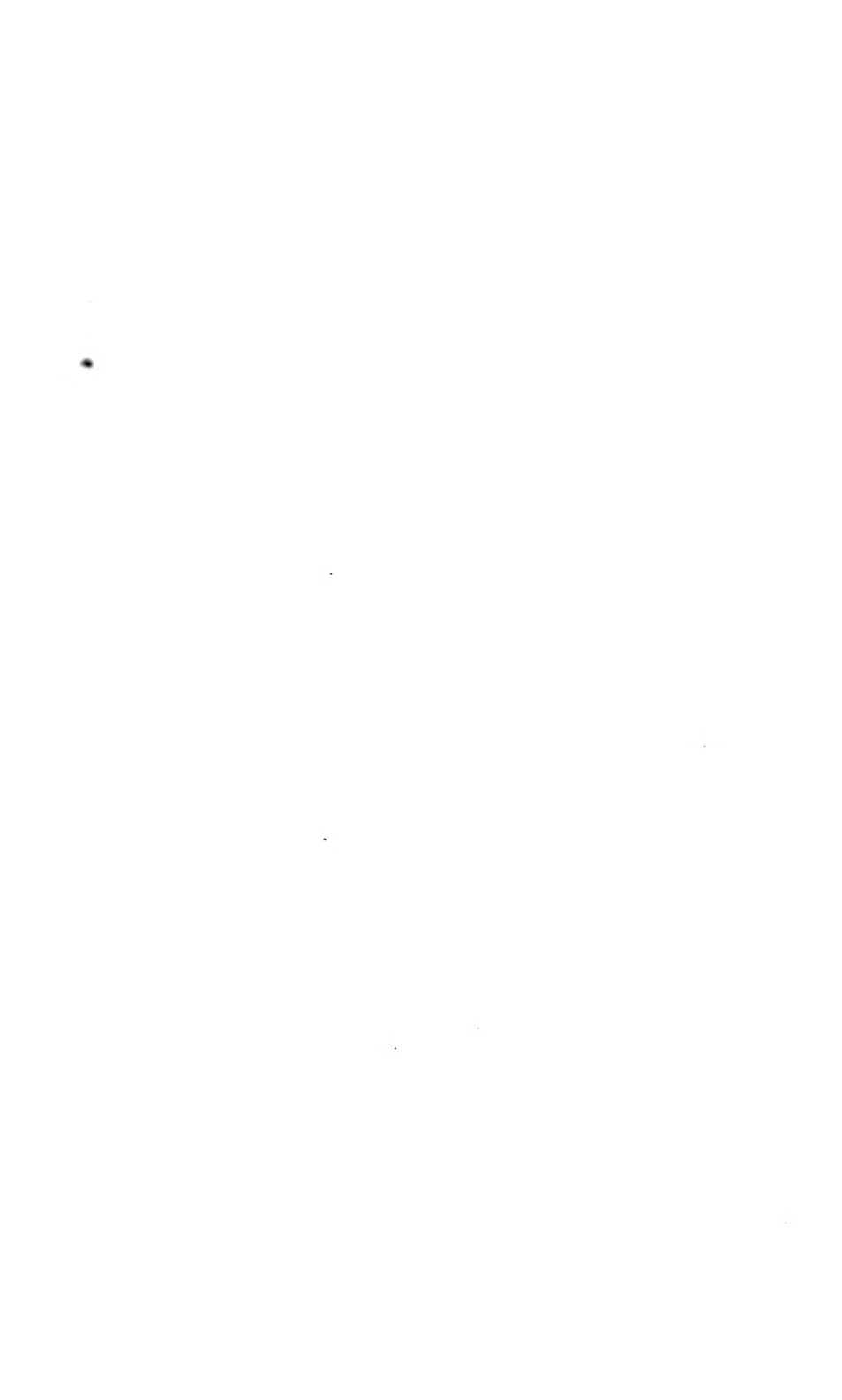
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REASON AND REVELATION.

PREFATORY.

(1) RELIGION is a phantom of inconceivable outrage, which, like a ghost of horrid form, has led mankind captive into a slavery of unrequiting, fruitless toil and costly sacrifice ; or else it is a service, the glory, sublimity, and full fruition of which will be but poorly comprehended until our earthly pilgrimage is ended and the soul is at rest in the land where angels dwell.

(2) The Bible is but a record of hypocritical and sacrilegious pretensions, such as would eclipse the Koran, the Vedas, the Zend-a-vesta, the Book of Mormon, or any other book of sacred pretensions, which has ever hoodwinked mankind into a stupid mockery, senseless reverence, and idiotic devotion ; or else it is a book containing a Divine Revelation, which has inspired the world with the infinite thought of God and the idea of human duty and destiny—and has thus done more to elevate and civilize our race and render it happy than all other instrumentalities combined.

(3) The idea of God is a nightmare of fabulous superstition, world-wide and coeval with the race of man; or else it is a truth, the height of which has never been reached, the depth of which has never been fathomed, the comprehensiveness of which has never been grasped, and the superlative glory of which will forever baffle thought and imagery.

(4) Man, as to his origin, distinctive characteristics, unique organism of soul, duty, and destiny, is the enigma of all enigmas in natural history, and the riddle of all riddles in metaphysical theorizing; or else he is the creature of an infinitely wise Creator, for whom the earth, with all its rich material resources, and the world of domestic animals, were made, and whose mission on earth is to bring himself into harmony with God's law of love and righteousness, and thus be fitted for the society of the intelligent of all worlds who have wrought well the task which heaven assigned.

(5) The devil, as some suppose, is nothing but a ghost of human imagination, whose spectral image has frightened the race into intolerable forebodings and apprehensions; or, as others conceive, he is a huge and horrid monster, who, in defiance of God, has depopulated heaven, crushed the hopes of humanity, and even threatens to usurp the throne of the universe; or,—as suggested by analogy, revealed in the Bible, and proven by philosophy,—he is a being (if a being at all), or a power in the moral universe (as he certainly is), under the control and do-

minion of the Infinite Father, and used by him as an instrumentality of good in carrying out his benevolent purpose in the creation, development, and final fate of man.

(6) Christ, in his teaching, wonder-working life, death, and resurrection, was an impostor who has "turned the world upside down" by a lingo of falsehoods and hypocritical pretensions for which he knowingly and willingly died,—thus presenting to the world a miracle more marvelous than any that are recorded in the Bible; or else he was the "Messiah," commissioned to speak as never man spoke, to do that which "no man can do except God be with him," to unify all people, and inspire the world with a new hope by bringing "life and immortality to light, through the Gospel."

The foregoing propositions present no middle ground. Reason has not even a seeming place to rest its foot except in one or the other of these extremes. While the Bible-trumpet gives no uncertain sound on any of these deep problems, atheism and infidelity are equally pronounced. It is of infinite moment, therefore, that we carefully trace the analogy between Reason and Revelation, that we may thus be rooted and grounded in the truth.

The following pages will need no apology, if only they are found to contribute somewhat to the happy end of distinguishing between the false and the true.



INTRODUCTION.

ON the great themes of RELIGION, BIBLE, THEOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY, DEMONOLOGY, and CHRISTOLOGY, the world of thoughtful men has been and is now greatly in dispute as to *what is truth*. While we have designed, in the following pages, to present the position which reflective minds have sought to maintain on these deep problems in the different ages and countries of the world, it has been no part of our purpose to do more than to excite the reader to honest investigation. The spirit of theological dogmatism and proscription is alike to be condemned by every one who is more desirous of finding the truth than in being found in the line of popular thought. In this age of unparalleled mental activity and intelligence, what devoted churchmen need, more than anything else, is *the courage of their own honest convictions*. Only let the grace of Christian liberty, in its fullness, become the personal heritage of each individual thinker, and superstition will be relegated to the dark ages, and the reign of truth and righteousness will soon be inaugurated as the harbinger of "on earth peace, good-will toward men."

Next to the "unpardonable sin" is the disposition which would interdict the soul in its personal right to follow the line of thought which to it seems to lead good-ward and God-ward. Nothing has so disgraced the Church, dishonored God, and crushed the hopes of aspiring humanity, as the spirit of theological dogmatism and ecclesiastical proscription. If, therefore, we have contributed in some degree to the spirit of untrammelled, honest, and earnest investigation, we shall be pleased to offer it as an apology for writing a new book.

RELIGION.

Religion has been placed first on the programme of discussion, because it is fundamental to those themes which succeed it. If, in the light of reason, it could be shown that religion is no part of the soul's nature, but that man was made to live like a beast and die like a beast, then the subjects of Bible, Theology, Anthropology, Demonology, and Christology would be themes of no special concern. But if, on the other hand, the sublime truth can be made to appear, that man, because of his native religiosity, has been divinely purposed as the connecting link between God and the rest of his sublunary universe, then their significance is incomparable, and their glory superlative.

That the intelligent student of mental philosophy and religious history might be led to regard the Christian religion as but the fulfillment of the soul's

native predilections, and as being attractive and beautiful beyond comparison, we have aimed to represent all the prominent positions which thoughtful men have sought to defend on the subject of religion. Under the conviction that a reference to mental science and to comparative religion would exhibit Christianity in an unparalleled beauty, we have sought to show—

First, that the Creator designed man for religion ;

Secondly, that the lowest form of religion known to our race has shown itself to be better than no religion ;

Thirdly, that while heathen mythologies help to establish the fact of man's native disposition to worship, their incompetency to meet the higher necessities of the soul's nature makes them prophetic of something better; and,

Fourthly, that, in the light of reason, the instinctive necessities of man's being, together with all the multiplied forms of religion, are but so many united predictions which have found their fulfillment in Christianity,—the religion of progress and of universal unity.

THE BIBLE.

The Bible, like all other books, should be tried at the bar of reason. Its sublimity and superiority can only be comprehended and fully appreciated when it has passed the ordeal of the higher criticism. If it be not adjudged and approved at the court of

human reason, both as to its origin and its interpretation, then it shall worse than fail of its divine mission. Truth, whether religious or scientific, must be earnestly sought after and tenaciously clung to, else its twofold mission of developing the mind and serving as an instrumentality of good will utterly fail.

Nor will the divine purpose concerning the Bible be accomplished, except as the individual man is left free and is found willing honestly and earnestly to seek after the truth of revelation. While the natural sciences have to do only with the hidden wisdom and power of the Almighty addressing themselves to man's intellectuality, the Bible comes to us with the problem of God's fatherly character, man's duty and destiny, seeking to speak through human reason to man's moral and spiritual being. The difficulties, too, which attend the discovery of the facts of God in nature are quite analogous to those which meet us in our search after the truths of the Bible. While both Nature and Revelation stand before us with heights of thought we cannot reach, depths we cannot fathom, and subjects too comprehensive for our grasp, yet both alike meet our present necessities with plain practical truth, and thus beckon us on to the unknown heights.

These difficulties of Bible interpretation, however, will be greatly simplified if we will allow reason to play its rightful part in discriminating between the human and the divine utterance. If in reading the

Bible as a book of *history*, of *law*, of *biography*, and of *poetry*, we apply the same common-sense rules of interpretation as are applied to other books, we shall readily see that much of it comes within the scope of human wisdom ; and if nothing more be claimed, then the Bible, as a book of Divine Law and Revelation which transcends the limits of worldly wisdom, will appear all the more sublime in the comparison. That God has directly interposed in man's behalf to reveal *spiritual truth* in the Bible, sufficient to elevate and save our race, is a proposition which honest intelligence will not gainsay. This much, and no more, the sacred volume claims for itself. Any effort, therefore, at defending the Bible as a book of science, or as of *verbum verbo* inspiration, is as gratuitous as it will be fruitless. In reading the sacred page, reason has been divinely commissioned to discriminate and eliminate, until the voice of the great Father is unmistakably heard. Any effort, therefore, at subordinating human reason, or in any wise interdicting the individual soul in its honest investigation of the Bible truth, "cometh of evil."

THEOLOGY.

If the reader of this third part shall in any way be helped to an implicit faith in the personal existence of the Creator of the universe, who is the center of all science, the foundation of all true religion, and the Father of all intelligences, then the work of

writing these chapters will be well and faithfully vindicated. While the Bible gives no uncertain sound touching this grandest of all themes, speculative theology has developed more than a trinity of conceptions. We have aimed, however, to classify these diversified thoughts, under the titles *Agnosticism*, *Pantheism* (Spiritualistic and Materialistic), *Atheism*, and *Theism*. In the comparison of these various theories we have sought to show that reason in its going forth can find no place to rest its feet until it is brought face to face with the "*I Am that I Am*." We have aimed to show that the Nebular Hypothesis, the Darwinian theory, and even Dogmatic Atheism, in their arguments, together with every conceivable method of reasoning, must inevitably lead to the sublime thought of an Infinite Contriver, who is the Creator and Controller of all the universe of animate and inanimate things.

ANTHROPOLOGY.

The questions, Whence are we? What are we? and Whither do we tend? in virtue of their nature, are of more practical importance to man than the combination of all other problems which come within the purview of human reason. While the fact of heavenly Paternity is of first importance, and one in which intelligence is agreed, the wisest and the best men of the world are earnestly devoting their attention to the problems of the divine *methods* of

man's creation. As the Mosaic account is unmistakable, and as scientists are disagreed as to the methods of man's origin, we have sought by comparison of views to show which is the more reasonable. If in the light of physical facts it would seem that our world has been constructed with the benevolent design of making it a home for man; and if mental philosophy has discovered to us the native powers of *intellectuality*, *morality*, and *religiosity*,—powers not even a trace of which, as we shall seek to show, can be found with the lower order of animals; and if the human soul may be considered a divinely organized commonwealth, in which man is notified as to the proper or improper thing to be done; in which a faithful record is kept of passing events; in which he is adjudged as to his innocence or guilt, and in which he is approved for well-doing and punished for wicked-doing, thus indicating the divine purpose of protecting the soul from the ravages of sin and hence pointing to its immortality:—if these several suggestions are made to appear, then it would seem that man's spiritual and real kinship is not with terrestrial beings, but with beings celestial.

DEMONOLOGY.

In our chapters on demonology we have presented the two extremes, finding the truth, as it seems to us, midway between them. The position which infidelity seeks to popularize is, that the devil is noth-

ing but a ghost of human imagination; while the popular theory assumes that he is a horrid monster, next in wisdom and power to the Almighty. While the former view fails to account for a universal superstition and flatly contradicts the bitter experience of mankind, the latter, as we have aimed to show, will not endure the light of sound criticism. The first may be characterized as superstitious and without even the show of evidence; the second may be said to have been popularized by mere assumption, without an attempt at argument.

While those who claim that the devil is Nothing would seem to offer their skepticism as an apology for a wicked life, those who assume that he is next to Everything appear willing to allow the superstition to be stereotyped, with the benevolent view of frightening silly women and sillier men from the path of wrong-doing. But these good men seem to overlook two important factors in solving the deep problem of right-doing. First, the only acceptable service, in the eyes of the great Father, is the life which flows from a heart of love for the right and hate for the wrong:—for this reason, though the Divine Teacher proclaimed, by heavenly speech and purity of life, the fatherly character of God, yet in his greatest recorded sermon he did not so much as allude to this monster of popular faith. Secondly, God would not have his Church built upon a foundation so precarious that it will not endure the light of sense and reason. The cause of God and human-

ity is best served by those who are most successful in eliminating falsehood and establishing truth. All error comes of evil and engenders wrong, while all truth is of God and tends good-ward and heaven-ward. When Christianity has done its perfect work, all forms of falsehood will be banished from the earth, and universal truth will stand firm as the Rock of Ages.

Under this conviction, we have aimed to excite the spirit of honest investigation touching the popular theory of Demonology, which, it seems to us, has too long robbed the great Father of the glory of his moral universe. "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

The middle ground which we have sought to maintain is that Evil, which is omnipresent and which has been personified as "Devil," is a *principle incorporated in the nature of the soul and in the providences of God, with a benevolent design to the good of man*. This principle, with its twofold purpose, was with Adam and Eve, and has remained with their posterity.

Demonology, as thus represented, explains the cause of the sin of our first parents, accounts for the universal superstition touching this subject, meets the experience of mankind, is in perfect harmony with science, sense, and reason, is found to be in keeping with Biblical criticism and with all the admissible rules of exegesis, and above all it reflects the wisdom, goodness, and glory of God, as revealed

in his moral universe. If in the following pages these conclusions are made to appear, this innovation upon the popular theory will be justified by those who are not joined to their idols. We only ask for these chapters a careful reading and an honorable criticism, and we shall gladly and hopefully submit to the result.

CHRISTOLOGY.

Recognizing revelation as progressive, we have placed Christology at the close of our programme, for the reason that we regard Christ as the fulfillment of all prophecy, and the completion and end of all revelation. Believing that too much importance has been attached to Moses and the Old Testament Jewish history, and altogether too little significance given to Christ and his Sermon on the Mount, we have aimed to detract from the one with the view of magnifying the other. Jewish history has but little to do in the work of saving our race except where the hand of God may be seen, and even the "Law was [only] our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." But the divine order has been reversed, and destructive criticism invited, by pointing the world to the Old Testament instead of inviting the living multitude to "behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." Only let Christ be exalted, infinitely above all and in view of all, as "God manifest in the flesh," and

men of sense and reason will not longer stumble and fall at the credulity of intelligent men.

While but few men have had the temerity to deny the divine authority of the Christ of the New Testament, fewer still fully appreciate the majesty of his person and the sublimity of his mission. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." The Infinite Spirit no man hath seen or can see; yet the great Father hath revealed, in the person of Jesus, so much of his infinite self, touching his nature, character, and will, as our finite minds can comprehend.

This divine manifestation may be clearly observed in the nature, necessity, manner, and the sublime results of the truths he uttered, in the superhuman wisdom and miraculous power which he displayed, in the purity of his life and in the spirit of gentleness and loving good-will which he ever revealed; in his having voluntarily "suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God;" in his triumphant resurrection from the dead and glorious ascension into heaven, where he has gone to prepare a place in the house of many mansions for all in the different countries and ages of the world who shall be counted worthy of the "Well done, good and faithful servant." He is the God to us, and the only God we shall ever be able to comprehend.

"Let him that readeth understand."

These introductory pages will indicate to the

reader the line of argument pursued and the conclusions reached. If any are disposed to condemn these conclusions at the outset, we ask a stay of judgment until the body of the text has passed the ordeal of careful criticism.

PART I.

RELIGION.

(1) NATURAL RELIGION.—(2) NO RELIGION.—(3) ETHNIC RELIGION.—(4) CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

PREFATORY.

(1) *Religion is a part of the nature of the human soul.*—Man's native disposition to worship some being outside of and supposed to be above himself is shown in the universal history of mankind to be as clearly marked as is the disposition of the beaver to construct his dam or of the eagle to soar aloft. The "Ten Great Religions of the World" discussed in the celebrated work of James Freeman Clarke, together with all the other multiplied forms of devotion which make religion in every way coextensive with our race, can be accounted for only upon the supposition of man's native disposition to worship.

(2) As religion is a part of the soul's nature, *the individual or nation ignoring this native faculty*, or refusing to observe the laws of its life and development, *does a wrong which nothing can right.*

(3) The universality of religion not only proves that a disposition to pray was incorporated in the nature of the soul, but it raises a strong presumption in favor of the conviction that He who im-

planted this instinctive disposition to worship *would*, if need be, *reveal a system of religion such as would meet the native necessities of the soul*, and thus enable man to answer the design of his creation. That such a necessity existed will be clearly seen in the history of comparative religion.

(4) The fact that each of these great religions has books which are held as divinely sacred, so far from reflecting discredit upon all pretensions to a "book revelation," is an argument, *à priori*, in favor of the fact that somewhere in this great multiplicity of books *there is a Book the divine origin of which may be clearly traced*. Counterfeits there may be, without number; but their existence not only points to a genuine book, but they make this book of truthful revelation all the more valued, provided it can be found. The foregoing propositions will be illustrated in the following chapters.

CHAPTER I.

NATURAL RELIGION.

Intellectuality, morality, love and hate, native powers of humanity.—Religiosity a constituent of the soul.—Natural religion the basis of revealed religion.—Any religion better than none.

NOTHING but the study of manifest phenomena, in connection with the human mind, has fixed the facts of mental philosophy. We are not at liberty

to say that it is in the nature of the mind to seek after and attain science, except for the manifest reason that such has been its universal tendency and its constant achievement. Solely because of these obvious phenomena has it been determined that *intellectuality* inheres in the human mind. Nor can defeats and miscarriages in intellectual pursuits be urged as an argument against this conclusion ; but rather they illustrate the necessity of greater diligence in finding out the ways of the Almighty. This is our first privilege and highest duty.

Again, that *morality* is instinctive in man, has been determined from the simple fact that in all ages and in all countries he has sat in judgment on questions of right and wrong, and has given moral character to words and deeds. That these mental decisions are often far from being just, does not in the least alter the conclusion that there is a native power and disposition to give character and pass judgment upon the words we utter and the life we live ; it only illustrates the necessity of moral enlightenment.

Once again, the phenomenon of remorse has established the proposition that the mind is possessed of a *conscience*, a power divinely appointed to impart pleasure for right-doing, and to flourish the scourge when we violate our sense of right. And though this power sometimes approves that which is in fact wrong, and flourishes the scourge when we have done that which is intrinsically right, this does not reflect upon the divine purpose of its appoint-

ment; much less does it weigh against the belief that this power to approve and scourge was incorporated in the nature of the human mind. This again only suggests the importance of an enlightened moral judgment.

Moreover, the history of our race, as well as the experience of every individual, clearly demonstrates that the human soul was made to *love* and *hate*. And though men have often learned to love that which deserves nothing but detestation, and to despise that which is worthy of the highest affection, this does not in the least militate against the conclusion that the power to love and hate forms a constituent part of the soul's organism, nor against the wisdom of such an appointment. These perversions, however gross, so far from disproving the existence of these native faculties of the soul, only go to further establish their existence and to urge the necessity of their proper training.

As the manifest phenomena of the race have determined the fact that intellectuality, morality, love, and hate are powers incorporated in the nature of the soul, so likewise has the fact been fully demonstrated that *Religiosity* is not only an element of man's nature, but it is interwoven with the very texture of his entire being, and forms a most constituent and important part of the soul's nature. If the intellectual faculty of the mind has been discovered in the fact of its universal tendency to seek after science, so the universality of man's seeking

after God has settled the question that man was made for religion. As to the universality of such "feeling after God," none will doubt who are at all acquainted with the phenomena of our race. There is not a nation, nor a part of a nation, whose history is known, that has not had some form of religion. Certain tribes in the islands of the sea have, in a few instances, been reported as having no religion. But when their customs were better known, they have, in almost every instance, been found to have a religion to which they clung with the greatest tenacity.

After a most exhaustive review of all the prominent religions of the world, Dr. Clarke says: "This survey must have impressed on every mind the fact that man is eminently a religious being. We have found religion to be his supreme and engrossing interest on every continent, in every millennium of historic time, in every stage of human civilization. In some periods men are found as hunters, as shepherds, as nomads; in others they are living in cities; but in all these conditions they have their religion."

The tendency to worship some superhuman power is universal. This native instinct of the soul to worship led the first families of earth to deify the sun, moon, stars,—to give to them moral character, and then worship them. To unenlightened reason there seemed to be still other deities who needed to be propitiated; hence the beasts of the field, the

fowls of the air, and even the monsters of the deep were made objects of worship. And still other difficulties of providence presented themselves, until not only the whole animate kingdom, but even the mountains and rivers were made objects of devotion. Everything in the universe, it was thought, must be propitiated by prayer and sacrifice, that its favor might be gained for man.

Nor does the fact that our religious nature has gone astray in establishing religions which are not only antagonistic to each other, but even degrading and cruel, in any wise disprove the theory that man was made to worship some superhuman power, any more than the perversion of other native faculties of the mind throws discredit on their existence. In this particular we may clearly observe that the religious faculty is in exact keeping with every other native power of the mind. What faculty has not been perverted?

As natural religion is the foundation upon which revealed religion is based, it is for that reason most important that this proposition be most thoroughly examined. The universality of religion is no longer a question of controversy among those whose intelligence entitles them to respectful consideration. But infidelity has sought to account for this universal phenomenon in some other way than by admitting that religion is incorporated in the nature of the soul. For to admit natural religion is a long stride in the direction of admitting revealed religion. The

importance, therefore, of removing this foundation rock has been clearly observed by the enemies of the Bible.

(1) It has been claimed that this universal disposition to worship has grown out of the force of circumstances, and not from the nature of the soul. Strauss says that "the Epicurean derivation of piety from fear has incontestably a good deal of truth in it. For if man had all he wishes, if his needs were always satisfied, if his plans never miscarried, if no painful lessons of experience constrained him to regard the future with apprehension, the notion of a higher power would hardly have arisen within his breast. He would have thought that thus it must be, and accordingly accepted his lot with stolid indifference" ("The Old Faith and the New," p. 109).

But this argument proves one of two things, either of which is too much for the objection, viz.: First, that the Creator of these circumstances has "miscarried," as to the universal result of such natural influences, or else, Secondly, this environment of difficulty was intended by the Creator to produce this very tendency to piety, and that this universal disposition to pray is but the legitimate result of natural causes with which man has been surrounded. Hence, even though we assume that it is not incorporated in the nature of the soul, but is the legitimate result of natural causes, yet we do not by such assumption get rid of the fact that religion is natural, but only make it the product of divinely-

appointed instrumentalities. If the disposition to pray was not incorporated in the nature of the soul, it was, at least, given by divine economy. Such were the natural contingencies of life that the propensity was developed. As this natural result must have been known to the Creator, he is, therefore, the author of this disposition to piety.

But this infidel proposition is a most groundless assumption, contrary to both analogy and philosophy. For example: if the conditions of life, as imposed upon man, have led to piety, why, we may well inquire, have not other animals also been thus led to pray? They have not "had all they wished;" their "needs have not always been satisfied;" their "plans have miscarried;" they "have had painful lessons of experience;" their life, in these particulars, is not dissimilar to that of man:—yet they have never been led to "the notions of a higher power"! The "derivation of piety" with them is not a thing universal,—of all time past and present,—as with man.

Is it claimed that the lower animals are inferior, and less intelligent than man, and that for this reason they have not sought refuge in religion? But if superior intelligence in man has led him to a universal false conclusion, then may we exclaim—

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

Moreover, philosophy, as well as analogy, proves that the proposition is wholly groundless. If the

soul's disposition to pray be accounted for on the ground of external causes, why not proceed to claim that the soul is without any instinctive tendencies except as they are produced by natural surroundings? Why not maintain that intellectuality is no part of the mind, but that this universal tendency to seek after science has been evolved by the force of circumstances? And why not go farther and claim that the universal disposition to sit in judgment on questions of right and wrong does not prove that morality inheres in the nature of the mind, but that the difficulties of this moral state have developed this world-wide tendency—and, moreover, that the powers of love and hate are not instinctive in the nature of the soul, but that they are simply preternatural excrescences, produced by surrounding beauty and deformity? And, for the sake of logical completeness and continuity of thought, why not proceed to eclipse even the theory of atheistic evolution, by supposing that man himself is not the creature of a Creator, nor yet has been evolved from the lower order of animals, but that he is simply an æon, or emanation of natural surroundings? If the universal tendency to worship "some being outside of and supposed to be above ourselves" does not demonstrate that worship is in the nature of the soul, then we may well inquire, How can we, aside from our own consciousness, demonstrate the existence of all, or even any, of the so-called faculties of the mind? To deny, therefore, the fact that religion inheres in

the very nature of the human soul is to deny all the conceded facts of mental philosophy. As such denial is too absurd to be entertained, we must conclude that the objection is an assumption without any foundation in fact.

(2) It has been further claimed that "man is the subject of imitation and of education; and therefore this universal habit of worship." We admit the proposition that man is the subject of imitation and education, but deny the conclusion, that this accounts for the universal habit of worship. If it be claimed that the present generation has been trained, by example and precept, to this "universal habit," we may naturally inquire, Where did the previous generation, who did the training, get it? In keeping with the objection, it must be claimed that the habit was obtained from their ancestors. But then the question comes up with all its original force, Where did they get it? And thus in every step backward, from generation to generation, the question arises, Where did they get this disposition to worship? until we come to our first parents. And there, as here, we ask again: Whence this tendency to pray, and feel after God? And the only answer is: They received it at the hand of the Creator.

As certainly, therefore, as the fish was made for the water, and the bird for the air,—as certainly as the eye was made for the light, and the ear for sound,—so certainly was the human soul made for

religion. In the light of historic and philosophic truth it must be apparent that God purposed, in the creation of man, that practical religion should be the first and highest of all human duties. The concession of this fact is, as we shall see, a mighty step in the direction of conceding the fact of revealed religion.

Moreover, religion is not only a constituent element in the nature of the soul, but it is the most important part of the nature. The very definition of the term clearly indicates its purpose, and its purpose makes it of infinite moment. The word *religion* is from two Latin words, *re*, again or back, and *ligo*, to bind. The thought is, to *rebind* or *bind back*. God is holy; but the creature, because of the perversion of his freedom, is unholy, and for this cause is cut loose from the Creator. But though man is thus cut loose from God, yet he is left with this religious faculty which seeks to rebind or bind him back to God.

It may be objected that these efforts at rebinding the finite back to the Infinite have not only been wonderfully fruitless of good results, but most prolific of evil, as evinced especially in heathenism and in the abuse of Christianity. It may be observed, however, that while the tendency Godward has been slow, it has nevertheless been steady. And it will be seen, farther along, that the highest form of benevolence ever known to our race has been the legitimate result of the highest form of religion.

Moreover, we shall seek to show in the next chapter that the worst form of religion known to history was, and is, better than no form. When we think of the depravity of our nature, we can hardly imagine a religion so corrupt as not to be better than no religion at all.

Allowing that the purpose of our religious nature is to rebind the soul with all its noble powers back to the source of all good, then its sublimity of aim is beyond comparison. As the long train of cars standing upon that railroad track, loaded with precious freight, the object and destiny of which is to feed the famishing multitude in a distant state, will stand there until they rot down upon the track, unless they are united by a connecting link to the locomotive, in which alone there is the power to move them to their destination, so likewise man, with his noble mind, freighted with intellectuality, sociality, and morality, and having the inherent legacy of power by which he may learn to love supreme excellence and hate iniquity,—man, with all these native and Godlike powers, would have been doomed to live like a beast and die like a beast, but for the connecting link of religion, which unites him to the infinite “I Am that I Am,” in whom alone there is the will, the wisdom, and the power to move the soul with all its heavenly freightage on from victory to victory, until man shall stand a peer with the angels and forever dwell in the “City which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.”

Without religion life is but a desert sea, with no lighthouse on the distant coast: and man is without chart or rudder, left to perish among the foaming billows, to live without hope and to die without God. This representation of man without religion is as true in the philosophy of experience and the light of history as it is in the revelation of God. If, therefore, a man can be found who can truthfully say, "I have no religion—I find in my soul no disposition to feel after God, if haply I might find him," then we are forced to the sad reflection that that man either is a freak of creation, or else, what is worse, he has succeeded in destroying not only the best part of his nature, but the power for which all other powers were divinely given.

CHAPTER II.

NO RELIGION.

- (1) The faculties of the soul subject to law.—(2) These laws not equally important.—(3) Immutability of law.—(4) The penalties of each law faithfully enforced.

AS the Creator has endowed the human mind with the faculty of religion, the individual or the nation who ignores it, or refuses to observe the laws of its life and development, does a wrong which nothing can right. This proposition will be illus-

trated under the light of the following facts of mental science :

First. *The various faculties of the soul have been made subject to law.* Of this there can be no intelligent doubt. As well declare that the body and its members are not under established law as to say that the faculties of the mind are free from fixed method. Moreover, as certainly as the body and its parts have health and strength upon the condition of their obedience to the established laws of their being, so certainly do the various faculties of the soul reach their highest attainment by obedience to the settled methods of their nature.

Second. *These laws* relating to the native faculties of the mind *are not equally important* to be understood and obeyed. As the various members of the body are each of consequence but not all equally so, so likewise the various faculties of the mind, while each is necessary to constitute a perfect whole, are yet not all alike important. Hence, while the laws which relate to these different parts of the mind are of consequence and should be obeyed, the strength of the necessity of knowing and obeying each is to be determined by the importance of the faculty with which it has to do. As the eye is more important than the hand, the laws which relate to the former should be more carefully observed than those which relate to the latter. So, likewise, that faculty of the mind which seems most important should with greatest diligence be brought into obedience with

the laws of its nature. Hence, as religion, the object of which is to bind the finite back to the Infinite, is, as previously shown, of the greatest moment, it is consequently man's first privilege and highest duty to bring that faculty into blissful harmony with the administration of the divine methods of its development. The comparative importance of these higher and lower laws will be illustrated further on.

Third. *All the laws of God are immutable in their administration.* Not only has the Creator made man, body and soul, subject to law, but he has also attached to these laws rewards and penalties, which come with the certainty of cause and effect. As these divine methods of controlling man have been established in the councils of Infinite wisdom, with a benevolent design to the good of man, it would seem to follow that the heavenly council must have determined that the greatest good should come to our race by enforcing these divine methods without let or hindrance.

The enforcement of these laws is more inexorable than are the laws of man. The railroad corporation may determine that no one shall stand or walk upon their track. And yet a man may violate that rule and hope to escape the consequences. If observed by the engineer whose train is coming with fearful speed, he may confidently expect that, to save his life, the engineer will blow the whistle, ring the bell, and even reverse the engine. But he who stands on

the track of the Almighty, in violation of the divine law, need not hope for the blowing of whistles, ringing of bells, or reversing of engines—but may be assured that “the soul that sinneth, it shall die.” As well may a man put his hand into the fire and hope to escape the consequence of his folly, as to violate the divine laws of the soul and hope to avoid the awful consequences of such violation.

Nor is there forgiveness, in the sense of removing the evil results attending the violation of the law. The doctrine, therefore, however popular, which leads man to believe that he can sin with impunity, and that repentance will not only restore him to the divine favor, but will also give back the lost energies of the soul, which have gone as the result of violated law, is as destructive to human happiness as it is foolish, sacrilegious, and profane.

There is no doctrine in the Bible more to be prized than the doctrine of forgiveness; and none more precious in the blessed experience of the humble penitent than the truth that “if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.” But we aver that forgiveness with God is the direct result of obedience to certain other laws of our being, and has nothing directly to do with the evil consequences of violated law.

The doctrine of forgiveness, as often taught, grants license to continue in sin. Convince a man that he can repent and get forgiveness of his sins tomorrow, in the sense that he may be released from

the record of his past life, and he will find an apology for violating the laws of God to-day. Make him believe that he will have an opportunity to repent in the next world, and he will find it quite convenient to keep on sinning while in this. But the Bible nowhere authorizes us to teach a man that he can repent and get forgiveness to-morrow, much less in eternity. Upon the subject of repentance and forgiveness in the future, the Bible is as silent as the grave. The voice of Satan is "To-morrow;" but the voice of God is "Now." "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

There is a theory, quite in accord with human depravity, that teaches us that there is no difference between the sinner dying at the age of four-score years, providing he cries for mercy before ceasing to breathe—if only, while he is making his last round of rebellion against God, he repents just before he goes over into the awful, yawning abyss—no difference between this old fossil of iniquity and the aged father in Israel whose whole life has been one of prayerful training in the school of Christ!

What a pity and a mistake that our Saviour while on earth did not inform us of the hour of our exit, that we might have that all-important "inch of time" in which to prune off our worldly feathers, oil up our religious wings, and fly away to glory!

The theory is based upon the groundless supposition that Christ came into the world to teach, live, and sacrifice, that he might "prepare us to die"

rather than to live. Death is a solemn event, we know; but life is infinitely more important. Death is but an event in the history of life; for we shall be in life even after death. The words we utter, the life we live, and the spirit we breathe, will go with us to the Great Hereafter. And if these words have been words of prayer and truth,—this life, one of justice, mercy, and humility,—and this spirit, one of love to God and good-will to men,—these Christian graces of life, and not the circumstances of death, will be the only conditions upon which we shall hear that most blessed “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

But, on the other hand, if our words and life have been those of deception and blasphemy, of injustice, cruelty, and arrogant presumption, and our spirits alien to the spirit of Christ, it will be in virtue of such a life of ungodliness that we shall merit and receive the awful denunciation, “I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

We should therefore feel, and strive to make others realize, that when we violate the laws of God we touch chords that shall vibrate for evil through the cycles of eternity.

That this truth of God may be an abiding conviction of our souls, let us seek both a philosophical and a Biblical answer to the following questions:

(1) What is the nature and extent of forgiveness with God? (2) What is its necessity? (3) What are its results?

(1) *The nature and extent of forgiveness.* Let us suppose a sin that is fourfold in its tendencies. For example: A man may visit the saloon, and spend for rum the money which rightfully belongs to his family. As one sin follows another, so tipping leads to drinking, drinking to drunkenness, and drunkenness to ruin. As may be seen, he has (1) robbed his home of its furniture; he has clothed his children in rags, and deprived them of the opportunity of education; he has made his once hopeful wife a most pitiable object of despair. He has (2) sinned against his own body, in that he has made that once vigorous frame a physical wreck, trembling under the weight of iniquity. But he has (3) wronged his own soul in that he has robbed it of its manhood; and he feels that he is neither fit to live nor prepared to die. And still more and worse, (4) conscience, echoing the voice of God, brandishes a sharp scourge within, filling the soul with apprehensions and awful forebodings of a judgment to come; and in his vision of delirium he looks in upon his own soul and beholds it a cage of unclean birds,—of wild beasts, tearing, tormenting, and destroying, until the last spark of hope is well-nigh extinguished. This is no overdrawn picture of the awful results of violated law.

But before the night of despair sets in and death comes to end all, conviction steals upon his mind. "He comes to himself." He now, as never before, sees what he has done for his family, for his body,

for his soul, and toward his God. His feet seem to be sinking for the last time into the horrible pit of black despair. With a trembling faith he looks up to that God whose laws he has despised, and in the deepest contrition of an agonizing spirit he cries, "God have mercy upon me, a sinner!" And, quick as the spark from the red smitten steel, he hears the voice of mercy, "Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven."

Now, to settle this question of forgiveness once for all, we have only to inquire as to what, of all this life of debauch, has been forgiven. And to ascertain this, let us for the time close our ears to the voice of speculative theology and hear only the voice of reason, founded upon common observation and experience.

Bear in mind, the sin was fourfold—viz., against the family, against the body, against the soul, and against God: that is, domestic sin, physical sin, psychological sin, and relative or moral sin.

(a) Would the act of wifely forgiveness pardon, in the sense of restoring the lost furniture of the house and the children's lost opportunities for education? Or would it simply take that banished husband back into the bosom of the family and restore him to his God-given relationship? At best, that act of forgiveness can do nothing more than the latter. If more comes, it must be the result of a new obedience to domestic law.

(b) Did forgiveness with God restore the wrong

that was done to the body? Forgiveness has been full and free, and yet the blood is still in his eye, the bloat is yet upon his cheek, and his step trembling and feeble. The effects of physical sin still cling to him. The violated laws still reap vengeance. The act of forgiveness has only accepted the little of physical strength that yet remains as a living sacrifice.

(c) When God freely forgave this repenting sinner, did he pardon in the sense of removing the evil effects brought to bear upon the soul? During these years of dissipation the soul was robbed of much of its native power to think, of many precious opportunities to develop its higher faculties of morality and religion, and, above all, of its power to resist temptation and cleave to the right. In the act of forgiveness are these powers and opportunities all restored? The voice of common-sense answers, No! What God did for the body he has done for the soul; he has accepted it, weak and helpless as it is, and not strong as it might have been but for sin. And more, he gives his grace to help in time to come. And because of the evil results of violated law, it will require eternal vigilance on the sinner's part and all the appliances of the grace of God to keep him out of the whirlpool of ruin. No matter how thoroughly an old sinner may have been converted, nor how freely he may have been forgiven, nor yet how rapidly he may be making strides from the region of darkness to the land of light, ask that

man, and he will tell you, in the bitter experience of his soul, that those years of rebellion against God hang like millstones about his neck, tending to drag him back into the old vortex of habit. All that has been removed and pardoned in the act of forgiveness is the relative or moral sin which separates us from God. God removes from our soul the feelings of alienation, and sends forth his spirit, whereby we say, "Father!" He does not permit our previous sins to be our eternal overthrow; but because of obedience to the laws of faith, hope, and prayer, and faithful devotedness to right-doing, he sends forth this spirit of adoption.

Thus our averment that forgiveness is the blessed result of obedience to other laws of our being, and has nothing directly to do with the evil consequences of violated law, must be apparent to all reflecting minds. Thus, too, we vindicate the *immutability* of God's administrative justice.

(2) *What is the necessity of forgiveness?* Much, every way. Had these sins which intervened between the soul and God not been pardoned, all had been wretchedness, misery, and utter ruin: but now all is hope and joy. Had the father said to the prodigal son, who had spent his substance in riotous living, "Return to the land of destitution and perish in despair," how it would have filled the soul with the bitter wail, "Lost, lost, lost!" But when he meets him with the kiss of affection, and puts on his trembling hand the ring, the emblem of a father's

endless love, what infinite blessedness invigorates the fainting soul!

(3) *What are the results of forgiveness?* Although they have not interposed between sin and its legitimate consequences, yet the soul which had been shut up with sin, and hence shut out from God and of necessity doomed to "banishment from the presence of God and the glory of his power," is now rescued from the further dreadful consequences of sin, transplanted into the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, and may forever sing the songs of praise for his redemption. And his cup, though small because of sin and wasted opportunities, is full of joy and praise to the great King.

From all this we learn three important lessons: First, when we violate the laws of God we do an irreparable wrong to our own souls. Secondly, we shut ourselves up with sin, our worst enemy, and of necessity away from God, our best friend. Thirdly, we learn that however sinful we have been, God, in his infinite mercy, accepts the humble penitent with all his weakened powers and wasted opportunities, and imparts his grace to help in time to come, on the condition of repentance.

Fourth. The penalty attached to *each violated law will be faithfully enforced*, however perfectly we may observe any or every other law of the soul. Human government may say to the public, "You are at liberty to do a certain amount of evil, provided you will consent to do a given amount of good." For

example: A man gets it into his perverted heart to sell rum,—an occupation which he knows, if he has sense enough to make his business a financial success, will tend to send his neighbor to a premature grave, fill the almshouse with fatherless children, crush the hopes of loving mothers, and scatter like autumn leaves the firebrands of wretchedness and death. As his depraved soul has come to the satanic conclusion to do worse than murder his brother, he makes application for license to sell rum; and the court, by authority of legislative enactments, grants a permit to do this evil on the condition of the payment of a hundred dollars. That is, the court assumes to say, “Obey one law of the state by doing one hundred dollars’ worth of good, and we will grant you the privilege of violating another law of social order, by which you may do an inexpressible amount of evil.” But Heaven has not enacted a law which may be violated on the condition of obedience to any or all other laws of our being. While any law obeyed brings its reward, regardless of others, so any law violated is attended with evil consequences, no matter how perfectly we may obey any or all others. The divine government is inexorable, and will not permit us to do evil that good may come.

If we obey the laws of the body we shall, by so far, receive the reward of well-doing. But if at the same time we violate the divine laws of the soul, we are doomed to drink the very dregs of the cup of our iniquity. So, likewise, if we carefully observe

the laws of intellectual development, we shall reap the reward of our sowing. Meantime, however, if we violate the laws of the moral faculty, we may have gone down to the depths of moral degradation. "One individual who has inherited a fine bodily constitution from his parents, and observes the rules of temperance and exercise, will enjoy robust health, although he may cheat, lie, blaspheme, and destroy his fellow-men; while another, if he have inherited a feeble constitution, and disregards the rules of temperance and exercise, will suffer pain and sickness, although he may be a paragon of every Christian virtue." The world has produced not a few physical and intellectual giants, who were nevertheless moral and spiritual dwarfs.

If this method of divine government were clearly understood, many of the providences of God which seem inscrutable would be seen to be clear as the sun. This thought will be made clear in the use of the following illustration: Two ships are out upon the high sea. One has on board missionaries, Bibles, and tracts, whose object is to give the light of Christian civilization to those who sit in the darkness of heathenism. The other is loaded with pirates and implements of cruel death, whose mission is to murder and steal. The storm is high, and every mountain-wave threatens to sink the ships to the bottom of the sea. Meantime the vessel in which the missionaries are springs a leak, and the missionaries, Bibles, and tracts find a watery grave in the depths

of the ocean, while the ship in which the pirates are rides proudly over the perilous waters, and on they go to blood and death.

“Mysterious providence!” says the infidel. “Mysterious providence!” echoes the unthinking Christian. Nothing mysterious in all this if we remember two things: first, ships do not float in virtue of *moral* but of physical law; secondly, no moral law has been violated and no moral results attend—only the physical law has been broken which requires vessels to be water-tight in order to float, and only physical consequences have come as the result. Because of the independent operation of law these pirates, while they receive the benefits of obedience to physical law, have the harvest of soul-wretchedness which comes as the result of violated moral and spiritual law. They have observed the lower law and violated the higher, and are reaping the result of their sowing. So of the missionaries: while their bodies went down because a physical law had been broken, their souls went up to receive the “Well done,” in virtue of their obedience to the higher spiritual laws of their being.

Again, on the lap of that mother who has been bereft of her husband lies her only and beautiful boy, who, she confidently expects, will be her staff and support in her declining years. But, alas! he grows sick, pale, and at last dies. “Oh! why,” exclaims the heart-stricken mother, “should my dear boy have opened his eyes, only to close them in an

endless night?" To her this providence is an inscrutable mystery unless she recognizes two important considerations: first, that at some time and by some one a physical law has been violated, and that death has come as a relief and blessing to the child; and secondly, that the light of life has gone out on the shore of time that it might be lighted up on the strand of eternity. Moreover, this may be an instrumentality more powerful than any sermon ever preached, beckoning the mother up to the land where angels dwell. Nothing but a physical law has been violated; and no evil has come which, in virtue of obedience to a better law, Heaven will not vastly more than compensate.

Even in our short-sightedness we can see something of the fatherly benevolence of Him who has determined, in the councils of his own wisdom, that the penalty attached to each violated law shall be faithfully enforced.

Moreover, it may be in the line of human duty to violate the lower law that we may obey the higher. For example: It is the hour of midnight. The cottage is in flames, in which there are sleeping a widow and her five children, unconscious of their danger. While the law of bodily safety to yourself may say, "Keep out of the fire," the golden rule may urge you to rush through the flames and bring out the mother and her helpless children and save them from the awful death, even at the cost of wounds to yourself. Then while, because of violated physical law, your

body may be writhing in agony, your soul, in virtue of obedience to the higher law of humanity, may be filled with ecstatic joy. If, therefore, one law comes in conflict with another, the line of duty is indicated by ascertaining which is the higher. Or if the divine law encounters the human, we are not to hesitate as to who shall be obeyed, God or man.

From the foregoing philosophical proposition and illustrations, it must be apparent to the thoughtful mind that man's first and highest obligation is to bring himself into harmony with the administration of the laws of his religious nature.

As shown in the previous chapter, the religious faculty is that alone which binds the finite back to the Infinite; and, as will be shown in the next chapter, it is this part of man's nature which determines more than anything else the character of the individual or the nation. As this is the highest part of our being, the laws which relate to it are of first importance. We repeat, therefore, that the individual or nation ignoring this native endowment, or refusing to observe the laws of its life and development, does a wrong to the soul which nothing can right. The lowest form of religion known to our race is vastly better than no form at all. The nearest to nothing of religion practiced by mankind is that of the Fetich worshipers of Africa. But that this is infinitely better than no religion may be clearly seen by a comparison between atheistic France and superstitious Africa. The corruptions

of the Roman Church brought on the French Revolution, which established atheism and the statutory enactment of "No religion." The inhuman cruelty and wretchedness which followed in the wake of this Revolution stand out in the bloody pages of history as an awful illustration of the unutterable curse which must rest upon the nation which has thrown off all allegiance to religion, and more especially when it pits itself against the highest form of religion known to our race.

"The only instance in which the avowed rejecters of revelation have possessed the supreme power and government of a country, and have attempted to dispose of human happiness according to their own doctrines and wishes, is that of France during the greater part of the Revolution, which, it is now well known, was effected by the abettors of infidelity. The name and profession of Christianity were renounced by the legislature, and the abolition of the Christian era was proclaimed. Death was declared by an act of the republican government to be an eternal sleep. The existence of the Deity and the immortality of the soul were formally disavowed by the National Convention; and the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead was declared to have been only preached by superstition for the torment of the living. All the religions in the world were proclaimed to be the daughters of ignorance and pride; and it was decreed to be the duty of the Convention to assume the honorable office of disseminating

atheism (which was blasphemously affirmed to be the truth) over all the world.

“As a part of this duty, the Convention further decreed that its express renunciation of all religious worship should, like its invitations to rebellion, be translated into all foreign languages; and it was asserted and received in the Convention that the adversaries of religion had deserved well of their country! Correspondent with these professions and declarations were the effects actually produced. Public worship was utterly abolished. The churches were converted into ‘temples of reason,’ in which atheistical and licentious homilies were substituted for the proscribed service; and an absurd and ludicrous imitation of the pagan mythology was exhibited under the title of ‘the religion of reason.’ In the principal church of every town a tutelary goddess was installed with a ceremony equally pedantic, frivolous, and profane; and the females selected to personify this new divinity were mostly prostitutes, who received the admiration of the attendant municipal officers, and of the multitudes whom fear, or force, or motive of gain had collected together on the occasion. Contempt for religion or decency became the test of attachment to the government; and the gross infraction of any moral or social duty was deemed a proof of civism and a victory over prejudice.

“All distinction of right and wrong was confounded. The grossest debauchery triumphed. The reign

of atheism and of reason was the reign of terror. 'Then proscription followed proscription, tragedy followed after tragedy, in almost breathless succession, on the theater of France. Almost the whole nation was converted into a horde of assassins. Democracy and atheism, hand in hand, desolated the country and converted it into one vast field of rapine and of blood.' In one part of France, the course of a river (the Loire) was impeded by the drowned bodies of the ministers of religion, several hundreds of whom were destroyed in its waters; children were sentenced to death for the faith and loyalty of their parents; and they whose infancy had sheltered them from the fire of the soldiery were bayoneted as they clung about the knees of their destroyers.

"The moral and social ties were unloosed, or rather torn asunder. For a man to accuse his own father was declared to be an act of civism worthy of a true republican; and to neglect it, was pronounced a crime that should be punished with death. Accordingly, women denounced their husbands, and mothers their sons, as bad citizens and traitors; while many women, not of the dress of the common people nor of infamous reputation, but respectable in character and appearance, seized with savage ferocity between their teeth the mangled limbs of their murdered countrymen.

"France during this period was a theater of crimes which, after all preceding perpetrations, have excited

in the mind of every spectator amazement and horror. The miseries suffered by that single nation have changed all the histories of the preceding sufferings of mankind into idle tales, and have been enhanced and multiplied without a precedent, without a number, and without a name. The kingdom appeared to be changed into one great prison, the inhabitants converted into felons; and the common doom of man commuted for the violence of the sword and bayonet, the sucking-boat and the guillotine. To contemplative men it seemed for a season as if the knell of the whole nation was tolled, and the world summoned to its execution and its funeral. Within the short period of ten years not less than three millions of human beings are supposed to have perished in that single country by the influence of atheism. Were the world to adopt and be governed by the doctrines of revolutionary France, what crimes would not mankind perpetrate? What agonies would they not suffer?" (Horne's Introduction to the Study of the Scriptures, p. 25.*)

Only let atheism, or "no religion," be popularized in this God-favored land, and our country, because of its superior intelligence, is doomed to sink to lower depths of iniquity and consequent wretchedness than were ever known to any nation of the globe.

* Yet the France of that day was held up by many infidels of our own country as an example worthy to be followed.

We may observe the laws of intellectual life and development, go from college to college, from university to university, for intellectual advantages, and thus by dint of effort cut out the niches upon the mountain-side by which we climb to the summit, and there stand proud monuments of intellectual grandeur; and yet, as knowledge is simply power, serving alike in the hand of angel or devil, a nation of such would, like France, become a nation of educated devils. Were it possible for us to obey all the laws of our being, both body and soul, and yet disregard the laws of our religious nature and seek to throw off all allegiance to the Almighty, then our doom is photographed in the nation of "no religion." No matter for our intelligence, material wealth, implements of war, national fame, or any or all of the instrumentalities of civilization: only let unbelief in the Bible be popularized, and bold atheism stalk abroad like the devil of old, and the bloody record of our future history will not only tell of our infidelity to God, but on every page will be written, "Calamity—lamentation—woe—woe—unutterable wretchedness." Let us have all the legends of paganism, the hobgoblin stories of Jewish superstition, and more too, rather than be cursed with the curse of "no religion."

CHAPTER III.

ETHNIC RELIGION.

(1) Practical religion tends to the transformation of moral character.—(2) Perfect manhood can be hoped for only as the result of worshiping an absolutely pure and holy being.—(3) In the whole range of pagan religion such absolute holiness of character in the object worshiped is not to be found.—(4) Hence the necessity of a revealed religion, such as would meet the demands of the soul's nature.

FROM the foregoing, we are certainly prepared to assume that religion inheres in the human soul as the noblest element of our nature, and that any violation of the laws of this part of our being must be attended with a wrong to the soul which nothing can right. Having taken the first step, we are prepared to take the second, viz., that natural religion is a sure prophecy of revealed religion, if it can be shown that such a revelation was a necessity. Certainly God has not created anything without its corollary. A wise and benevolent Creator would not have made a fish had there been no water in which it could swim. The delicate eye had not been constructed but for the existence of light. So neither would God have created a faculty of the soul without providing an adequate means for its appropriate development. To suppose otherwise is not only to reflect upon the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, but it is to contradict the obvious

teachings of both analogy and philosophy. The most perfect *fitness, adaptation, and arrangement*, indicating an infinite *design*, are everywhere to be seen by the intelligent eye. If then man was made for religion, it only remains to be shown that revealed religion was a necessity of man's nature. From comparative religion we shall seek to establish the following propositions :

(1) Practical religion tends to the transformation of moral character.

(2) Perfect manhood can be hoped for only as the result of worshipping an absolutely pure and holy being.

(3) In the whole range of pagan religion such absolute holiness of character in the object worshiped is not to be found.

(4) Hence the necessity of a revealed religion, such as would meet the demands of the soul's nature.

If it can be shown that these several points are well taken, then the conclusion of the whole matter will be reached when we have shown that the God of the Christian's worship is a God of infinite purity of character.

SECTION (I).

Practical religion tends to the transformation of moral character. A careful survey of the history of nations and individuals will clearly illustrate this proposition.

(1) The cultivation of the *intellect* does not of it-

self, necessarily, tend to the development of the noblest manhood. When Rome was the mistress of the world, not only in arms but in learning as well, she was also the metropolis of moral debauch. And while the lovers of art and science were gathering within her walls from all parts of the inhabited earth to receive an education, her moral life became so corrupt that, though the mightiest empire of the world, it nevertheless broke down of its own rottenness. What is true of the nation is also true of the individual. Xerxes, whose very fingers were dripping with the blood of the million slain, and whose life of luxury and debauch brought him to a premature grave, had a developed intellect of giant proportions. Alexander the Great had an intellectual ability which enabled him to conquer the world, and yet, after scattering the firebrands of cruel death among the inhabitants of earth for a few brief years, he died at the age of thirty-two, from the effects of moral corruption. By the power of intellect he had conquered the outward world, while through the imbecility of his religious nature he had fallen an easy prey to the baser forces of the inner world.

Observation as well as history illustrates the fact that a man may have a mighty head for science, and at the same time a very small and feeble heart for good. The fact is that "knowledge is power,"—simple power like wealth,—that will serve as well in the hand of a monster of wickedness or a devil of dark-

ness as in the hand of a saint of goodness or an angel of light. Hence, the more you put into a man's head while his heart is set on wrong, the mightier engine you make of him for evil. If a man has the wicked heart to make and pass counterfeit money, the less knowledge he has the better it is for the community. It is philosophical as well as Biblical that "out of the heart are the issues of life." Before the streams of human action can be made pure, the fountain must be thoroughly cleansed.

(2) Nor does material wealth, much or little, indicate the moral character of a nation or an individual. The ancient kings, whose almost boundless riches and external glory were only equaled by their brutish cruelty and the gratification of selfish and animal lusts, clearly illustrate this proposition. But we need not go back to historic time to learn that the acquisition of earthly riches, so far from developing noble manhood, more frequently tends to the growth of a spirit of profound selfishness, the very breath of which is stagnation to every noble impulse of human helpfulness. This is a fact of too common observation. It was truthfully said of a millionaire who died not many years ago, that while he was one of the "richest men ever born into this world, he was one of the most pitiful little souls that ever went out of it." It is not riches, but rather the spirit and manner by which wealth is often acquired, that make it impossible for a "rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."

(3) Nor yet does the whole range of history furnish a single example where purely human effort has succeeded in establishing a system of moral science, such as would bring out the highest type of manhood, recognize the universal brotherhood of mankind, and thus tend to enhance the interest and happiness of the whole human race. The best that could be done, by way of establishing a system of ethics that would be helpful to humanity, was accomplished by such men as Solon, Socrates, Plato, Cicero, Seneca, and Plutarch. But their fruitless efforts, as will be shown in the third section of this chapter, only illustrate the absolute necessity of a divine revelation.

(4) The objective history of all nations clearly illustrates the fact that whatever has been developed in the individual or in society, which was truly helpful to mankind, was brought out, not by science, wealth, or abstract human effort, but by the exercise of man's *religious nature*. Not the renowned scholarship of the once famous Egypt, not the knowledge of history and oratory of which Rome was once so proud, nor yet the profound material philosophy of ancient Greece—not one of these influences nor all combined gave those countries their civilization. The whole secret of their success will be found in their religion. Secular knowledge, material wealth, personal effort, together with all else of instrumentality, can be made available for good only when sanctified by religion. Nothing, absolutely nothing,

will determine the moral character of a nation but its religion. The spirit and life of a people can be learned only by ascertaining the spirit and life of the God or gods they worship.

Ancient Corinth, the "eye of Greece," was notorious for its licentiousness and prostitution. And her degradation was directly traceable to the goddess Venus, who was the supreme object of their worship. The worshiper had attributed to this goddess the moral character of a prostitute, and the intensity of his devotion at her polluted shrine was the measure of his transformation into the defiled moral likeness of the being worshiped.

In contrast with the degrading worship of Venus, observe that of the goddess Diana. She was looked upon and worshiped as the goddess of chastity. The natural and necessary result of that religious devotion was to transform the worshipers into her character of moral virtue. And such was the gulf that separated between the Corinthian women and those of Ephesus, that the latter would not be found walking in the streets of Corinth, or keeping company with the former. Paul's prohibition of the public ministry of the women of Corinth may be found in the fact that their worship at the polluted shrine of Venus had so degraded their character, that until they had "brought forth fruits meet for repentance," it would be in the interest of a religion of purity for them to remain in silence. No such prohibition was imposed upon the women of Ephesus.

The primitive religion of India, which prevailed long before Brahmanism was introduced, has been well characterized as "devil-worship." Two of the principal deities of this ancient religion are Shiva and Kali. These deities are supposed to delight in nothing so much as in highway robbery and bloody murder. As a necessity, the devotee who worships at the shrine of these gods is transformed into a very demon. He prays to Kali, the goddess of destruction, to assist in his life of pillage and murder, and his faith and prayer nerve him on to the most shocking deeds of bloodshed and destruction.

In this ancient religion of the Thugs, the highest premium of honor and renown is given to the worshiper who succeeds best in stealing, murdering, and kidnapping children to be offered in sacrifice at the altar of Kali. And besides the children, one third of the proceeds of their plunder they religiously devoted to their tutelary goddess. The very ambition to please a being of such supposed monstrous character can, in the nature of the soul, have no other effect than to transform the worshiper into an incarnate demon.

But why give illustrations of this philosophic truth? The whole history of heathenism is but a book, upon every page of which is written the truth that the worshiper is transformed into the moral image of the being worshiped, in the ratio of the faith and intensity of his devotion.

Not only universal history but observation and

experience go to prove the truth of this proposition. Even in Christendom somewhat different views are entertained as to the true character of God. And that character, whether it be vindictive justice or loving mercy, will develop itself in the character of the worshiper. If we believe that "God is love," and that he delights in the manifestation of love in the hearts of all his children; and if we earnestly desire and devoutly pray that God's will may be done in us, then, with the certainty of cause and effect, we shall be transformed into the divine likeness, and soon find within us a sympathy and love as broad as our humanity. As action and reaction are equal, not only in mechanics, but in spiritual influences as well, it may be assumed as a fact in mental philosophy that the transformation into the moral likeness of the being worshiped *is in exact ratio of the faith and intensity of the worship*. This principle of transformation of moral character has been clearly recognized by paganism. The expression of the priests of Buddhism only voices the universal sentiment of religion when they say, "If men pray to Buddha and do not become Buddha, it is because the mouth prays and not the mind." So, likewise, the true standard of our Christian piety can be measured only by the spirit and life we manifest. Growth in the Christian life and experience are the measure of our faith and loving worship.

SECTION (II).

Perfect manhood can be hoped for only as the result of worshiping an absolutely pure and holy being. The truth of this statement needs no further illustration than that which went to establish the foregoing proposition. Implicit faith in a supreme being of absolute holiness, and a prayer of ardent desire to be lifted up into willing obedience to that infinite character, is the only known method by which reason can hope for the development of the highest possible manhood. As has been seen, there is no faculty of the human mind that has been charged with the duty of the moral transformation of the soul except the religious. Love for a being of supreme excellence inspires an ardent desire and prayer to become alike lovely. The natural and necessary reward of such desire and prayer is a continual transformation into that ideal loveliness.

SECTION (III).

In the whole range of pagan religion, such absolute holiness of character in the object worshiped is not to be found. The voice of universal religious history proclaims the truth of this proposition. A careful survey of all the prominent religions of the world, past and present, will clearly show that, while each religion had objects of worship having some trait or traits of moral character the tendency of which was to elevate and civilize the worshiper, there were yet

other traits of character attributed to those deities which made it impossible for the soul to reach the heights of possibility for which it was created.

(1) Brahmanism, the religion of India, whose population is between two and three hundred millions, has been largely helpful for two reasons. First, the Brahmanic system of moral science was in many respects most commendable. It recognized the fact, which even Christians have sometimes failed to comprehend, that sin wrongs the soul. That system laid truth at the foundation of all good works. It declared: "The fruit of every virtuous act which thou hast done, O man, since thy birth, shall depart from thee to the dogs if thou deviate from the truth." And again: "The soul is its own witness, the soul itself is its own refuge: offend not thy conscious soul, the supreme internal witness of men." It recognized the sacred relation that existed between parents and children, and the high obligations that grew out of that relation. The Brahmanical law required devotion without ostentation, and benevolence without proclamation. "Let no man be proud of his rigorous devotion; let him not, having sacrificed, utter falsehood; having made a donation, let him never proclaim it. By falsehood the sacrifice becomes vain; by pride the merit of devotion is lost; and by proclaiming a present its fruit is destroyed." It also clearly recognized the individual responsibility of each man, where it said: "In his passage to the next world, neither his

father, nor his mother, nor his wife, nor his son, nor his kinsman will remain his company: his virtue alone will adhere to him. Single is each man born; single he dies; single he receives the reward of his good, and single the punishment of his evil, deeds." The excellence of this moral code reaches its climax in requiring an entire submission to Divine Providence. "Let him [the Brahman] not wish for death. Let him not wish for life. Let him expect his appointed time as the hired servant expects his wages. Meditating on the Supreme Spirit, without any earthly desire, with no companion but his own soul, let him live in this world seeking the bliss of the next."

The second helpful influence of the Brahmanic religion is that the worshiper stands in awe before the throne of the great Spirit-Universe. His piety toward this ever-present pantheistic power is worthy of Christian imitation. But while his devotion is to be commended, the fact that the object of his worship is materialistic and void of moral character is a thing to be commiserated. And it is just at this point that the whole system breaks down. While their code of morals in many respects is commendable and their devotion worthy of imitation, yet, having no personal Supreme Being before the mind whose very presence tends to fill the soul with the spirit of filial fear and loving obedience, there is not a sufficient incentive to enable the worshiper to carry out the system of morals which has been so divinely arranged.

A rule of life may be given to the household which may be eminently adapted in all its details to the training of the children into nobility of character; and yet, if there be no parents in the presence of those children who are to be feared and loved, then there is not a sufficient incentive to lead them to such loving obedience as will bring out any such nobleness. The Brahman's thought of power fills him with reverence, while his thought of moral character leaves him in comparative moral depravity.

(2) Ancient Greece reached her zenith of glory under the inspiration of feeling after "The Unknown God." In that inscription they recognized the existence of a Supreme Being, but confessed their ignorance of his true character. The marvelous sermon on Mars Hill delivered by the great Apostle had only the object indicated in the expression, "Him declare I unto you." That the human soul was of noble birth was a thought which the Grecian mind had fully grasped. But while the native powers of the soul were to them sublime, they utterly failed to attribute any such supreme nobleness of character to the gods they worshiped. The secret of their semi-religious power was clearly indicated in that inscription on the temple of Apollo at Delphi, *Γνωθσε σεαυτόν*—"Know thyself." Their religion on the one hand was almost half-right, in that it recognized the native nobleness of the human soul and the necessity of developing its hidden powers, but on the other hand, it was more than

half-wrong in failing to recognize a vastly superior nobleness of character in the God whom they ignorantly worshiped.

The human side of their religion was wonderfully helpful. Their exalted views of the native dignity of the soul gave them comparatively exalted notions of the deity. But their whole system of idolatrous worship, as well as the prayers of their greatest philosophers, show that they had no clearly defined views of a Being of omniscience, omnipotence, and absolute holiness of character. Socrates prays, "Father Jupiter, give us all good, whether we ask it or not; and avert from us all evil, though we do not pray thee so to do. Bless all our good actions, and reward them with success and happiness." While this prayer clearly shows that this great philosopher was earnestly seeking after God, his daily custom of sacrificing and praying at the altars of his country's gods equally illustrates a most sickening failure to find him. And if he and a few of his disciples, such as Alcibiades, Crito, Xenophon, and Plato, have challenged the admiration of all good men, when they had nothing but the feeble light of the soul's nature, as reflected by the Infinite, we can scarcely imagine what superlatively grand men they would have been, if only they had been blessed with the light of the full-orbed Sun.

(3) Buddhism has existed for about 2500 years. It is the prevailing religion of China, Central and Eastern Asia, Swedish Lapland, and parts of India.

The number of its votaries is estimated at not less than 450,000,000—more than one third of the inhabitants of the globe. In point of numbers it is the prevailing religion of the world. Its canon of sacred books, too, is well defined. These religious records set forth a system of ethics which is eminently worthy of a higher type of manhood than has ever been developed in the masses of its subjects.

Buddhism has its Decalogue of commandments, the first five of which are (1) not to kill, (2) not to steal, (3) not to commit adultery, (4) not to lie, (5) not to be drunken. These are for the common people, while the other five are for those who propose to enter upon the practice of a higher life. This outline of the practical part of their religion shows it to be purely one-sided. The entire decalogue of commandments is but a system of negations, which is well as far as it goes, but very one-sided. It asks for no love. Indeed there is nothing to love. The only god in the mind of the devotee is the stern and inflexible Soul-of-the-Universe. This pantheistic god is full of vengeance, but has no sympathy, and is so entirely indifferent as to the race of mankind that rewards and punishments are left to the stern necessities of an inflexible law.

The first article of the Buddhist's faith is the transmigration of the soul from one animal to another. The second article is, that the question of the soul passing into a lower or a higher order of animal at death is determined by the life of the in-

dividual. Hence their life is spent under the influence of a slavish fear. Their only inspiration to a life of virtue is in the hope that a life of self-abnegation and an utter indifference to suffering will by some unknown providence give them promotion. Hence, "they torture themselves with self-inflicted torments; for the body is the great enemy of the soul's salvation, and they must beat it down by ascetic mortifications. But asceticism, here as everywhere else, tends to self-indulgence, since one extreme produces another. In one part of India, therefore, devotees are swinging on hooks in honor of Siva, hanging themselves by the feet head downwards over a fire, rolling on a bed of prickly thorns, jumping on a bed filled with sharp knives, boring holes in their tongues, and sticking their bodies full of pins and needles, or perhaps holding their arms over their heads until they stiffen in that position. Meantime in other places whole regions are given over to sensual indulgences, and companies of abandoned women are connected with different temples and consecrate their gains to the support of their worship." Thus they imagine that by making this life wretched in the extreme they will escape a worse punishment in the life to come. Such a system of religion as this the enlightened mind instinctively declares to be a most shocking outrage upon humanity, And yet it has in it much of truth, --truth, however, that appeals only to *fear*, the baser part of man's nature. And while it can be

easily shown to be better than no religion at all, it lacks that fundamental truth by which it could make progress and become a religion to unify all nations and inspire within the soul an assurance of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come.

Buddhism has proved itself to be comparative stagnation, and that for the obvious reason that it has not the slightest conception of the existence of a Being of infinite wisdom, power, and holiness of character, who appeals to man's love as the most potent power of the human soul. As a fact of experience, no life can be a grand success but that which flows out from a heart of love. If man has before him a Being of infinite perfections and pre-eminently worthy of the soul's supreme affections, then will service be a profound pleasure and life a grand success. But in the absence of any such inspiring faith, the Celestial Empire is to-day where it was more than a thousand years ago. "Brahmanism devoted itself to meditation upon the infinite and the eternal: Buddhism considered only the finite and the temporal, particularly the soul and its laws."

(4) The religion of Confucius is superior to that of Buddhism only in the fact that it is a step in advance. It encourages great reverence for the past, and imposes the duty of giving great honor to parents. Like the religion of Greece, it takes a more exalted view of the native dignity of the soul, and the necessity of seeking to bring out its hidden possibilities. In the mind of Confucius this life was everything,

while that which is to come was comparatively nothing. He had great faith in man, but no corresponding faith in God. His life-struggle to develop a noble manhood was eminently worthy of imitation. And the influence of his example and teaching has lifted China into a better civilization, and has thus somewhat prepared it for the coming of a religion which meets the needs of every native power of the soul.

But, like Buddhism, the religion of Confucius lacked the one great fundamental truth without which the highest form of civilization can never be reached. It largely comprehended the nature of the soul and the necessity of obeying its laws; but of the counterpart of that soul, and of the highest law of its being, it was utterly ignorant. It recognized man's power to love, but it presented to him no Supreme Being who was worthy of the soul's highest affection. Love is the ennobling power of the soul, and the child of eternity. But a religion that chains it to time and things of time, and has no food to offer but that which this material world has to give, will exist, if at all, only to give place sooner or later to a religion that will meet all the necessities of the soul in its aspirations after God and immortality.

In looking back through the history of the human race, we shall observe different forms of belief almost *ad infinitum*, and yet all these forms can be classed under two heads, viz., Monotheism (a belief

in one God), and Polytheism (a belief in many gods). Of the present inhabitants of the globe, there are about 500 millions of Monotheists, of whom about 130 millions are Mohammedans, over eight millions are Jews, and about 365 millions are Christians—including Catholics about 190 millions, Greek Church a little less than 75 millions, and Protestants over 100 millions. Of Polytheists there are not less than 600 millions now living on the earth. Of this vast number Buddhism is the religion of over 470 millions, Brahmanism numbers not less than 130 millions, and the Parsees about one million.

In this classification the religion of Confucius is reckoned with that of Buddha. Besides these, there are among the aboriginal tribes scattered over Africa, America, and other parts of the globe, not less than 180 millions whose faith does not arise to the dignity of Polytheism, and whose life is even more degraded.

We must not suppose, however, that because they have not the "gods many" of Polytheism, they have therefore no religion. Their superstition is founded in a belief that a kind of magical power inheres in certain stones, plants, animals, etc. Their religion is termed Fetichism. The fetich is anything in which such magic power inheres. Those best informed as to this lower form of religion which is believed and practiced only by the most degraded tribes of earth, tell us that the first step out of Fetichism is when ignorant tribes cease to be satisfied with believing merely in the magical power

inherent in their fetiches, and begin to ascribe a certain conscious operation to the objects of their reverence, especially to the fetiches in the form of beast or man. In this way the fetich becomes an idol, and fetichism an idolatry. The lowest form of such idolatry is where the savage does not hesitate to throw away, to chastise, or even destroy his fetich, if it does not appear to gratify his desire.

What has been said with reference to the various religions of modern paganism may with even more propriety be said of all the religions of antiquity. Rome in her best days, while she had over four hundred temples crowded with pagan deities, was nevertheless living "without hope and without God." Hence her three million souls, who had given to their deities only such moral character as was suggested by their own depraved nature, were, by their worship, transformed more and more into the image of these monsters, until at last the body-politic gave way under the intolerable weight of its own corruption, and Rome had fallen to rise no more.

Egypt, once the pride of earth and the glory of the seas, knew much of art, science, history, mathematics, and philosophy; but, having no knowledge of a supreme Intelligence of absolute holiness, was led to the worship of beasts. Hence it has been said of the Egyptians that bestiality, the lowest vice to which human nature can descend, was common amongst them. The paintings and sculpture of their divinities, in the mummy catacombs, are for

the most part clusters of beasts, birds, reptiles, and flies, grouped together in the most disgusting and unnatural relations: a true indication that the minds of the worshipers were filled with ideas the most vile and unnatural. With thirty thousand gods, possessing only such character as depravity had to give them, it is not wonderful that the glory of Egypt is a thing of the past.

But certainly enough has been said to impress the reader with the fact that, in the whole survey of heathen religions, there is not a single instance in which human wisdom attained to the knowledge of a god of absolute holiness of character. All have sought after God, and even the most degraded have had some faint conceptions of him. This whole history of religion would seem to be a sure prophecy of a forthcoming revelation.

SECTION (IV).

Hence the necessity of a revealed religion, such as would meet the demands of the soul's nature. If the moral character of a nation or an individual depends wholly upon practical religion, and if the soul's highest possibilities can be reached only by worshipping a being of absolute perfection; if, further, the whole history of pagan religions presents to us no such perfect moral character; and if, finally, a revelation of the true character of God seems from the foregoing to be a necessity, the question of infinite moment is, Has such a revelation been made? This question we proceed to consider.

CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

- (1) The soul is governed by fixed and unalterable law.—(2) Man's highest good depends upon his knowledge and obedience to the laws of his being.—(3) Christianity has made known to man these laws of his moral and spiritual nature, as they are made known nowhere else.

THE Christian religion rests upon a twofold foundation: viz., first, its manifest miracles, and, secondly, its perfect adaptedness to the nature and necessities of the human soul. The first are facts of observation, the second is a fact of experience. In establishing this religion the touchstone of its divinity was its miraculous nature. Christ might have spoken as man never spoke, he might have done all that he is said to have done, he might have died and been buried as we are told, and yet, but for the miracle of his resurrection, Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost would have been entirely fruitless of results. There would never have been a first Jerusalem church, nor can we reasonably suppose that there would ever have been any other. It is this part of the foundation against which infidelity has been hurling its missiles during the ages. But now, at the end of near two thousand years, the "foundation standeth sure."

The question of miracles, however, will be discussed in another part of this work: under this section we wish only to ask attention to the *subjective evidence* of the divinity of the Christian religion. While the miracles of this religion may be regarded as first in the order of proof, they are not first in importance. Were it possible now, after the test which the experience of ages has given it, to remove this part of the foundation, it would still be seen that Christianity rests upon a base firmer than adamantine rock: it lives in the *hearts* of the wisest and best men of the earth.

The senses may be the only avenues by which the mind can reach the outer world; but if the perception of the objective material be once had, then the mind may dispense with the senses, and still not only retain truth, but even, by constructive imagination, may discover new and more important truth. So likewise the objective testimony of Christianity may first challenge our faith, but when the evidence of experience has come observation may cease, and yet the faith grow stronger and stronger by the subjective testimony of a blessed experience. This truth will be clearly illustrated if the following propositions can be maintained:

(1) The soul is governed by fixed and unalterable law.

(2) Man's highest good depends upon his knowledge and obedience to the laws of his being.

(3) Christianity has made known to man these

laws of his moral and spiritual nature, as they are made known nowhere else.

Were it possible to disprove all the external evidences of Christianity and even the remaining part of the internal, yet, if the foregoing propositions be established, the question of divinity of origin is settled once for all. It behoves us, therefore, to examine them severally with the utmost care.

(1) That man has been created, body and soul, subject to fixed laws is a fact which the intelligent will not deny. Experience, if nothing else, has taught us that the thinking, the speaking, and the doing of certain things bring reflections of reproach and mental unrest with the certainty of cause and effect; while, on the other hand, the thinking, saying, and doing of certain other things are equally certain to produce a healthy, strong, and happy state of mind. As certainly as when the body takes a given portion of poison there come sickness and pain, so certainly when the soul violates its sense of right there come remorse, mental weakness, and discontent. "There is no peace unto the wicked" is a fact not of the Bible only, but of bitter experience as well. On the other hand, as surely as food of a given kind and quantity will impart to the physical organism a glow of life and strength, so surely will the spiritual nature be made stronger and happier by observing its sense of right.

(2) These personal experiences as well as observation have fully convinced every thoughtful mind of

the important fact, *that God has made the soul's highest good dependent upon its obedience to both negative and positive law.* And to know what these laws are, and to obey them, is to know all that is necessary to know, and to do all that is necessary to do. Any revelation, therefore, which helps man to understand what these laws are is of God; and any religion which tends to bring him into harmony with the administration of these laws is of divine origin. Man is lost only for the reason that he has put himself out of harmony with the laws of his being. Salvation means nothing less, it can mean nothing more, than the bringing of man back into loving obedience to the divinely established laws of his nature. It is not enough then to have only objective testimony in favor of the divine origin of a given religion: there must be the subjective evidence of a blessed experience going to show that what claims to be revelation does not contradict, but is the counterpart of the native laws of the soul. There can be no real contradiction between the science of the mind and that of revelation.

Religion must stand or fall, not at the bar of a cold intellect, which deals with nothing and can understand nothing but the abstract facts of observation; but the best evidence of its divinity must be found in the subjective test of the soul's experience. Not by external theorizing but by internal knowledge we have learned that faith, hope, and love are as essential to the well-being of the soul as are air,

food, and exercise to the body. Man's richest experience has taught him that the mind is in its normal and most happy condition when by faith it takes hold of its Creator as a benevolent Father, has a well-grounded hope for time and eternity, and has learned to love truth, honesty, gentleness, and Supreme Excellence. As certainly as that the fish was made to swim, the birds to fly, the eye to see, and the ear to hear, so certainly was the soul organized for such faith, hope, and love. Give it these, and it can think well, speak well, act well; and only under the inspiration of these graces which meet the necessities of its nature, can the soul achieve its greatest victory and reach the highest altitude of possibility.

This one fact of man's most sublime experience must forever disprove the popular doctrine of the soul's native total depravity. If such were its nature, its highest attainments and greatest enjoyment would be realized in revelry and debauch. If the soul's nature be unmixed sin, unmixed wickedness must be its native element. But experience and observation have taught us that the nature of the soul is one thing, while that of sin is the exact opposite. The very constitution of the one and the character of the other place them in open antagonism. And in this mortal combat one or the other must die. "The wages of sin is death" is as experimentally as it is biblically true. Experience has taught nothing more absolutely certain than that righteousness is

the normal condition of the soul. Remove it from this its native element and envelop it in wickedness, and as certainly as effect follows cause will its instinctive endowments be destroyed.

Take the fish from the water and place it in the open air, and its destruction is inevitable. Remove the bird from the open atmosphere and plunge it beneath the water, and death is certain. We have no method of determining their intrinsic nature but by ascertaining the conditions upon which they live and enjoy. So likewise we can only know the inherent constitution of the soul by determining the condition of its life, health, strength, and highest happiness. Analogy, philosophy, sense, reason, and revelation all join with united voice to proclaim the precious truth of the soul's native kinship to God. There is no congruity between the exalted nature of the soul and the baseness of sin.

We emphasize the fact that *if the soul's nature be that of "total depravity," then its native element is sin.* But that such supposition is a moral absurdity is clearly seen in the conceded fact that sin wrongs the soul, and if persisted in must inevitably be its destruction. The nature of the human soul has been wofully belittled and slandered by a popular theory which flatly contradicts the facts of mental experience. That there is "depravity" none will deny; but that it is "total" is a conclusion devoid of sound reason.

Notwithstanding the soul's tendencies to evil, the

subjective test of experience has clearly shown that it reaches its highest achievements through the influence of its faith in a Creator of fatherly benevolence, a well-grounded hope for time and eternity, and a love for truth, honesty, gentleness, and Supreme Excellence. That such faith and love are but the counterpart of the soul's nature and necessities is clearly evinced in the fact that man thinks best, speaks best, and acts best, to himself and to his kind, while most under the influence of these graces. Show us the grandest man the world ever saw, and we will point you to the man who lives most in the heavenly atmosphere of faith, hope, and love. Any revelation therefore which shall in any wise make known these native laws of the soul is of God; and any religion the natural tendency of which is to bring man into joyous harmony with the divine administration of these laws must be of divine origin.

(3) *Christianity has made known to man these laws of his moral nature as they are made known nowhere else.* These three steps of logic will present the skeptic with a short method by which he may be relieved of his intolerable burden of doubt. We admire the great labor of such men as the Hon. Robert Boyle, who, finding himself in the dark and cheerless region of skepticism, determined to have light if light was to be found. Being a man of profound learning, he is said to have translated fifty different languages that he might examine the evi-

dences for and against the divinity of the religion of Christ. After much prayer and great study, he emerged from that gloomy and dejected region of doubt into the bright sunlight of Gospel truth, and came to be a mighty man for God and humanity. Many have been brought to see the truth of that divine expression, "I am the light of the world," all the more clearly by first looking out into the darkness of infidelity. They "met the specter of their doubts, and laid them."

(a) *Infidelity is largely a system of negations and contradictions.* While it proposes to undermine the temple of the world's faith and hope, it offers nothing as a substitute but confusion and despair. Hume of England, noted for his clearness as a historian and his bewilderment as a philosopher and skeptic, is reported to have said, "I seem affrighted and confounded with the solitude in which I am placed by my philosophy. When I look abroad I see on every side dispute, contradiction, and distraction. When I turn my eye inward, I find nothing but doubt and ignorance. Where am I? or what am I? From what cause do I derive my existence? I am confounded with questions. I begin to fancy myself in a very deplorable condition, environed with darkness on every side." Having advocated a negative philosophy which sought the destruction of all religion, the great skeptic was left in the pitiable condition of living a life of death, in that he was "without hope and without God."

The positive side of Voltaire, if he had any, was never able to assert itself. In his great life-work nothing but the angel of destruction put in an appearance. Having sown the wind he was doomed to reap the whirlwind, as may be seen in his reported words, "The world abounds with wonders, also with victims. In man is more wretchedness than in all other animals put together. Man loves life, yet he knows he must die: spends his existence in diffusing the miseries he has suffered, cutting the throats of his fellow-creatures for pay, cheating and being cheated. The bulk of mankind are nothing more than a crowd of wretches, equally criminal, equally unfortunate. I wish I had never been born." Having deprived the soul of its native heirship to the arm of faith, the anchor of hope, and the life of love, it is not wonderful that in the agony of his despair he exclaimed, "I wish I had never been born."

Infidelity is not only a system of *negations*, but it is full of *contradictions*. A careful study of deism from its beginning until now will show that the arguments of one deist have been contradicted by those of another. While Celsus, the first infidel writer, granted that Christ possessed miraculous power and that it was imbecile to deny it, Hume, in his arguments against miracles, declares that to grant the miraculous power of Christ and then deny his divinity is a conclusion devoid of all reason. In Germany, the hot-bed of infidelity, Hegelianism has been the prototype of many schools and theo-

ries of antagonism. The skepticism of one school has been successfully contradicted by that of another. So that Christianity can well afford to leave them to settle their own disputes, in the hope that Germany will yet come to herself. Nor have the infidels of England and France been any more successful in uniting upon a common ground of attack. They seem to be at sea without rudder or compass or chart, with but little ballast and an immense amount of sail. Such an incongruous theory of negations and contradictions may well be left to the methods of its own destruction.

(b) *Infidelity as an apology for a bad life.* Men not only become "wise above what is written," but they often desire a liberty of life which Christianity will not allow. "I came not to send peace but a sword," said the divine Lawgiver. His mission was to array truth, righteousness, virtue, and benevolence against falsehood, wickedness, libertinism, and selfishness. This spiritual war is the "irrepressible conflict," which shall know no peace until Christ's kingdom of righteousness shall celebrate its own glorious victory in the world's grand jubilee of redemption. As the conditions of peace on the divine side are "unconditional surrender," the human side, desiring a liberty of life which Christianity will not grant, finds it necessary to renounce the religion of Christ. As light comes to dissipate darkness and asks no pardon for its coming, so Christianity proposes no compromise with sin in

any form. If a man commits a crime, however atrocious, he must needs offer some sickening excuse for the outrage. So men desiring a life of unrestrained passion and selfishness offer many excuses at the bar of public sentiment, among which a certain class present their infidelity as an apology. But the native necessities of the soul will usually assert themselves, and before entering the shadowy valley the *insincerity* of their professed infidelity is discovered, and left as the only legacy of hope in their behalf.

What can a world lying in sin and consequent wretchedness hope from infidelity? It builds and endows no asylums for the insane, the blind, and the helpless poor. It erects no churches, the grand mission of which is to counteract the degrading influence of rum, rowdyism, and rascality. It sends no missionaries to heathen lands to give them the benefit of schools, colleges, and all the blessings of Christian civilization: it does none of these things; but when urged to assist in building up these institutions, the sublime mission of which is to elevate our race and glorify God, it apologizes for its selfishness by offering at the bar of public sentiment the poor excuse of unbelief.

(c) *Infidelity is ignorant of the subject it proposes to discuss.* In another part of this work we have sought to show that the infidel, at best, is only half competent to sit in judgment on the truths of Christianity; and this for two obvious reasons:

First, Christ came not to present the facts of abstract science, but to reveal spiritual truth, much of which comes only in the purview of human *experience*. If discerned at all, it must be through the spiritual vision of the inner life of the soul. Secondly, the infidel makes no claim to any such spiritual insight. He may be fully capable of examining and understanding the external or the objective testimony of Christianity, but of the internal or subjective evidence he knows nothing and can know nothing until he has obeyed the divine injunction, "Keep my commandments." His testimony is wholly one-sided, and hence wholly unreliable. Sir Isaac Newton was once a great skeptic. Being a mathematician and a philosopher, he came to Christianity demanding a mathematical certainty. But while such certainty was impossible in the nature of things, by earnest seeking he obtained an experimental knowledge which he no more doubted than he questioned the truths of mathematics. This great scientist knew that no man, however learned, was a competent witness for or against Christianity until he was in possession of the knowledge of experience. We are told that Dr. Halley was once talking infidelity in his presence, when Newton replied, "Dr. Halley, I am always glad to hear you when you speak about astronomy or other parts of mathematics, because that is a subject which you have studied and well understand; but you should not talk of Christianity, for you have

not studied it. I have; and I am certain that you know nothing about the matter." Good government, science, morality, and religion have received nothing and hope for nothing at the hand of infidelity: the only conceivable good that can come of it is, that it may excite the spirit of honest investigation, and men after peering for a time into its darkness may turn to Christianity to enjoy its light all the more.

Having said so much of the nature and necessities of the soul, we need only to turn to Christianity to find a counterpart both of that nature and those necessities. The absolute divinity of the Christian religion may be seen by analogy. A careful study of the science of the mind, and the laws under which it reaches its highest possible achievement, together with an experimental knowledge of the requirements of Christianity, will show by their marked analogy that the Creator of the soul is the Author of the Christian religion. External testimony may be so far convincing as to lead to faith, but experience leads to knowledge. While faith may sometimes tremble doubtfully in the balance, knowledge is certainty itself. We may doubt even what we see and hear, but experience removes all cavil. The difference between objective and subjective testimony is the difference between faith and knowledge, between what we *believe* and what we *know*. Faith may be necessary to bring us to God, but the knowledge of experience is the result of our coming.

Christ only asked the world for faith enough to make the subjective test. He said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself:" thus clearly showing that he submitted the question of the divinity of his religion not to the evidence of observation, but to the test of experimental knowledge. And the beloved disciple understood this subjective test when he said, "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments."

Nor do men of honesty and intelligence call in question the divine origin and helpfulness of the Christian religion, when they observe its requirements illustrated in the lives of good men. It is only when the human imperfections and shortcomings of its professors are brought to the bar that it is condemned. It is thus that Christianity has suffered more in the house of its pretended friends than it has in that of its avowed enemies. Hypocritical pretension under the cloak of sanctified indulgence has been and now is an intolerable burden with which Christianity has been too long weighed down. If the world of professing Christians could be brought to practice the precepts of Jesus, and to manifest his spirit,—the noblest that ever animated human heart, the spirit of love to God and to universal man,—there would come an inspiration which would bring to intelligent skepticism the blush of shame and everlasting contempt.

Nor is there any justice in trying the Christian

religion at the bar of wickedness. Mohammedanism should not be condemned in the court of a community which manifested no faith in the Koran and exhibited none of the life and spirit of Mohammed, however much they might pretend to be his disciples. Neither should Christianity be censured at the bar of society on account of conduct of professors of it, however orthodox in theory they may be, which reveals no practical faith in the Gospel of *good-will*, and illustrates in their daily walk and conversation none of the life and spirit of Jesus. If Christianity be tried upon its own merits, and not upon what men think, say, or do, it will not only stand the test, but it will appear as the "religion of universal unity," destined to swallow up the good of all religions, and eliminate all of evil, and thus unite all hearts in fraternity of universal brotherhood, and bind them back to the great Father that he may be all and in all.

If then the infidel would emerge from the dark and cheerless region of doubt into the joyous light of gospel truth, he need only adopt the short method of turning his thoughts inward and learning the deep, native necessities of his soul, and then, committing himself to the faith and life demanded by the Christian religion, learn by experience that those necessities are therein fully met. Whether we are in the church or out of it, such is the nature of the soul that the fundamental principles of Christianity

must be practically observed if life is to be made a success, death a triumph, and heaven a reality.

And it may be observed that man is under *negative* as well as positive law. He cannot lie, steal, or murder without doing an irreparable wrong to his soul. Strict obedience to these negative laws is an imperative duty which every man owes to himself, though touching these requirements the Bible were as silent as the grave. These are obligations imposed, not because of the written word, but because they were incorporated in the nature of the soul long before they were revealed in a book.

The point we wish to make is, that every prohibitory law of general application recorded in the Sacred Scriptures was first written in the nature of the soul. Theft, robbery, etc., are wrong, not because they are prohibited in the Bible, but rather they are condemned in the Bible because they were wrong in the nature of the soul. This one truth of observation and experience is evidence of the fact that the Creator of man is the Author of the negative laws of the revealed code which are found to be the counterpart of man's nature. Even if atheism were to achieve its long-desired but fruitless victory of convincing itself that there is no God, no devil, no heaven, no hell, no immortality, "no nothing," yet, as long as the human soul retains its nature, it is in duty bound, for its own sake, to obey the prohibitory statutes of the Bible.

But the soul is also under *positive* law, the duplicate of which is found in the Christian religion.

(a) A study of mental science, founded upon observation and experience, will discover to us the necessity of *faith*. Faith is *the soul's confidence founded upon evidence*—the mind's assent to a proposition on the ground of testimony. Whether this faith be strengthening and joyous or otherwise is determined by its object. For example: If a man is about to set sail from New York to Liverpool, and has reason to believe that he will have, contrary to his desires, a tempestuous and perilous voyage, then by so much will his soul be weakened and discouraged; but, on the other hand, if he has reason to believe, as he desires, that his voyage will be pleasant and his arrival safe, his soul is strengthened by emotions of pleasure.

If the soul is to be nerved to daring deeds, it must have faith in the possibility of success. But for such faith, man would never fell the forest, plow the ground, sow the seed, and till the soil. But for such faith, we could build no houses and barns, plant no orchards, and rear no beautiful homes. But for such faith, there had been no companies organized for the purpose of exploring the mines of earth and bringing up the wealth which a benevolent Providence had hid away for the coming man; there had been no ships to plow the seas, railroads to cross the continents, and submerged cables to connect the old and new worlds. But

for such faith, communities had built no school-houses, churches, asylums, nor had there been any of the multiplied manifestations of Christian civilization. In short, but for such faith, there had been no such thing as doing.

And it may be observed that the soul's strength and happiness are in the ratio of its faith, desire, and expectation. It is through the strongest expectation of the object of his greatest craving that man reaches his highest possibility of achievement in strength and blessedness. As the soul in its aspirations goes out for eternity, as is proven by the history of mankind, it follows that its deepest necessities cannot be met by its faith in the things of time. Its greatest strength and blessedness are born of its faith in a Creator of fatherly benevolence, who holds out for his children the riches of eternity. The strength of such faith, other things being equal, is the measure of the soul's power to think, to do, to dare, and to enjoy. Look back over the world of great men who have done most in the discovery of true science, in the establishment of a system of ethics such as would enhance the interest and happiness of mankind, in personal labors and sacrifices for truth and righteousness, and you will behold an army of men who had the strongest faith in a God of fatherly love. The individual and the nation have reached their zenith of glory through the inspiration of such exalting confidence.

This faith, then, the sublimest of all which the soul

can obtain, is the only assurance which can inspire the greatest strength, courage, and happiness, and thus meet the gravest necessities of the soul. This highest requirement of man's nature can only be found in the Christian religion. You will search the great religions of the world in vain to find the lofty thought of the "Fatherhood of God, and the universal brotherhood of man." This sublime revelation was not made through the world's wisdom, but by the divine knowledge of Him who spoke as man never spoke. It is the worship of this holy One that transforms the soul into the likeness of his superlative glory. He, therefore, who has none of this faith lacks the richest experience possible to man, and, in the language of the immortal Newton, he "knows nothing about the matter."

(b) *Mental philosophy discovers to us the soul's native need of HOPE.* As faith is the mind's confidence founded on evidence, so hope is its *expectation* and *desire*. While faith is the mind's assent to a proposition because of testimony, and takes hold of things present and past as well as things to come, hope looks only to the future with expectant desire of coming good. In the absence of such expectation and desire man could put forth no intelligent effort. Outside of that which is purely mechanical hope is the mainspring to all human action. Only let the last spark of hope be removed from the mind, and the night of despair will begin in which there is no

inspiration, no courage, no happiness, nothing but the gloom of an endless night.

The soul may put forth goodly effort because of hope which relates to this life. A man may exhibit great energy, and even enjoy much, on the expectation and desire of continued life and worldly prosperity. In the hope of acquiring knowledge and fame and enjoying earthly pleasures, man may do wonders and be at comparative peace with himself. But as certainly as the heavens are higher than the earth, so certainly there is a more exalted hope for the soul made for eternity than any that time can offer. Besides, there is coming a time when all these earthly expectations will be dissipated. Now we may hope for life, health, material wealth and worldly fame; but soon these hopes, which relate to time, will leave the soul, and that, too, in the hour of its greatest need. It was the approach of this dread hour that caused Hume to exclaim, "I begin to fancy myself in a very deplorable condition, environed with darkness on every side." Why not? The soul, summoned to drop every earthly hope and pass down through the cold, dark, and cheerless valley, without a ray of light from the great beyond shooting up from the horizon, is in despair too intolerable even for the heathen to endure, much more for one who has deliberately chosen darkness rather than light. So the whole history of our race furnishes but few examples of men dying without a hope which survived all earthly expectations.

But this instinctive hope is not sufficient for the solemn hour of death. The soul's greatest need in this most trying experience is an expectation, well founded and clearly defined, which may serve "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." This deep necessity of the soul cannot be met by science, morals, philosophy, or any or all of the great religions of the world outside of Christianity, nor by anything which this world has to offer. Only in the Gospel have life and immortality been brought to light. That the Christian religion inspires the soul with this well-grounded hope, whether in wealth or poverty, health or sickness, life or even in the awful hour of dissolution, is a truth which has been attested in the blessed experience of untold thousands of the wisest and best men of earth. And this most precious hope rests not on any one, or any portion of the facts connected with the marvelous history of Jesus, but upon the solid foundation of *all* that he said, *all* that he did, *all* that he was in his life, death, resurrection, and glorious ascension.

(c) Nor is it enough to have *faith* and *hope*: the soul's greatest necessity is *love*. As a matter of fact in the experience of every man the soul enjoys only what it loves. And the nature and extent of this love are the measure of its happiness. If it loves nothing it enjoys nothing. If the object of its love be of the baser sort, then its happiness will be of low character. He who loves nothing but the

objects of sense has a happiness only akin to that of the lower animals.

This leads us to remark that man's emotional nature is affected in two ways, namely, by sensation and reflection. The soul may have pleasurable emotions through its love for the objects of sense. But the enjoyment that comes of what we see, hear, taste, etc., is not the highest happiness of which man is capable. This may be seen in the fact that these pleasurable emotions arising from sense do not represent the state of mind with which man is best satisfied in health or sickness, in life or death, and under all the environments with which he may be surrounded. There is another love and another satisfaction, as we shall see, which are as far above these sensational pleasures as man is above the beast.

Besides, the happiness which comes of sensation belongs, as suggested, to the lower order of animals as well as to man. The horse has pleasurable emotions, arising from the love which he has for what he sees, hears, tastes, etc. And alas! the poor horse often has very unpleasurable emotions, because of what he dislikes and fears but is obliged to experience. It may be observed that many men of comparative intelligence live in the sensual world, and while through their power of reflection they learn more of wretchedness, they know no more of the soul's richest happiness than does the beast of the field. Living in the sensual world, they live like a

beast and die like a beast. The mind's possible peace, which is deep like a river and deepens and widens as it flows on toward that great ocean of peace in the home of eternity, comes not through the senses, but from the love born of reflection. Just here is the line which separates between the man and the brute.

The human mind reflects more or less, whether it will or not, upon the past, present, and future ; and the result of this reflection is its heaven or hell. Man meditates upon the relation he sustains to himself, and comprehends somewhat his obligations to love and obey his sense of right. This is a personal duty which he would owe to himself though there were not another man in the universe. In the light of Christianity he reflects upon his kinship to his fellows and the consequent obligation of being and doing to all men as he would they should do to him. Nor does reflection stop here ; but under the influence of Christian revelation he ponders upon his relationship to an infinite Creator of fatherly benevolence, and his consequent duty of giving to that Creator a loving heart and an obedient life. Such reflections are the native possibilities of the human soul, and when brought into play they lift man into the highest altitude of joy and glory.

And further, the spiritually-minded man, who has learned to love these sacred relations and the highest obligations which grow out of them, has a happiness of blessed experience which the sensual

man knows nothing of. It is a matter of experimental knowledge, that the state of mind with which the soul is best satisfied at all times and under all the environments of its earthly life comes of that conscious love for supreme excellence which has been revealed in the paternal character of its Creator. As such love is the soul's highest possibility, so it is its first privilege, greatest obligation, and hence its native element. Nowhere in the wide universe has such love been revealed but in the religion of Jesus Christ. And it is the piety of faith, the worship of love toward this Being of supreme excellence, that transforms the devout soul into the divine likeness, and makes it an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ.

In the foregoing chapters we have sought to show (1) that the human soul is made for religion, as certainly as the eye is made for light; (2) that this natural, inborn religion has manifested itself in deifying some being or beings, giving to it or them moral character, and then offering the sacrifice of personal devotion; (3) that such loving consecration transforms the worshiper into the moral image of the being or beings thus worshiped, in the ratio of the strength of his faith and the intensity of his veneration; (4) that if the soul is to reach its highest happiness and superlative glory, it must have before its vision a Being infinite in his attribute of holiness, to whom with implicit faith it may offer its loving sacrifice; (5) that in the whole

broad range of heathen mythology we search in vain for a religion that offers to its devotees a Being of such absolute holiness of character; (6) that the Christian religion lays its claim to the faith and loving consecration of the world in that it offers for their worship a Being of infinite perfection in all his glorious attributes of wisdom, power, and universal benevolence; (7) that the Creator of the human soul is the Author of this religion may be clearly seen in the fact that it exactly meets the soul's native necessities for the highest possible *faith, hope, and love*, and thus inspires it to think well, speak well, and act well its part in the great drama of life, and imparts to it the condition of existence with which it is best satisfied in circumstances prosperous or adverse, in health or sickness, in life or death. It must be obvious to every reflecting mind that in all this matter reason and revelation go hand in hand, and that the pressing duty of every man is to "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all else will be added."

PART II.

THE BIBLE.

PREFATORY.

(1) * “IN the beginning” [*ἐν ἀρχῇ*—in the indefinite past] God manifested his thought in the things which he created. As the picture is first in the mind of the artist, and then upon the canvas as an illustration of the previous thought, so likewise the world and the fullness thereof, together with all the laws by which they were to be governed, were first in the mind of God, then assumed form when creation was an accomplished fact.

(2) This revelation of thought in the beginning was identical with the Creator, so that to understand the manifestation of God's thinking is to know Him who thought. The thought was with God: the thought was God's.

(3) There were no creative wisdom and power from the beginning of creation until now, save of God.

(4) All life was in the Infinite; and that life, manifesting itself in the things which were created and

* We introduce this part of our discussion by a paraphrase, giving as we believe the true interpretation of the proem to the Gospel according to John,—a grand utterance, but of difficult and doubtful meaning, for it has been the stumbling block of critics and commentators of all schools and of all ages—John i: 1-14.

the laws by which they were governed, was the only guiding light of man

(5) That manifestation of the character, attributes, and will of the Creator was shining through the twilight of nature; but the moral and spiritual darkness of the minds of men were not able to comprehend the life and light of God thus divinely shining.

(6) As preparatory, therefore, to a clearer manifestation of the thoughts and will of God, one was sent to explain the light of God's life and will as indicated in the things which he had made. More than all the prophets that had gone before him, John the Forerunner looked into the text-book of nature, especially as written in the human soul, and so enforced the law and will of God as therein written as to lead multitudes to repentance. Truly might Jesus say, "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist."

(7) He came as a witness to this light of life, thus embodied by the creative hand of God in the laws of nature and of the human soul, as well as shadowed forth in the older revelation, and had fulfilled his mission when he had so testified to them that all who possessed a teachable spirit "might believe."

(8) He made no pretensions save that of proclaiming the will of God as manifest in the light of creation.

(9) God's life, which thus shines in nature and especially in the human soul, is the light which more

or less enlighteneth every man who cometh into the world.

(10) Though God had revealed his thoughts and purposes concerning men in the soul and in the world which he had made, yet the blinded condition of man failed to clearly comprehend the revelation. While the great Father spoke of his character and will to all the children of men, and while many were led into heathenish darkness because of spiritual blindness consequent upon sin, there were some who came to a knowledge of God and who by faith were made his spiritual heirs.

(11) God came to his own people, the Jews, in the person of this great preacher, preaching repentance; but they as a nation rejected the light.

(12) But those of the Jews who believed his preaching and repented of their sins were adopted into the family of God as his children.

(13) Thus some of the Jews were prepared for the coming of Him who is the fulfillment of all prophecy and the end of all revelation, not because of their nationality, but because of the incoming Spirit of God.

(14) In the fullness of time, the manifestation of thought and will, which God had made in nature and in the commonwealth of the soul, but which the darkness of the human mind failed to comprehend, was "made flesh and dwelt among us." Christ revealed the character, attributes, and will of God so clearly that none need be ignorant of their duty and destiny.

John begins this prelude to gospel history, as did Moses, with the old book of nature; and in his line of thought takes in John the Baptist, the connecting link between Judaism and Christianity, and thus, by coherency of thought, is led to Christ whose marvelous life he proposes to give. He clearly recognizes the philosophical fact that God, having endowed man with the faculty of reason, spoke to him in physical nature, providence, and especially in the nature of the soul, as to his character and will. Paul has corroborated John's prefatory suggestions: "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore, God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen." (Romans i: 20-25.)

CHAPTER V.

MISCELLANEOUS AND INTRODUCTORY.

(1) Importance of thorough investigation.—(2) Difficulties of the Bible analogous to those of nature.—(3) These difficulties will be lessened by properly classifying the composition of the Bible.—(4) Original manuscripts.

REVELATION therefore means nothing less, it can mean nothing more, than making plain the suggestions of nature. There is not a truth in the Bible relating to God, duty or destiny, which is not intimated in the things which the Infinite has created. Everything which the hand of God has touched bears the impress of the divine. The soul made in the image of God is a divine commonwealth of heavenly pattern. If then we study the Bible as an interpreter of the thought of God as suggested in nature and the human soul, its divine origin will be made manifest. If reason and revelation are seen to go hand in hand, the Maker of the one must be the Author of the other.

(1) The importance of this investigation cannot be overestimated. If out of the world's darkness God has uttered a clear and unmistakable voice in the Bible, it is man's first privilege and highest duty to know that fact. Moreover, if we would find the truth touching this subject of infinite moment, we must recognize at the outset that the question of

the divine origin of the Bible is a two-sided question. In ages past, as well as now, thoughtful men have been in dispute about it. We are not at liberty to accept without criticism the testimony of the friends of the Bible, and unceremoniously ignore the arguments of its enemies. Such *ex-parte* testimony must of necessity lead to a one-sided conclusion. We shall best serve the truth by obeying the injunction, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

In this age of intense mental activity and freedom of thought, when infidelity is aggressive and defiant, the minister is poorly qualified for the duties of his sacred office who has simply studied what has been said by orthodoxy, but is utterly ignorant of the arguments of heterodoxy.

Moreover, to accept the Bible as God's revelation on the ground of any such one-sided testimony is not only to rob the soul of its divine right, the benefit of honest investigation, but it is also to do an irreparable wrong to the cause of truth. In the economy of infinite wisdom, all truth, whether scientific, moral, or religious, seems to have been hid away in secret chambers, and that, too, with a benevolent design to the good of man. Wisdom has thus adapted its work to the soul's native powers of discovery. So man's effort at finding the truth results in the twofold good of discovery and development. Truth discovered is the soul's enlargement. But we defeat the end of both discovery and devel-

opment by *ex parte* investigation, and much more by superstitiously accepting a proposition without even an effort to give a reason for the hope that is in us.

For this reason the Bible has more to fear from its over-credulous friends than it has from its most avowed enemies. Excessive credulity has been and is now the greatest enemy the Bible ever had. For instance, to claim for the Bible *verbal* inspiration,—a thing which it never claimed for itself,—is so contrary to sound reason that many intelligent men have been driven either into skepticism or into a state of utter indifference. To seek to maintain such faith, or rather such superstition, is to ignore intelligent research and reverse the wheels of Bible truth. The light of the Church well-nigh went out and the dark ages intervened, only for the reason that honest investigation of religious truth had ceased. While the pulpit contented itself with Latin mummery, and the pew opened its ears wide to the masked buffoonery of priestcraft, the Bible was becoming more and more nearly extinct. And but for those few clear-headed and warm-hearted Waldenses, who with Bible in hand sought refuge in the mountains of Piedmont, the world would have been robbed of that revelation which to be valued needs only to be studied.

Luther's protest was not only against the usurpation of popish presumption, but was equally hurled at the stupid credulity which allowed the Bible to

be taken out of the hands of the common people. The grand mission of Protestantism has been and is now many-sided; but the great secret of that power by which it has turned the world upside down is its stern and unflinching advocacy of the individual right and duty of every man to "search the Scriptures." This honest and thorough searching, so far from destroying the sacred record, has resulted in translating and publishing the Bible into over two hundred and fifty different languages and scattering it like autumn leaves over all the earth. When investigation ceases the light of the Bible goes out.

We only voice the truth of history when we aver that the more thorough the research of religious truth has been the more fully has the Bible been vindicated. This fact carries with it a twofold conviction: first, that the Bible, in the main, must be true, for the reason that nothing but truth can endure the light of an honest and most searching investigation. The light of true science will dissipate the darkness of every false religion. And, second, that, while infidelity has purposed the overthrow of the Bible, it has been so overruled as to contribute largely to its firm establishment and circulation, by exciting the spirit of most thorough and scholarly criticism. The infidelity of Germany, France, and England has stirred all Europe and America with a spirit of investigation which has led to a searching after truth, the measure of which is the scholarship of the nine-

teenth century. But for the philosophy of Hegel, which after his death was distorted into pantheism and many forms of infidelity, Germany would have become a stagnant pool of superstition, worse, if may be, than the legends of heathen mythology. The nightmare of a stupid credulity which had settled down upon it was in the providence of God to be dissipated through the instrumentality of the adverse criticism of one school of the disciples of Hegel, who were the progenitors of the varied forms of German infidelity. Hegelianism developed in the "Tübingen school" full-fledged deism; and even atheism not only stirred this pool of mental stupidity by breaking the fetters of superstition, but it has been instrumental in calling to the front a host of scholars who have filled all Europe and America with a flood of Gospel light. This irrepressible conflict of religious thought, which for more than a half-century has stirred the old and new worlds to their very center, has forcibly illustrated the truth of the adage "Truth is mighty and must prevail."

The scholarly skepticism of Hume, on the "incredibility of miracles" has given the world the benefit of the masterly reviews of such men as Drs. Paley, Campbell, and Palfrey.

And even Voltaire's blatant infidelity has served the good purpose of breaking the chains which popes, cardinals, and priests had forged, and with which France was bound hand and foot. It has provoked the liberty-loving spirit which defies the

popish bulls and priestly authorities, and asserts its inalienable right to "search the Scriptures" for itself. And though individuals and even churches may go down in the fearful conflict, the Bible has nothing to fear from the assaults of skepticism and infidelity so long as they tend to excite the spirit of sound learning and the most searching, honest, and intelligent investigation.

That school-teacher may be a good one who can explain and amplify science, but he is a better one who can excite the spirit of honest investigation; for such effort is attended with the twofold good of finding the truth and, what is better, of unfolding the powers of the mind.

When the pulpit shall cease to wrangle over disputed theology while infidelity chuckles at its folly, and shall seek with the same earnest enthusiasm to excite in the pew the spirit of honest inquiry after truth, then will skepticism retreat and infidelity hide itself.

The question is not, "Is the Bible a revelation from God?" but rather, "Does the Bible contain a revelation from the Infinite Father sufficient to save the lost race?" This, in this age of enlightened reason, we apprehend to be the question of all unbiased and intelligent men who have the courage of their honest convictions. And this is the question which we shall seek to solve. We can well afford to allow the accumulated chaff to be blown away, if only the wheat can be gathered into the garner. If

need be, let the process of elimination go on until the voice of God is unmistakably heard.

(2) The difficulties of Bible interpretation have been urged as an objection to its divinity of origin. The common people have thought that if God had uttered his voice there had been no uncertain sound. Had Infinite Wisdom made a revelation to finite mind, it would have been so clear and unmistakable that all would have fully comprehended it and all had been of one mind as to its meaning. But exactly the reverse is the case. There are many things in the Bible which are not only hard to be understood by those who are unlearned, but of which even the wisest men of the Church confess their ignorance. Besides, many passages which scholarly men pretend to understand are still in open dispute among them. While one whose life has been devoted to the study of this marvelous book has deliberately concluded that salvation depends upon the believing of certain doctrines and the obeying of certain precepts, another equally learned has come to very different conclusions. In the presence of such contradiction, difficulty, and doubtfulness of interpretation, sense and reason have often hesitated to accept the Bible as of divine appointment! As the written book seems too high to be reached, too deep to be fathomed, and too broad to be comprehended by finite mind, it hardly appears reasonable to many that an utterance of Heaven would be so hard to understand.

But honest investigation in the light of analogy will show that such depths, heights, and breadths of utterance are characteristic of God. That the old book of Nature contains a divine revelation none will question. Where else can we learn of the Omniscience, Omnipotence, and Omnipresence of the Infinite? And yet God has written on every page of this old book much of truth which the wisest have failed to understand. Besides, many things which scientists profess to understand are in doubt and dispute. While much has been learned of Astronomy, Geology, Mineralogy, Botany, Philosophy, etc., how little of it all is understood as compared with what is yet to be learned! The task of finding out God in nature seems to be endless, and is suggestive of an eternity of progressive work. It must be apparent to the thoughtful mind that the difficulties of finding out the moral character of God in the Bible are quite analogous to those of ascertaining his natural attributes as revealed in nature. Nor does the analogy stop here. While God comes to us in the old book with truth of simplest form and then stretches out far beyond our grasp, so in the Bible he stoops to meet the capacity of the weakest mind and then ascends to satisfy the aspirations and excite the further investigation of the most giant intellect. The Bible, like science, has to do with time and eternity.

Nor do we find any invincible difficulty in understanding the one or the other enough for all practi-

cal purposes. While science goes beyond our grasp, we know enough to plow the ground, sow the seed, till the soil, reap the harvest, and so to utilize the forces of nature as to meet the necessities of our being. And certainly the man who refuses to act upon such knowledge, except for the reason that there is much in nature which he cannot comprehend, is a fit subject to be kept at the expense of the state or allowed to starve. So, while the Bible contains much, especially in matters of doctrine, which even those richest in Biblical lore little understand, still those of honest purpose and teachable spirit, however illiterate, will find no invincible difficulty in learning enough of God and man and the duties of honesty, truthfulness, and love, to be saved now and forever. And he that refuses to act upon the practical truth which may be easily understood, because there is much of doctrine which he does not understand, exercises no practical good sense, and must live and die without the Christian hope. Besides, such is the providence of God that we can only hope to enjoy the greater spiritual insight of the Bible truth by obeying that which we already understand. It must be apparent to the intelligent reader that this, so far from being an objection to the divine origin of the Bible, is evidence in its favor.

Nor is the task of interpreting the Bible for practical purposes as great as that of reconciling the discrepancy of pretended interpretations. An old man

of whom we have read, who for many years enjoyed reading the sacred Scriptures, which had been a "lamp to his feet and a light to his path," unfortunately came across a book which attempted to explain what one must believe and do in order to be saved. Soon he met with another book which gave quite a different account of the matter. He was induced to take down a list of their hard words and learned phrases to see what the Bible said of them. But, to his surprise, he could not find any of these high-sounding words and scholastic phrases in the book. "Nor," said he, "did I find half the difficulty in understanding the Bible that I did in trying to harmonize their pretended explanations. The fools are fighting about their own fictions; I will leave their polluted streams and return to the fountain." He who comes to the Bible to learn his duty will find no insuperable difficulty. But for the human efforts at explaining and defining just what a man should believe,—touching the disputed doctrines of Trinity in Unity, Vicarious Atonement, Total Depravity, Absolute Election, Free Grace, Water Baptism, this way, that way, or no way,—but for self-constituted dictators as to what was necessary to be believed on these points of systematic theology, which none have been able to settle,—there had been no practical difficulty in understanding enough for all purposes of usefulness. Every effort at dogmatizing on subjects of disputed theology has been a hinderance to the Gospel, hurtful to man-

kind, and a disgrace to Christianity. In the name of the "liberty wherewith Christ has made us free," let the Church arise to the situation and earnestly protest against the spirit of ecclesiastical dictation. Seek to "edify one another," and then leave each free to think as God may help him to think.

(3) The free and honest student of the Bible will be greatly helped by a proper classification of its composition. The popular doctrine of "Verbal Inspiration" precludes the privilege and obvious duty of discriminating between the various parts of the Bible. If God inspired each word from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, it is presumption to claim that the Gospels are better authority than the "Song of Solomon," or that one part of the New Testament is preferable to another. Besides, on starting out with such an assumption, simple consistency precludes the right of allowing that one of the sacred authors is preferable to another. If each word recorded in the Book of Ruth was put into the mind of the author by the Almighty, who dare say that Ruth in her utterance was not equal to Jesus? With an assumption so out of keeping with sense and reason, who may presume to discriminate in favor of Moses, John, Paul, and Christ, as against Job, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah?

If we can get from under the nightmare of superstition, and read the Bible in the light of reason, we shall clearly observe that it is a book of History,

Biography, Law, Poetry, Prophecy, and of Revelation. This view of the Bible will relieve it of an intolerable burden which credulity has put upon it. Besides, that part of the sacred book which may thus be taken as of absolute divinity of origin will appear all the more beautiful in comparison with those parts of the Bible which relate only to History, Biography, etc., much of which can be recorded without divine interposition. This will be shown in the following chapters.

(4) However much we may be interested in the Old Testament, it is proper to observe that our special attention will be given to the New. We are not so much interested in the past as in the present, and care less to know the divine methods adapted to the conditions of the Jews than we do to understand the heavenly message given by Him who has abolished the old and established a new dispensation. In the task of proving that the New Testament contains a revelation from God, the logic of events carries us back to the Apostles, who heard the wonderful words and witnessed the marvelous life and works of Jesus.

It is no part of our purpose, however, to enter into a detailed account of the origin, antiquity, and genuineness of the various manuscripts which have been carefully collected and collated, and from which our present sacred canon of scriptures has been compiled. The Biblical student who has the time and disposition to enter into an investigation of this

whole subject is referred to such exhaustive treatises as Horne's "Introduction," Stowe's "Origin and History of the Books of the Bible," or to the works of Professor Tischendorf, or Westcott and Hort, or others who have written elaborately on the subject. The object of our task will be more easily served by simply calling attention to the following facts connected with the question of original MSS., viz. :

(1) The manuscripts of the New Testament as first written by the Apostles or by their amanuenses have long since perished. The most scholarly research has not been able to find any manuscript of earlier date than the third or fourth century. Some of these oldest manuscripts contain the whole of the New Testament, while others contain only parts, and all show the ravages of time. The fact that the first manuscripts, written by the Apostles themselves, have all perished would seem to affect the authenticity and genuineness of the sacred record; but it is only seemingly so, as will be seen by a careful consideration of the following facts :

(2) While human language is as old as our race, we may readily believe that the art of writing was not given till a later time. But for the divine gift of language of some kind, our first parents would not have been able to communicate their thoughts, and thus would have been left in a worse condition than the animal kingdom. Later on, when communities were organized, and the first generations began to pass away, chirography of some kind became

a necessity. But for the art of writing, the most of human history would have gone down into a hopeless chasm. But while the art of writing, in some form, is reasonably supposed to have been known in very ancient time, the art of printing was not known until the fifteenth century. The first copies of our Bible were written on perishable material prepared from the bark or wood of trees; but copies were made from time to time, for separate churches, until about the fourth century they began to be written on parchment, strong and durable, made from the skins of animals. Thus it was that for more than fifteen hundred years our present canon of scriptures was sacredly and safely kept.

(3) About seventeen hundred of these manuscripts of the New Testament, or parts thereof, have been gathered from the different parts of the world, copied by different persons, remote from each other and at widely different ages of the Church.

(4) The most ancient manuscripts were written in capital letters, without division, punctuation, accents, or anything of the kind,—simply on straight lines, with not even a space between words. Punctuation and accents are no parts of inspiration, much less are chapters and verses. All these are the work of modern hands.

(5) Though these multiplied manuscripts have come from various parts of the then known world, copied by men of widely different nationalities, in widely different periods of time, and in a way so

liable to mistakes, yet they all agree with remarkable harmony and exactness, showing that we of the nineteenth century read, without material alteration, the same Bible that was read by the apostolic fathers and their successors in all the past ages and countries of the Church. Hence, though the manuscripts as prepared by Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and the other sacred authors have all perished, yet they, or accurate copies of them, must have been in the hands of those who wrote the manuscripts which we now have: else how could those men who were widely separated by time and space have produced records so nearly alike both in matter and form?

These different manuscripts do indeed present some various readings and some obvious interpolations, but none that affect any truth fundamental to the divine plan. After a careful collation of manuscripts in their various readings Dr. Stowe has summed up thus: "From the thousand manuscripts (more or less) of the Greek Testament or parts of the Greek Testament which have already been examined, critics have selected about fifty thousand various readings. But most of them are simply differences of orthography—as if the word *labor* were spelled in one manuscript with the *u*, and in another without it. Very many are simply diversities in the collection of the words—as if one should say, 'Jesus went to Jerusalem,' and another, 'To Jerusalem Jesus went.' Not fifty of the fifty thousand make any change in the meaning whatever."

And having shown by comparison that these fifty discrepancies of reading do not affect any fundamental truth of the New Testament, Dr. Stowe further says: "The uniformity and purity of the text of the Greek Testament, when we consider how old a book it is, and for how many ages it was propagated only in manuscript, before the art of printing was known, and when we call to mind the vicissitudes of persecution, corruption, superstition, unbelief, bigotry, dogmatism, and latitudinarianism, through which the Christian churches have passed since that time, is perfectly amazing, and beyond that of any other book in the world of frequent publication and wide extent. Milton and Bunyan and Shakespeare, though scarcely more than two centuries old, and always having the advantage of type and printing, open a much wider field for various readings than any part of the Greek Testament, the latest book of which has been in existence more than seventeen centuries."

Elsewhere the same writer says: "With perhaps a dozen or twenty exceptions, the text of every verse in the New Testament may be said to be so far settled by the general consent of scholars that any dispute as to its meaning must relate to the interpretation of the words rather than to any doubts respecting the words themselves. But in every one of Shakespeare's thirty-seven plays there are perhaps a hundred readings still in dispute, a large portion of which materially affect the meaning of the passages in which they occur."

By a careful comparison of the foregoing facts the seemingly lost link of the first three centuries is virtually replaced, and the sacred chain of manuscripts, running back to the Apostles, is made so perfect that we of this remote age may be assured that we read the records of those who heard the words of Jesus, and who witnessed the marvelous deeds which he performed, in the words in which they recorded them.

Moreover, to be assured without doubt of the important fact that when we read our present Greek New Testament we are reading the truths as originally recorded by the Apostles themselves, we may cite the testimony of the Fathers of the Church. We have the writings of Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp, who were the personal disciples of the Apostles themselves, and of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Clement of Alexandria, Athenagoras, Agrippa Castor, Hermas, Papias, Melito, Tatian, Hippolytus, and Cyprian, some of whom wrote voluminously, as well as others who flourished in the second and early part of the third century. From quotations found in the writings of these Fathers, in those of the heretical writers, of Lucian and Celsus, who wrote against Christianity, and of Eusebius, the great Church historian of the fourth century, even though all the manuscripts from which the best editions of the Greek Testament were compiled had perished, the New Testament might be well-nigh perfectly reproduced. This

truth of history clearly evinces the fact that these Fathers of the Church not only quoted from the same sacred records from which those eleven hundred manuscripts were copied, but it is indisputable evidence that both the Fathers and the writers of those manuscripts had in their possession the New Testament, as written by the Apostles themselves. To believe that these immediate successors of the Apostles, scattered over the then known world, and the authors of this legion of manuscripts, living hundreds of years apart and in widely different parts of the world, have separately produced the same Greek New Testament without having the same original Apostolic records, is to believe a greater miracle than is recorded in the Bible. *Such a coincidence is humanly impossible.* Such unanimity of production must have had a unity of origin, or else there has been a succession of accidents such as will eclipse even the atheistic theory of creation.

This fact, therefore, may in reason be considered as established, viz.: that the various manuscripts from which our present New Testament was compiled are in the main only duplicate copies of the manuscripts first written by the Apostles themselves.

Nor need we occupy time in calling attention to the various translations which have from time to time been made from these various manuscripts. It is sufficient to know that Biblical critics, after critically collating these various manuscripts, have given us a translation of a perfectness and exactness un-

paralleled in the history of translations. Moreover, so long as we have the manuscripts which are virtually the manuscripts of the Apostles, Biblical criticism is both a privilege and a duty: the Biblical critic can go back to the original manuscripts and there study and learn their truth and spirit for himself.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BIBLE A BOOK OF HISTORY.

Man left to record historic facts without Divine help.—Are the records true?—Consistency of Hebrew history.—God's hand evident.—Apparent antagonisms between Science and the Bible solved by more perfect knowledge, interpreted by common-sense.

IN reading the Bible no one of intelligence will fail to see that it is largely a book of history—a simple record of past events. Nor is there anything so marvelous in its composition or statements of facts as to lead to the conclusion that divine interposition was necessary to the knowing or the recording of those facts. To suppose that God inspires a man to report historical facts with which he was conversant, and could therefore tell without inspiration, in any other way than to incite him to record what the all-comprehending economy of God in man's behalf required to be recorded, is contrary to the teaching of analogy and philosophy, and a claim which the Bible nowhere makes for itself.

All analogy teaches that God leaves man to do what he can, and only interposes when human ability fails. For example, in raising a crop there are both the human and the divine sides to be worked. Man can plow the ground, sow the seed, till the soil. This, done in the right way and at the right time, is all that he can do. And yet how small a part he contributes to the end of being able to reap a harvest! God alone can and will send the light and heat of the sun and the moisture of the genial rain, and cause the grain to germinate and grow. But though the divine part be done never so perfectly, if the human part be neglected there will be no harvest to reap and man may be left to perish. What man can do he must do, and what falls beyond the limit of his power will, if necessary, be supplemented by the Infinite.

It is just so in the Bible. What man could know and tell without divine interposition has been left to his care. But while he can write the history of events with which he was conversant, tell the good and the bad qualities of the men with whom he was acquainted, and write much of truth in poetic verse, the fundamental and saving truths of the sacred book, which the world's wisdom failed to comprehend, must be and have been supplemented by Infinite Wisdom.

Conceding that much of the history of the Bible is purely human, the beauty of the divine part will stand out all the more like apples of gold in pictures

of silver. But when we claim that all the historical, biographical, and poetical parts of the Bible are *equally* inspired with the Sermon on the Mount, we claim what is devoid of all reason and do a gross injustice to Him who spoke as man never spoke. But for superstition, as it seems to us, we would interpret much of the history of the Bible as we do similar events in other books.

The Israelites, for example, were often at war with the surrounding nations; and much of the historical record is taken up in giving an account of the events which took place on the one side and on the other. Reason sees nothing more marvelous in these historic statements of fact than in the reported wars of Xerxes, Napoleon, or Washington. Nor have the Israelitish wars, as reported, any more to do directly with saving our race than has the history of the American Revolution. To claim any more for these historic events simply because they are in the Bible is to claim more for them than they claim for themselves, and is to detract from the glory of that part of the Bible the divine origin of which may be clearly traced. A large portion of the Old Testament is simply a history of events applicable only to the Jews, and hence of comparatively little interest to us, except as a history of that remarkable people among whom Christianity had its birth. Why should we be interested in, and how profited by, the success of this or that army, except as we may observe the hand of Providence with the

one or the other? And it is worthy of observation that then, as now, the justice of the quarrel on the one side or the other had much to do with the outcome.

While human conditions have much to do with immediate results, still, whatever else we doubt, we should never call in question the fact, patent upon every page of history, that there is an all-controlling Mind, which not only rules in the army of the stars but also presides over the destiny of nations. Only where such divine supervision can be observed does the sacred record become especially interesting and profitable. This is beautifully illustrated in the case of Elijah, whose faith and religion were divinely vindicated in the presence of "the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred." Such divine interposition may be observed, more or less, through the entire Jewish history. While the sacred historian may have been fully competent, from his own knowledge and of his own ability, to record the events which took place among the Jews in their forty years' journey from Egypt to Canaan, yet it was not within the limit of his power to do those marvelous things which belong only to God. He might tell without divine interposition the marvelous story of the crossing of the Red Sea, the giving of the ten commandments, the cleft rock, the miraculous supply of manna, and the divided waters of the Jordan; but a perception of the wisdom, power, and good-

ness by which these events were wrought comes only from God.

The Bible student, therefore, is only interested in knowing that these recorded events are *true*. And it may be observed that their truth has not been successfully denied. We have yet to find any well-authenticated profane history which invalidates the sacred history. Nor does the Bible materially contradict its own record. Hence, in the absence of other testimony, the Bible record of facts stands unimpeached. Besides, but for these miraculous phenomena we are utterly at a loss to account for the universally conceded facts of Jewish history.

No one questions the ungarnished story of Joseph being sold into Egypt, and the marvelous circumstances of his life. The fact that from the family of Jacob there sprang a great nation has never been questioned. Nor does any one doubt that the descendants of the old Patriarch were slaves in Egypt, nor that this nation of slaves, at the end of four hundred years, liberated and transplanted themselves to the land of Canaan. Even the story of their journey and the humanly insurmountable difficulties which they had to encounter in their tedious and vexatious travels has not been successfully contradicted. Dr. Robinson and others have shown great study and labor in seeking to explain how the Israelites crossed the Red Sea without a special miracle. But every effort at showing the passage to have been made without special divine interposition

has only made confusion worse confounded. The only reliable history of that marvelous event is given in Exodus. And it is worthy of observation that this story is in perfect keeping with the entire record beginning with Moses and ending with the establishment of the Israelites in the land of Canaan.

God's purpose to deliver the Israelites from the yoke of Egyptian bondage, made known to Moses in the burning bush at Mount Horeb; the marvelous events which took place at the meeting of this divinely-appointed lawgiver with Pharaoh, and which caused the latter reluctantly to say, "Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel;" the going forth of six hundred thousand adult slaves besides children, with no owners or taskmasters to molest; the divine guiding of the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, which led them in a way which they knew not until they were wedged in between mountains on either side and a deep sea in front, affording an opportunity for the signal display of God's interposing power in their behalf; this seeming blunder on the part of Moses which led Pharaoh to summon together his chariots, horsemen, and army to take advantage of the situation and capture their flying fugitives and again put on the yoke of unrequited toil; the wall of waters which were on the right and left of the Israelites, so that they might travel all night on dry ground and land safely on the other side; the Egyptians pursuing with Pharaoh's horses,

his chariots, and his horsemen, only to be miraculously ingulfed in the waters, as the Israelites had marvelously passed over on dry ground,—all these wonderful events are but a continuous chain of which the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea is but a single link.

Nor does this marvelous chain stop here. The Decalogue as given to Moses amid the thunders of Mount Sinai, the equal of which the world never saw, and the superhuman character of which will be illustrated farther on; God's opposition to sin, because of which the Israelites were detained in the wilderness for the term of forty years, in an unproductive country, where we can hardly conceive it possible that the necessities of over nine hundred thousand people could be met without divine interposition; the crossing of the Jordan; the driving out of the Canaanites, a nation of giants, and the establishment of the Israelites in the land—all these miraculous events are in perfect keeping with each other, and unitedly present the Israelites as a marvelous wonder in the history of nations.

Nor does the wonder stop here. The Jews of today are but a standing miracle in favor of the prophecies concerning this people. Their national pride was unbounded. No people ever clung with such tenacity to their national life as did the Jews. But in the fulfillment of the prediction of Him who knew the end from the beginning, the strong ties which bound them to their national life have been

providentially severed, and the remaining eight millions of the descendants of Jacob are to-day scattered throughout the civilized world, without a country which they can call their own, and, though dwelling in packed communities, having no city of their own in the world.

These phenomena of Jewish history are so manifestly miraculous that they present no middle ground to be occupied. In the light of reason no rationalistic theory will account for them. We must either deny the record *in toto* or else consent that God did it, and that hence it is marvelous in our eyes. But, as previously suggested, the conceded facts of Jewish history can only be accounted for on the supposition of divine interposition. While a critical examination under the guidance of reason will find that much of this history, as a record, is a purely human work, yet the sun at unclouded noonday is not more clearly seen than is the hand of God in the miraculous events therein recorded.

It may be objected that if the Bible had been divinely supervised, human imperfections would have been excluded. But it should be observed that Providence has to do with fundamental truth and leaves man to solve the practical problem in his own way. For example, God having fitted up the world for man's occupancy, and having made provision whereby he can gain a livelihood, build up a home, organize communities, construct cities, found empires, and beautify the world, has then left him

to solve the problem of life in the counsels of his own free-will. Thus God in his dealing with man goes only so far, and leaves the residue largely to himself, with all his imperfections. Reason has been charged with the duty of determining what belongs to the divine and what relates to the human side of the controversy. If we study God's methods of dealing with man as seen in nature and providence, we shall find no invincible difficulty in determining where Infinite Wisdom and Power leave off, and where human ignorance and weakness begin.

All this is quite in keeping with the historic part of the Bible. God has clearly made known his *nature, attributes, will*, and the consequent *duty* and *destiny* of man, and then wisely left the residue largely to the creature to be solved in his own way. We say "wisely," for the reason that man's individual effort at solving in detail those fundamental truths of revelation will be greatly helpful to him. Nor need there be any insuperable difficulty in determining what belongs to the Infinite and what to the finite. The greatest difficulty in hearing the unmistakable voice of God in the Bible is found in the fact that we have not been taught to discriminate between the divine and the human utterance. Only let the Bible student begin the work of discrimination with the courage of his own convictions, and the voice of God will be certainly recognized.

While the hand of God may be seen in Jewish history clear as light, and obscured from none save

those who "having eyes see not," those divine interludes will appear all the more beautiful in contrast with the tone of human imperfection which to the unbiased mind elsewhere prevails. All we need to do is to read the historic part of the Bible with our eyes open and Reason upon her throne, and we shall clearly distinguish between the divine and the human.

It may be further objected that God's having singled out the Jews as a people to be so peculiarly and divinely favored was an unjust discrimination against other nations not in keeping with fatherly benevolence. There are valid reasons, however, even from a human standpoint, why the Jews or some other nation should have been chosen as the repository of the sublime truth of *monotheism*. It is known to every reader of history that at the time of Moses the whole world had gone into polytheism. Nor can any one know the universality of idolatry, the extent to which it was practiced, and the consequent degradation of the race, without realizing the utterly hopeless condition of mankind unless they were relieved of such an intolerable burden of superstition. Nor, further, can we conceive of a method more divinely wise than that which seeks to lift the burden by establishing the fundamental doctrine of unmixed monotheism,—the doctrine which is central to all science, the foundation of all true religion, and the secret power which elevates the race. If from benevolent design God planned to save our race from the burden of

polytheism and idolatry, the first step to be taken was to prepare a nation to be the repository of the fundamental truth of *one God*.

It must be apparent to the observing mind that such an undertaking, in the face of a polytheistic world and of the freedom of the human mind, was an all-important but most difficult task. God, purposing to save man by *man*, began, as seems most reasonable, by training a nation, whose sublime mission should be to establish the foundation truth of "one God." This training was many-sided, and of long duration. It began in the Patriarchal age with Abram, who, in the disgusting and sickening presence of polytheistic idolatry, maintained the doctrine and worship of one God. This was instilled into the mind of his son Isaac, who transmitted it to the patriarch Jacob, and through him it became the divine legacy of Joseph and his brethren, who transplanted it as a tree to the Egyptian soil, where it was divinely watered as with the dews of Hermon.

For four hundred and fifty years, while Israel's posterity was under the yoke of bondage, this foundation truth of monotheism was maintained upon Egyptian soil. Nor was this yoke unimportant in protecting this fundamental thought from being swallowed up by the idolatry which was everywhere prevalent in Egypt. Had Joseph and his posterity been free to mingle in the society of the Egyptians on the ground of social equality, they would have abandoned their doctrine of one God and gone

wholly into polytheistic worship. Even ostracized from society as they were, their coming in contact more or less with idolatry had its effect upon the unmixed monotheism which the family of Jacob transported to that land of thirty thousand gods.

Besides, that four hundred and fifty years of bondage and unrequited toil bound the hearts of Israel's posterity so firmly together that nearly two thousand years of dispersion, in which the Jews have had neither country nor city they can call their own, have not been able to sever them. And though for all these ages the Jews have been scattered among almost all nations, tribes, and families of earth, yet they refuse to mix with the Gentile world, and stoutly maintain monotheism in the presence of idolatry and polytheism, whether found in heathen or Christian lands. Certainly the objection of unjust discrimination will entirely disappear, and fatherly benevolence take its place, provided we take into account the grand object to be attained, and the sublime results which have come to the world through the divine selection of Israel as the repository of the thought of one God as against that of "lords many and gods many."

Once again. It has been objected that some of the historic statements of the Old Testament are at variance with the teachings of science. Great efforts are being made to popularize this idea of mistakes in the Bible, notably those of Moses. While we grant that in the historic part of the Bible more or less of

errors may be found, yet such seems to have been the divine supervision that no mistake as to fundamental facts has been permitted to mar the sacred page. This objection to the Bible is not new. Almost every new discovery in science has been received at first as antagonizing the divine record. In the light of these new discoveries heterodoxy exultantly cries, "Down with the Bible!" while orthodoxy wails out, "Down with reason, and up with revelation!" But men of sense and moderation have learned to wait until the new "science" has been tested, and until the Bible has been interpreted more in keeping with sound reason; when, without an exception, the discrepancy has disappeared.

When the Copernican system of astronomy, for example, was first broached, it was thought to be destructive of all that part of the Bible which referred to the heavenly bodies. But while it has had much to do in reconstructing human theology, there is not a fact clearly stated in the Bible which the science of astronomy contradicts. The reference in the Bible to facts with which science deals is by way of *illustrating* important truth, and not with a view to a scientific statement. It is now claimed, for example, that Moses contradicts the teachings of geology touching the age of our world. While much of so-called science is now in open dispute among students, all are agreed that our earth is of great antiquity. In connection with this question, the only problem difficult to solve is how men of intelligence should

have been led to conclude that Bible history contradicts this conceded fact. As to the age of the earth, Moses says nothing and suggests nothing. He only says, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The only word having reference to time is "*Bereshith*"—"in the beginning"—which means the *indefinite past*. Hence Moses only announces that at some time in the dateless past "God created the heavens and the earth." He leaves science to tell us, if it can, when that "beginning" was. And this reference to unknown time is only by way of illustration. Moses would declare to the Israelites and to a polytheistic world that in the beginning, whenever that was, *one God*, and not many as they supposed, had by his own infinite energy created all things animate and inanimate, whether in heaven or on the earth. Moses was not inspired to teach the facts of science, but he was divinely commissioned to make known to the world the sublimer truth of *one God*. We do not even suppose that he had any knowledge of the facts which the modern science of Geology reveals. If he did, of one thing we are sure: he made no attempt at stating them. Absorbed with the thought that *one* Almighty, in continued successive periods, did it all, he was entirely indifferent as to *time*. His sublime end would be accomplished if only the unbelieving world consent to the doctrine of *one Creator*.

Again, science and Bible history touching the

origin of man are by some supposed to be in open antagonism. Atheistic evolutionists are claiming that the modern science of natural history shows that all forms of animal life, man included, have been evolved from one prototype, while Moses clearly claims special creation for man. As this subject is fully presented in our chapter on "Anthropology," we need only observe, in this connection, that Moses simply states the fact that "God created man in his own image," and then leaves the world to speculate as to the *methods* by which that fact was accomplished. The discussion between *theistic* evolutionists and those who claim special creation for man is wholly on the question of *method* and not of fact. While science has to do with the question *how* God created man, Moses was content to show that God did it. "The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." So the Darwinian theory of evolution, which at first was thought to be so subversive of Biblical history, does not contradict the account of Moses so far as he has ventured to state facts.

Once again. Geology and the Bible have been interpreted flatly to contradict each other as to the age of the human race. Some scientists claim to have discovered that not only is our earth of great antiquity, but also that man has occupied it much longer than the period set forth in the Biblical history. That this discrepancy is only apparent to some

minds, and real to none, may be clearly seen by observing, first, that those best skilled in anthropology are not agreed as to the age of man. While some scholarly scientists claim greater antiquity for our race, others equally learned are seeking to show that Biblical chronology as it is, without supposing any missing links, is substantially correct; so that honest and intelligent criticism may justly demand a stay of judgment until science on this mooted subject becomes fixed. Secondly, the chronology of the Bible which indicates the age of our race is so obscure that the best Biblical students have materially differed as to its teaching. Nor can the various chronologies be reconciled. "Of sacred chronology there have been various systems. In these the epochs are the creation of the world and the Flood. But the chief copies of the Bible do not agree as to the dates of these events. While the Hebrew text reckons four thousand years from the creation to the birth of Christ, and to the Flood one thousand six hundred and fifty-six years, the Samaritan makes the former much longer, though it counts from the creation to the Flood only one thousand three hundred and seven years. The Septuagint version differs from both. It removes the creation of the world to six thousand years before Christ, and two thousand two hundred and fifty years before the Flood. These differences have never been reconciled." (*Chambers's Encyclopædia*, Art. "Chronology.") This illustrates the fact that

the Bible does not propose to teach the age of the earth, nor yet the exact period of time when man was created. These being facts which the human mind could attain to without inspiration, divine revelation interposes only where the world's wisdom would of necessity fail. The fact to be remembered is that the Bible, whether in the Hebrew or Samaritan text, or Septuagint version, does not assume to teach the exact period of time when man was created. Chronology in the Old Testament is largely connected with lineage, giving the ages of men of successive generations. And Matthew, in the genealogy of Jesus as given in the first chapter of his Gospel, has indicated no purpose to tell scientists the period of time that elapsed between the Patriarchs and the Saviour, but only to trace the lineage of Christ back to Abraham. And though in doing this he had passed over hundreds of years from one noted father to another, it would not, in the eye of reason, invalidate the correctness of his genealogy. As he was writing his Gospel for the special benefit of the Jews, and as they attached the greatest importance to the fact of being the "seed of Abraham," it was a matter of peculiar consequence that he traced the lineage of Christ back in unbroken chain to that patriarch. And, to be sure of his aim, he followed the authority of the Jewish text.

Nor has there been any dispute either as to the facts recorded in the sacred history or as to the conclusion reached; but the scientific and theological

wrangle for all these years has been over the *age of man*, a theme which evidently was not in the mind of the sacred historian.

Only let the facts of science be fully established, and Bible history interpreted in the light of reason, and psycho-religious spasms and jubilant atheism will be of the past. Only let sense and moderation do their perfect work, and in due time we shall see that the sacred history and the teachings of science in their statements of fact go hand in hand.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BIBLE A BOOK OF BIOGRAPHY.

(1) Biblical biography represents both sides of human character.—

(2) The God of the Bible punishes wickedness and rewards righteousness.—(3) The representation of the good and evil of men's lives will be helpful to mankind.

No one can read the Bible without observing that it deals largely with the character of men. In the greatest simplicity and frankness it tells both sides of the story. Nor need there be uncertainty as to the character which it condemns and the life which it seeks to encourage. And if the grand mission of the Bible is the destruction of sin and the inauguration of truth, honesty, and loving mercy, we can see why the two sides of human character should find a place in the sacred record: especially

if it be found that righteousness is encouraged and wickedness is condemned.

It has been objected, that some of the men of the Bible, notably those of the Old Testament, are of bad character. It has even been claimed that some who figured largely in the history of the chosen people, and occupy a most prominent place in the Bible, would not be tolerated in a civilized community. If men in this enlightened age were to be found guilty of such inhuman cruelty and demoralizing libertinism as were practiced by some men of the Bible, they would be put to death or confined in prison.

The best way to defend the Bible, and the only honest way, is to grant that the objection is well taken. Certainly, under the light of Christian civilization, we would unhesitatingly say that the man who would commit the most horrid crime,—that of having another man killed,—and from the most contemptible motive,—that of getting his wife,—deserves to be hanged if any man does. And the man who would take the advantage of his position to obtain seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines might well be regarded as a living pestilence and a walking hell, and as having forfeited his right to liberty. A man whose biography represents him as an idolater, a wine-bibber, and a licentious libertine we should unhesitatingly regard as a miserable example for common decency to follow.

While all this must be conceded, let it be distinctly declared that the concession in nowise compromises the sacredness of Biblical biography. It is gross injustice to hold the Bible responsible for the character of the men whose lives it portrays. These sacred biographies do not propose to defend, but simply to represent, character. And the divinity of the record is maintained if it can be shown, first, that the lives of these men of the Bible are faithfully and impartially given,—and secondly, that the God of the Bible punishes wickedness and rewards virtue,—and thirdly, that such representation of the good and evil of men's lives, together with the blessing and curse which follow, will be helpful to mankind. If these three propositions can be maintained, then we may readily see why these biographies should have been placed in the canon of sacred Scriptures.

(1) *Biblical biography represents both sides of human character.* This is a statement which cannot be made of human biographies. They are almost exclusively one-sided in the representation of character. While biographical history forms a large part of the great libraries of the country, we cannot read any of those books in the hope of learning more than one half of the truth. Only when two biographies have been written of the same man, one by the pen of a personal friend, and the other by that of a bitter enemy, can we hope to learn the true character of those who have figured largely in

the world's history. The eulogies passed upon the deceased members of the American Congress, as well as the modern biographies, clearly illustrate this statement. From these biographical eulogies we are led to a very false conclusion as to the true character of the deceased Congressman, unless there chance to be an adverse criticism, which would be regarded by both sides of the House as an indecorum almost intolerable. So popular sentiment has decided that when a man dies the bad side of his life shall be buried with his body, and only the good angel of his nature shall survive to tell the sweet story of a one-sided life. Hence it is that while modern biographies portray in vivid colors all the good qualities of the individual, they are equally careful to keep in the background, if not entirely out of sight, all that would be objectionable.

But not so with Biblical biography. In these sacred records there seems to be an honest *frankness* in the representation of personal character which is peculiar to the Bible. While it represents Moses, for example, as a chosen servant of God, it frankly tells us that he committed murder, for which he was compelled to flee the country to save his life. While Moses in his autobiography gives repeated instances in which he had direct revelation from God, he is equally frank to tell us that his unbelief shut him out of the promised land. He begins his story of supernatural correspondence by publishing to the world that "God called unto him out of the

midst of the [burning] bush." This is only the beginning of a long series of marvelous events running through a period of forty years. These manifestations of divine interposition in his behalf, as leader of the Israelites, were of such character and frequency that he could not have been honestly mistaken. To conclude that he was successfully hoodwinked for all these years, is to suppose a degree of mental stupidity so out of keeping with the character of the man that nothing short of a miracle would account for it. And while he had no hesitancy in understanding and believing the promises which God had made to him and which had been fulfilled again and again, he was equally convinced of the divinity of the communication which notified him that, because of the sin of unbelief, he and his brother Aaron would not be permitted to set foot on the land which God had promised them on condition of their fidelity. He is equally frank in reporting the great sin of his life as he was in telling the good of his marvelous career. While Moses was fully competent to write his own autobiography under such divine supervision as to exclude any fundamental mistake, the miraculous events which he records belong only to the Almighty. Nor does it seem possible for honest intelligence to come to any other conclusion.

Again, though Biblical biography speaks of David in a general way, and, in comparison with the hot-headed Saul, as a man after God's own heart, and

highly approves of many excellent things which he did, it does not hesitate to record his wickedness in having committed the meanest crime—that of having Uriah murdered for the sake of obtaining his wife. In human biography this unprecedented meanness of David would not have been mentioned. While the noble traits in the character of that grand man would have been eulogized to the skies, not a breath of scandal would have been permitted to blow over his fair fame. But under the special supervision of God, here as elsewhere, “there is nothing hid that shall not be revealed.”

So of Solomon. While the Bible gives his good side as to his great wisdom, his marvelous success in building the Temple, the wonder of the world, and under God in conducting the Jewish nation to the zenith of its glory, the sacred biography is equally minute in reporting his life of libertinism and debauch, and what came of it. The Biblical biography is like the mirror which represents the exact features of the man. The Bible looking-glass gives both sides of human character, and thus indicates the divinity of its origin.

(2) *The God of the Bible punishes wickedness and rewards righteousness.* While skeptics have not been slow to observe that certain of the men of the Bible were in some respects bad characters, it is marvelously strange that they have held the sacred book responsible for such wickedness, when it condemns it with unmistakable voice. They seem to

overlook the fundamental fact that the good qualities of men are held up to encourage a life of virtue, and the wickedness recorded only that the voice of its condemnation may be heard. If Biblical biography commended a life of debauch, then might just criticism denounce it; but when it presents the good and the bad side of human character only with the view of encouraging the one and stamping out the other, then its divinity is established.

Besides, it not only offers a reward to virtue, and pronounces a curse upon sin, but it represents the only possible way in which man can get rid of the intolerable burden of remorse which comes as the result of sin. While the sacred biography is frank to tell the world of David's great sin in his satanic methods to obtain Uriah's wife, its ulterior object seems to be to show succeeding generations the depths of unutterable wretchedness to which it plunged him. His harp could not be tuned to songs of praise to God while his great soul was weighed down under the curse of this terrible wickedness. While thus shut up to iniquity he was of necessity shut out from God. Great as he was, good as he was in comparison with any of the kings of his semi-barbarous age, and in many respects absolutely good, we learn for our profit that because of this great sin his soul had lost its native mooring, and hence was filled with unutterable despair. In the depths of his contrition and anguish of his soul, he confesses his sin, condemns

himself, and pleads for forgiveness in the penitential words of the fifty-first Psalm: "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin; for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; and uphold me by thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and *sinner*s shall be converted unto thee." Having shed burning tears of deep regret for his ignoble and unworthy life, and having cried out of these depths, and sought, with all intensity of purpose, the pardoning love of God, he then exultantly exclaimed: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: *many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.*" This story, which sets forth how David went away from God into sin, the wretchedness into which it plunged him, and the path of deep contrition as the only way back to the divine favor and blessedness, is eminently worthy of a place in the scripture canon. If not, what is? This sacred biography is but a duplicate of the soul's subjective knowledge. The voice of experience has taught us that the way to pardon and blessedness is the way

of repentance. David recognized the good that would come to the world from the report of his reported rebellion and what it led to, in the expression, "Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord."

Bearing in mind that the Bible is not to be held responsible for the wickedness of the men whose lives it represents, but only for a faithful delineation of both sides of their character; and, further, that it promises a reward to the good and pronounces a curse upon the wicked, we are now prepared for the last and more important proposition, namely:

(3) *The representation of the good and evil of men's lives will be helpful to mankind.* The Book of Ecclesiastes, though largely made up of the moral defeats and miscarriages of its author, is eminently designed to be abundantly fruitful of good results. While the casual observer wonders that such a book was put into the sacred canon, the careful Bible student sees clearly that it is a logical part of a perfect whole. The providential design of the Bible is to have men "abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good." To the happy end that "the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts," and be induced to "return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon," the great Father would not only attract us into the path of virtue by presenting a life of uprightness and the sublime results that come of it, but he would also *repel* us from the broad way

which leads to destruction, by giving us the biography of the wicked with the "vanity and vexation of spirit" that befalls them. While the human soul was divinely organized for immortality and communion with its heavenly Father, such are its evil environments that it is led to hew out "cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Man is prone to seek the things of this world with the view of satisfying the cravings and necessities of the soul. God would teach us in this Book of Ecclesiastes that this world cannot give what man most needs, and must have if the soul is to reach its highest destiny of possible peace.

And to the end of convincing all thoughtful men for all time to come that this world, with all its allurements, has not the one supreme good for which the human mind was made and to which it aspires, God allows one man, who of all men that lived before or since was best qualified, to try every apparent good thing under the sun and to learn by bitter experience that it was all "vanity and vexation of spirit." To the end that all who came after might learn, from one who had the opportunity of knowing, that the whole wide world does not contain enough to satisfy the demands of a single soul, the Book of Ecclesiastes has been given as "a lamp to our feet and a light to our path."

In this divine supervision, Solomon was to proceed upon the supposition that no philosophy was to be relied upon save that of experience. He de-

terminated, therefore, that he would devote his life to experimenting, that he might thus, if possible, find out what was good—*absolutely* “what profit a man hath of all his labor which he taketh under the sun.” And, since the world began there never has been such a marvelous life of experimenting. Providence seems to have afforded facilities for his work such as were never given to mortal before nor since. God endowed him with native ability, and afforded him opportunities for its unfolding such as have been the legacy of but few, if any, men in the world’s history.

The Proverbs of Solomon also reveal a depth of thought and comprehensiveness of wisdom which are akin to the marvelous.

There is, however, a verdancy in modern thought which regards the sayings of this wise man as being antiquated, in comparison with the present advanced age of thinking. Even juveniles do not hesitate to say that Solomon’s wisdom has been greatly eclipsed by this age of progressive thought, and that, if he were living in this age of steam, railroads, and telegraphs, he would not say “there is no new thing under the sun;” he would not expose his folly and ignorance by seeking to enlighten the world with the stupid saying, “That which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been.” This criticism, as it seems, grows out of the immense difference between our superficial thought and the profound conception

of the wise man. With one broad glance Solomon looks back into the vista of the past and contemplates the moral influences which were at the beginning of time set to work, all of which are in active force in this our day. "That which has been *is* now." Nothing is annihilated either in the physical or moral universe. He thus recognizes a principle in ethical and moral science which was far in advance of the age in which he lived, and which the wisdom of the world had not amplified until it was explained and applied to human life by Dr. Babbage. Having taken in the past, he peers into the depths of the future and sees that "that which is to be" will only be the remote results of the moral and physical influences which have been and are now at work. With this profound philosophy of the undying nature of human thoughts, words, and actions, and the endless influence of mechanical forces, it is not wonderful that the wise man should have exclaimed, "God requireth that which is past."

With the view of thoughtfully testing "all things that are under the sun" which men will be inclined to seek after, Solomon was not only endowed with native talent and acquired ability fitting him for this life-work, but at an early age he was made king of one of the greatest nations then upon the globe,—not of a dis severed portion merely, but of all the nation of Israel. In this capacity he reigned for forty years. During this long and

eventful life he devoted his time to learning from personal experience the absolute worth of everything which humanity would be inclined to test. His wisdom, his material prosperity and exalted position gave him an opportunity to learn the intrinsic value, or worthlessness rather, of all that the world has to offer of gratification of appetite, of excessive libertinism, as well as of esthetic taste, of wisdom, wealth, fame, commerce, and of vain-glory. "I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem. And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven. . . . I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and behold all is vanity [emptiness] and vexation of spirit." And having earnestly sought and successfully found what was absolutely good for the sons of men under the sun, his marvelous life of experience, together with the conclusion to which the wise man was led, has been faithfully recorded in the Book of Ecclesiastes, and has wisely found place in the sacred canon.

From the logic of this life of experimenting, and especially from the conclusion to which it led, namely, that it is the duty of all men to "fear God and keep his commandments," the great Father would teach all reflecting men in all succeeding ages that this world, with all its facilities, contains not sufficient of good to meet the aspirations and exalted necessities of a single soul. The

world is not high enough, deep enough, nor broad enough for the ever heightening, deepening, and expanding soul which struggles within this house of clay. Its spiritual *necessities* of godly faith, immortal hope, and love for supreme excellence, are blessings which, as we shall see, this world is not able to give.

(a) *Solomon tested worldly wisdom.* Many men of intelligence in all ages and countries have labored under the delusive hope that the deepest necessities of the mind would be met in the acquisition of secular knowledge. They imagine that the supreme good for the soul will be obtained if only they can acquire the wisdom which the world has to offer. Solomon seems to have been providentially charged with the duty of testing this delusion to a degree which others might not hope for, and then report progress for the benefit of those who might come after him. "I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit. For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow."

That Solomon, in giving the result of his experience in the pursuit of knowledge, refers only to worldly wisdom, is made apparent in the conclusion to which he was led (Eccl. xii : 13, 14). Besides, he recognized even secular knowledge as vastly better than ignorance. "I saw," says he, "that wisdom excelleth folly as far as light ex-

celleth darkness." Can wise men refuse to learn wisdom from one who has gone beyond their depths and found no gold, and yet hope to be forgiven of their stupidity? Worldly wisdom is good as far as it goes, but, like Solomon, we shall find it *good for nothing*,—that it is only "vexation of spirit" unless it leads to God, the end of all science, and the only source of what is absolutely good for the sons of men while under the sun.

(*b*) *Solomon tried mirth.* The temptation to frivolity has allured the steps of many a youth. It has even been claimed by wise men that amusements and hilarity are a necessity of the young. And to the end that this useful necessity may be met, the "social dance" has been instituted, the billiard-table has been placed in the parlor, the cards have been introduced, and philanthropic men have spared neither pains nor expense in fitting up the public ballrooms and skating-rinks, all for the gracious reason that the dear young people may have their mirthful nature developed! But who has lived with his eyes open, not to observe that the natural tendency of all such frivolous hilarity leads at last to the sad conclusion that it is all "vanity and vexation of spirit"? The universal experience of those who have tried it joins with that of Solomon. "I said in my heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth; therefore enjoy pleasure: and behold, this also is vanity. I said of laughter, It is mad."

Not but that this world may be made joyous, and

even *jolly*, if only we can regard mirth as a privilege of divine appointment upon which both young and old may enter with profound thanksgiving. But the young man who goes out to enter upon a career of mirth without taking God into the account need only hope to return with a sad countenance and with a starved and woe-begone soul. Many of the youth of our land might be saved from the sad reflection of wasted opportunities and misspent time, if only they would heed the warning of this wise man, which has been recorded for their learning: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth: and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the way of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Enjoy what God has given, but with an eye to its rational use.

(c) *Solomon tested the wine-cup.* The temptation to excess in the use of intoxicants had been, was then, is now, and will ever be most seductive in its influence. It is an allurements which has enticed more men into wretchedness and ruin than any sin that ever cursed humanity or dishonored God. This is an evil so palpable and so destructive to the peace of the individual, the happiness of home, and the good of community, and so fills the soul with sadness, the house with wretchedness, and so demoralizes society, that it would seem superfluous for wisdom to give the result of its experience. But as Solomon had started out upon the supposition that nophi-

losophy was to be relied upon save that of experience, and observing that many were enticed into the broad road of drunkenness, as if in the hope of finding that which was absolutely good for the sons of men, he said, "I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, . . . and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men."

And we may well imagine that his great wisdom, exalted position, and unbounded wealth enabled him to find out the good and the evil that was in the intoxicating cup. And having thoroughly tested it, he gives the result of his experience with "rum" for the benefit of all who should come after him.

Solomon makes the inquiry, "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babblings? who hath wounds without a cause? who hath redness of eyes?" Here are a series of questions, and then comes the answer: "They who tarry long at the wine, they who go to seek mixed wine." Having given a truthful answer to the questions proposed, the wise man then gives his advice to the tempted: "Look not upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." If these questions had been thoroughly pondered, the answer clearly understood, and the *advice* faithfully observed, an intolerable burden would have been lifted from the heart of suffering humanity. Nor would this God-favored country be cursed with an army of three hundred

and sixty thousand inebriates, who are marching, to the tune of death, down to a drunkard's hell.

(*d*) *Solomon tested wealth.* The sin of covetousness, which is idolatry, has always been the bane of society and the curse of the individual. Wealth is either a great blessing or a blighting curse. This depends wholly upon the methods by which it is obtained, the regard in which it is held, and the use that is made of it. If a man obtains his wealth honestly, regards it as the loan of a benevolent Providence, and distributes it for the good of himself, his family, the community, and the world, then it becomes an instrumentality of incalculable good; but if he obtains it by methods of doubtful character, regards it as the supreme good, and clings to it for its own sake and not for the purposes of human helpfulness, then the only result is that he who has been so unfortunate as to obtain it is neither fit to live nor prepared to die. And while generous men will breathe easier when it is known that such a one has ceased to breathe, the doors of heaven will be so barred that he can no more enter than a camel can pass through the eye of a needle.

While there is no sin that so dwarfs the soul into pitiful littleness as does covetousness, there is also none more deceptive and seductive. The drunkard often realizes that he is on the road to ruin; but the covetous wealthy man seems utterly insensible as to the direction of his course and the awful end to which it leads. To the end that he may be warned

of the "vanity and vexation of spirit" to which his course tends, Solomon comes in with his experience. "I made me great works; I builded me houses" [his own private residence required thirteen years for its completion, and is supposed to have been the finest residence that was ever built upon the globe]; "I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruit: I made me pools of water to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees: I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me: I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and the labour that I had laboured to do: and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." (Eccl. ii : 4-11.) When the Queen of Sheba heard of the wisdom, wealth, fame, and great glory of King Solomon's court, she set out for Jerusalem, "with

a very great train, and with very much gold, and precious stones." The reported splendor was more than she could believe, but when she witnessed the wisdom and superlative glory of his court, she exclaimed, "Behold, the half was not told me." In the presence of such knowledge, honor, and material prosperity, and the conclusion that it was "all vanity and vexation of spirit," who will be so presumptuous as to seek wealth as an *end*, rather than the means of *getting good and doing good*, and thus fritter away life's golden opportunities and be led at last to exclaim, in bitter wail, "The harvest is past, the summer ended, and I am not saved"?

Having tested *Libertinism, Drink, Mirth, Wealth, Agriculture, Fame, Commerce, Wisdom*, and everything "under the sun" which might tend to allure the steps of humanity with the delusive promise of being the "one thing needful," Solomon sums up the result of his life's experience: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." After a long life of earnest seeking, and of success in finding out what is good—intrinsically good—for the sons of men while under the sun, the Preacher gives a valid reason for his advice: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."

Whatever may be said of the bad character of Solomon and other men of the Bible, it is certainly apparent, first, that the sacred record, unlike human

biographies, has frankly given both the good and the bad sides of their lives. Secondly, while the sacred biographies unmistakably represent the curse of the Almighty as resting "upon every soul of man that doeth evil," they are equally pronounced in their promises of divine blessing upon "them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality." Thirdly, it must be equally obvious that such representation of a wicked life, together with the awful end to which it leads, is eminently worthy of God, and hence deserves a place in the sacred canon. It is thus that the great Father would *persuade* to virtue by the blessings which it brings and the hope which it inspires, and repel from sin by the wickedness which it leads to and the despair which comes of it—"if by any means" he "might save some."

While the Bible as a book of *Biography* is seen to be eminently helpful to humanity, and hence deserving a place with the Bible as a book of *Revelation*, yet in the light of reason we should discriminate between the human and the divine utterances. While we believe in a Providential supervision which has excluded any fundamental error from marring the page of sacred biography, we are not at liberty to accept it as being *inspired* of God in the same sense as we do those saving *truths* which the world's wisdom failed to grasp, and which, therefore, have been made known in the Bible as a book of *Revelation*. "Man's necessity is God's opportunity."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BIBLE A BOOK OF REVEALED LAW.

Section (I). How is Divinity of origin determined?—Section (II). Laws are of local or general application.—Section (III). Completeness of Old Testament laws.—Section (IV). Old Testament laws of divine origin.—(1) Consider the nature of the Decalogue.—(2) Consider its arrangement and completeness.—(3) Consider its possible origin.

IN reading the sacred volume, if we would clearly distinguish between that which is divinely inspired and that which human wisdom may have recorded, it is important that we discriminate as to the character of the scripture under consideration. We should so classify the literature of the Bible as to be able to know whether what we read is historical, biographical, poetical, or direct revelation. It is only thus that human reason can fulfill its divine mission of rendering to man the things which are man's, and to God the things which are God's. Nor can any one thus read the Bible in the light of reason without meeting *truth* eminently applicable to man's nature and God's glory, which is beyond the purview of human wisdom, and which therefore must be what it claims to be, of divine origin. In this age of skepticism and doubt, this last statement is of infinite moment, and therefore well deserves a

most thorough and honest criticism. To the task of pointing out divine interposition in giving the *fundamental* laws of the Old Testament, is the special intent of this chapter devoted.

SECTION (I).

How is Divinity of Origin Determined?

The practical question of every honest seeker after truth is, "How shall I know that the laws of general application found in the Old Testament are of God and not of man?" In answer to this question, it may be observed that it is not enough to know that the great and good men of the ages have regarded them as of divine origin. This testimony, at best, is only presumptive and suggestive, and proves nothing. It may serve as the foundation of a superstition which pins its faith to the skirts of others, but the man who assumes the responsibility of thinking for himself asks for the divine right of so clearly seeing the truth that he may be able to "give a reason for the hope" that is in him.

Nor is it enough to know that these laws are in the Bible. They might be found in the catalogue of the sacred canon, which the Church has sanctioned for thousands of years, and yet, like much else that is found there, they might be observed as being within the compass of human knowledge. These commandments are not true because they are in the Bible, but rather they are in the Bible

because they are true in the nature of man and the wisdom of God. If these laws are clearly seen to be God-inspired, the evidence must show, first, that they are a necessity of the soul's nature ; secondly, that they are indispensable to the well-being of society ; and thirdly, and especially, it must be shown that the world's wisdom at the time they were given was utterly inadequate to the task of enacting such laws. If these three steps of thought are seen to be coherent, then the conclusion of their divine inspiration is inevitable. Before proceeding to establish these several propositions, it is well to discriminate as to the application of law.

SECTION (II).

Laws are of Local or General Application.

Every student of the Old Testament has observed that many of its laws are of a *local* character, applicable only to the Jews in their local and isolated condition. While some of them are purely political, some moral, and others sanitary, they are all applicable mainly to the Israelites in their tedious journey from Egypt to Canaan. It is no part of our purpose to challenge criticism upon that portion of Jewish theocracy which is applicable only to the Jews. It may be observed, however, that whatever criticism may be put upon those Jewish laws, this may be said in truth, that under the faithful administration of them, including the Decalogue,

the Israelites arose from a state of slavery and serfdom into the grandest nation that the world had then ever produced. While it may be seen that the entire code of law, as given by Moses, was of divine appointment, yet, as much of it had reference to the political and sanitary condition of the Jews, and therefore had relation to time and place, we shall pass them all by to ask special criticism upon those laws which are of universal application, to all ages, conditions, and countries of the world.

It is well to observe, furthermore, that these Old Testament laws which apply to all men are of two classes, namely, *prohibitory* and *obligatory*; and both will be seen to be indispensable to the well-being of the individual and of society, as they are absolutely necessary to the glory of God. We shall observe still further, that this duality of law is of threefold application: (1) Laws fixing the obligation that man is under to himself; (2) Duties imposed upon the individual because of his relation to family, society, and the world; (3) Statutes fixing man's obligations growing out of his sacred relation to his Creator.

SECTION (III).

Completeness of Old Testament Laws.

The space allotted to this section will not allow us to go over the laws of the Bible in detail and show how they are the counterpart of man's varied

necessities, but we shall aim to present such a *summary* as will embrace all laws of general application. As the lesser is of necessity embraced in the greater, if a perfect digest be maintained as of divine origin, then all the laws in detail, set forth in the epitome, must also be of God. In the abstract that we shall give, we ask the Bible student to find a single law of general application, whether *prohibitory* or *obligatory*, which will not resolve itself back into this summary.

Fortunately the entire code of law, as given in the Bible, is summed up in a few terse words in a number of places; so that "he who runs may read," and he who has an honest desire may understand. Nor can honesty and intelligence call them in question. For example, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good: and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah vi : 8.) In perfect keeping with the thought of the prophet, we might answer his profound question with the single word "Nothing." This one verse tells the whole story of human duty. These words are so divinely grouped together, that they carry with them the thought of both negative and positive duty in its entirety. If we study the requirements of the Bible, from the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation, we shall not find a law, clearly stated and of universal application, that in any material point antagonizes this short code; nor shall we observe a

single requirement made for the race, which does not resolve itself back into the epitome of human duty as set forth in this single verse. If in our Bible reading we find here and there laws relating to the duty we owe to ourselves, our families, our community, or our Creator, we will observe that they are clearly couched in one or the other of these three words, JUSTICE, MERCY, HUMILITY. Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with thy God.

Nor is there any one so much interested in the observance of these three requirements as is the individual himself. *Justice, mercy, and humility* are the native necessities of the soul, as every reflective mind must allow. Nor can any one of these requirements be disregarded without doing violence to our nature. Honesty and intelligence bar infidelity on this point. A man may be an honest infidel touching this summary of divine law, but if so he lacks intelligence: he may be an intelligent infidel, but if so he is not honest.

Even if impossibility were made possible, and atheism were thus able to convince us that there is no God, no devil, no heaven, no hell, no anything, but man with his sensitive soul, even then the requirements of *justice, mercy, and humility* would remain in force. Besides, the man who contributes most to the good of his family, the community, and to mankind is the man who most intelligently and faithfully observes this summary of Bible law. No matter for our pretensions, the fact, founded upon observa-

tion and experience, remains the same, that our helpfulness to humanity is in the ratio of our obedience to these three requirements. Nor, in the light of reason, can any man hope to answer the design of his creation in glorifying God and enjoying him forever except as he brings himself into harmony with the administration of this trinity of statutes. To ignore them is to despise the counterpart of our being, and to make life fruitless of good.

If all the laws of the sacred canon are thus happily summed up in the three words *justice, mercy, humility*, are not the requirements of the Bible brought down to the capacity of the weakest mind? And if the entire canon of divine law is thus given in an abridged form, then who will fail to observe that all the laws of the Bible, in detail, applicable to mankind, are but the duplicate of man's necessities, in his relationship to himself, to his kind, and to his Creator? Only let all men be *just* to themselves, to their families, to their neighbors, to the world, and what a relief would come to our overburdened humanity! Add to the grace of justice that of *mercy*, not only to our friends but to our enemies as well,—mercy to the strong and to the weak, to all mankind, and the rest of the animate universe as well,—and the Eden of innocence will be restored. Who so blind as not to see that the divine laws of *justice* and *mercy* embrace the entire catalogue of God's moral statutes? If these be faithfully observed, the world's wilderness of woe

and solitary places of sadness shall be glad, "and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." If *justice* and *mercy* comprise all the moral obligations that are embraced in the code of the Bible, so likewise do the words "walk humbly with thy God" present a complete summary of all the religious requirements that can be found in the Bible.

Suppose that all the laws of the sacred canon, both prohibitory and obligatory, may be resolved back into the duties involved in the verse quoted; suppose that there is no law in the Bible of general application that materially antagonizes those requirements of justice, mercy, and humility; suppose that we discover that this code of law is not only made in the interest of man and society, but in addition it has been made so perfect in its *entirety* that human reason fails to be able to add to its perfection, as it also fails to be able to deduct a single law from the code without marring it as a whole: must we not further suppose that the Creator, who made the soul and designed society, is also the Author of this ordinance of morals and religion which so perfectly duplicates man's necessities, especially when we remember that its nature and completeness had, during the ages, baffled the world's wisdom?

It may be claimed that, however complete this summary of law, and however perfect in its adaptedness to the nature of man, yet it is not proof positive of its divine origin. Besides, it may be

urged that the prophet Micah, in presenting his perfect synopsis of human duty, only gave expression to the accumulated wisdom of the Jewish nation. We are therefore called upon to trace this completed epitome of morals and religion to its original source.

SECTION (IV).

Old Testament Laws of Divine Origin.

In the task before us we select the *Decalogue*, as synoptical and perfect in its digest of all the requirements of the Old Testament. Besides, Moses claims that he received those ten commandments *directly* from the Almighty. To deny this claim, as we shall seek to show, is to concede the greater miracle. He that assumes to deny that Moses obtained this marvelous code of law at the hand of God has taken upon himself the duty of explaining to the world when and where he did get it. And it may be observed that he who performs this Herculean task shall have done what the wisdom of over three thousand years has not been able to do. To see that the points to be assailed are as the immovable hills, we must consider, first, the *nature* of those laws; second, their *arrangement* and *completeness*; and third, the testimony existing as to their *divinity of origin*.

(1) *Consider the nature of the Decalogue.* In looking into the character of these ten commandments, we shall consider them in their adaptability

to the nature of man and the wants of society. If in the light of reason it could be shown that the world has been made neither wiser nor better by their introduction, this fact alone would bar all evidence of their divinity of origin. But if, on the other hand, they are found to be absolutely indispensable to the well-being of mankind, this alone, as previously suggested, will corroborate the claim of their Author. As the logic of their arrangement seems to be marvelously perfect, we shall therefore examine the *nature* of these commandments, in the order in which they stand.

(a) The first law seeks to establish the thought of the *unity of God*. "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me." In their worship they were to have no god in their minds but the Infinite, whose benevolent providence had been their shield, guide, and support. To appreciate the absolute necessity of this law and its position in the Decalogue, we must consider the condition of mankind at the time it was given.

When the doctrine of *One God* was announced amid the thunders of Mount Sinai, it was as new and as unexpected to the world, except to the Israelites, as if the sun had burst forth in all his resplendent glory at the hour of midnight. Human wisdom during all the preceding generations had only drifted farther and farther from this sublime thought,

which is now known to be fundamental to every step in the divine plan of saving a lost race. To us it may seem marvelously strange, but it is nevertheless true, that human *wisdom*, not *ignorance*, leads to the doctrine of "gods many and lords many." Nor can we imagine the wide-spread degradation and the heart-sickening sacrifices to which mankind were led through the influences of polytheism. If our minds can only compass the horrible condition of the world at the time Moses ascended the mount to commune with God, we shall then comprehend something of the infinite importance of this law, and clearly see why it is placed *first* in this divine catalogue, which is as marvelous as it is sublime.

(*b*) The next law prohibits the sin of *Idolatry*. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, nor any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath." In studying these commandments in their adaptability to man's necessities we shall observe the divinity of their arrangement. It will be clearly seen that this law is not only second in the order, but it is the next natural step in the divine philosophy of establishing the plan of salvation. Unmixed monotheism, and a thankful remembrance of Him from whom cometh all good, first; and a law hurled at polytheism and idolatry, second. To see the absolute necessity of this divine statute we need only contemplate the condition of the human race under the degrading influence of idolatry. In our chapters on "Religion"

we have sought to show that man is instinctively religious—that of necessity his moral character is intensified in the likeness of that of the being worshiped. And as it is impossible in the nature of things that man should be able to give better character to the gods of his own construction than he himself possesses, then it follows that under the influence of idolatry *depravity* had been worshiping *depravity*, until the “whole head was sick and the whole heart faint.”

Nor was it possible to lift this intolerable burden of idolatry from the hearts of world-wide humanity unless the object of their worship be changed from a being made like unto sinful man into one of infinite holiness of character. Hence this second law had been inoperative but for the one that had gone before. Every human effort at constructing an object of worship better than itself of necessity fell within the line of its own finite and sinful nature. The history of two thousand five hundred years establishes the truth of this proposition, and clearly shows that the fatherly character of God, as presented in the Bible, could never have originated with selfish man. As mankind will worship, and as they could not construct gods better than themselves, the only way, therefore, to destroy idolatry was to present the world with a being of supreme excellence of character. It is this sublime truth that Moses pitted against polytheism and idolatry; a truth which during the ages has been steadily roll-

ing upon the feet, legs, and body of the horrid beast.

(c) The third law prohibits the common sin of *blasphemy*. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." The Creator would not only require the creature to have no other being before him as an object of worship, but such should be our reverence that his sacred name should never be used except in the spirit of veneration. Can we reflect upon the infinite wisdom, power, and goodness of the great Father, and our ignorance and utter helplessness in his presence, and still fail to see the significance of this law, and the reason why it should stand in the Decalogue just where it does? Such is the reasonableness of this divine requirement, that we conclude that nothing but the spirit of reckless presumption can lead to its violation. In the light of reason, the very thought of the Infinite must fill the finite with *awe* and *reverence*. The very spirit which gives rise to blasphemy cannot do otherwise than bring down the curse of the Almighty and tend to dwarf the soul. Experience and observation establish the necessity of this commandment. And from the same source we learn the infinite advantage of holding the *sacred* name of God in the spirit of reverence and thanksgiving. Both Reason and Revelation teach us that the "Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain."

(d) The fourth commandment fixes a day of *rest*. "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy."

“ There is abundant evidence from history that the seventh day of the week has been observed from the earliest times as a day of rest. And the change from the seventh to the first day does not in any degree change or impair the obligation to sanctify a seventh part of our time. So far from it, the sacredness and glory of the day are much increased by its association with that great event on which our hope of life and immortality entirely depends. It seems to be admitted by intelligent men of every class and profession that the observance of a weekly day of rest is as essential to our intellectual and physical as to our moral and spiritual nature.” This law finds its counterpart in the necessity of man’s nature. As certainly as sleep is a necessity, so certainly is rest. If business, labor, or study must occupy our attention for six days, God saw that tired nature would need rest. Hence he sanctified the seventh day, and made it to be “ kept holy unto the Lord.” While there is a vast deal of superstitious slavery connected with the observance of the Sabbath, yet sensible people will not fail to see its necessity, nor will they have any invincible difficulty concerning the manner in which it is to be spent.

It is designed to be a day of rest from all secular employments except works of *charity* and *necessity*. And that rest be cheerful and joyous, the day should be spent in holy contemplation of Him from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. Experience has taught us that if we thus employ the one seventh

of our time as God appointed, it will contribute both to our spiritual and worldly interests. The dark problems of "Communism," "Nihilism," and "Dynamiteism" will be once and forever solved if only God's law of the Sabbath be observed in its letter and spirit. Only let this commandment which issued from out the thunders of Mount Sinai have "full course," and the adjustment of labor will no longer be a question in the science of political economy. The evils which now threaten our beloved country because of the antagonism between "capital and labor" would soon vanish if God's law of the Sabbath was faithfully kept. With continuous labor, week after week and year after year, we drift too far from God, and neglect to observe his law to do to others as we would they should do to us. We commend to the consideration of politicians the indispensable necessity of restoring the fourth commandment.

This ends the first table of the Decalogue, and has reference only to the requirements of religion, or man's relation and duty to his Creator. These four commandments, both as to their nature and method, beautifully and forcibly set forth man's kinship to God and the sacred obligations which grow out of such relationship. And while the accumulated wisdom of the past three thousand years and more attests their divinity of origin, the present advanced and future advancing ages of civilization will go to confirm and forever establish the infinite blessedness of

these laws. The second table of the law points out the obligation of man to man. Here, again, we shall observe a logic which cannot be improved upon and a code of law which forever bars the possibility of a human improvement of it.

(*e*) The fifth law defines the obligations of children to parents. And can anything be more reasonable than the command, "Honor thy father and mother"? Moreover, such is our nature, that if a man fails to honor his mother with love, it is not only impossible for him to honor God, but his pretension to love his wife must of necessity be hypocritical. If a woman fails to love her father, she too is inevitably doomed to coldness and indifference toward God and her husband. This is the divine starting-point of noblest manhood and womanhood. Thus we observe that if we are ever to learn to honor and love Supreme Excellence, we must begin by obeying the divine command, "Honor thy father and mother." Any pretension to love God, when there is no love for parents, must be regarded as hypocritical.

(*f*) The sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," prohibits the greatest wrong that one man can perpetrate upon the person of another. And as the lesser is implied in the greater, man is here forbidden to inflict injury, however small, against the person of any man. The justness of this law is patent upon its very face. Moreover, the history of our vicious humanity illustrates the necessity of this commandment, and the importance of its enforcement.

(*g*) The seventh, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," cannot, in the very nature of society, be violated without destroying the foundation of domestic happiness, and hence the peace of organized communities. The family home, held together by the sacred ties of kinship's love, must be regarded as the foundation of all civil government. Only let the purity of home be preserved, and the experiment of republican government, which seeks to protect man in all his God-given rights, will soon become an accomplished fact.

Nor can any one, whatever may be his arrogant boastings, disregard this domestic law without bringing down the curse of God upon himself and family. Illustrations of this truth are altogether too numerous for the good of our commonwealth. Free love, in all its forms of libertinism, only illustrates the sickening fact that it is wonderfully human in its origin and most dreadfully devilish in its results.

(*h*) The eighth law, "Thou shalt not steal," recognizes the personal right of property. And here as elsewhere, as the whole includes its parts, this commandment forbids man to trespass, in any wise, upon the property of another. But for the existence of this law, with the wicked and selfish tendencies of man's nature, there could be no such thing as material prosperity. And if the restraining influences of this law were lifted from society, it would be one great stroke tending to sweep from our God-favored country the evidences of Christian civilization, by

giving loose reins to the bad angel of man's nature.

(i) The ninth commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," is a necessity to protect man's good name. God would not only guard our person, our virtue, and our property, but also shield our reputation, which we should esteem above all value. He who regards not his personal character as above the price of all earthly blessings will become infamous because of a fundamental defect in his mental organism. The soul gives it normal expression in the words of Shakespeare :

" He who steals my purse steals trash ; . . .
But he who filches from me my good name
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed."

Moreover, lying is not only an injustice to others, but it rebounds with redoubled injury upon the man who bears false witness. Such is the moral government of God, that as we add most to our own happiness while seeking to make others happy, so while lying to make others miserable we make ourselves the more wretched. God would not only have us earnestly seek after a good name and tenaciously cling to it when once obtained, but he would protect us in its blessed possession by enacting this prohibitory law.

(j) The tenth and last commandment goes back upon our thoughts—"Thou shalt not covet." As man cannot look into the heart and know the

thoughts and intents of the mind, he must therefore legislate only for the overt act. But as God knows the very secret thoughts which give rise to words and deeds; and as he has determined that these secret thoughts, as well as these words and deeds, are to pass the ordeal of "a judgment to come"—he has hence made a law for the destruction of sin in its very beginning. Thus we observe that this moral code begins with childhood, putting it into the line of noblest manhood, and then proceeds with a series of prohibitory laws, having the sublime view of protecting mankind in all their natural rights of life, chastity, property, and character.

(2) *Consider the arrangement and completeness.*—Examining into the "nature" of these ten commandments in their adaptedness to the inherent needs of man and the wants of society, we cannot fail to see their completeness both as to matter and method. No logician, however perfect, need undertake to correct the arrangement of these laws. The logic is simply perfect. Moreover, we cannot take one of these laws from the ten without marring the whole, nor can we make any more perfect by adding thereto. It is simply a perfect whole, the like of which the world had never seen; nor can its equal in method, perfectness, and adaptedness to the needs of man and the wants of society be found in the literature of the world. The effort at criticising the arrangement of the Decalogue, by adding thereto or deducting therefrom, has led to the con-

version of many an honest and intelligent infidel, in that he discovered the document to be beyond the reach of human criticism. It was left for Him who established the new and spiritual dispensation to give to the world the "eleventh law,"—that of love, which is the fulfillment of all law and the end of all revelation.

(3) *Consider their possible origin.*—The question arises, Where did Moses get this complete and perfect summary of law? Certainly not from *observation*; for the people,—*all the people on the globe*,—history tells us, were given to polytheism and idolatry. Not from philosophy, for philosophy as then understood taught the exact opposite of theism. Moreover, Moses made no pretensions to philosophy. Certainly not from the best system of ancient morality. The Greeks and Romans had given their people the best system of ethics the world had ever seen. And yet Lycurgus, one of their conceded leaders in military reform, and whose system of political economy was in many respects helpful to Sparta—even he *taught* his people to steal, and ordained that weak children should be put to death. Alcibiades practiced incest; and Solon, who then was and even now is looked upon as their best and greatest moral teacher, allowed in his laws that there should be "brothels and prostitution."

When we look back into the days of Moses and observe that their *best* men were teaching and practicing these loathsome, detestable, and sickening

crimes, and see the awful degradation into which they had plunged our race, and then turn our eyes in the other direction and see grand old Moses standing up in the very midst of this thick moral darkness, and that, too, in the presence of a nation of superstitious slaves, proclaiming to a benighted world a code of moral and religious law so absolutely perfect that the accumulated wisdom and goodness of succeeding ages have not been able to detect a single flaw, nor add one tithe to its symmetrical beauty and perfection,—we say the marvellous picture, as it passes in review before our minds, brings us up to the very summit of that burning mountain where God, from the midst of the cloud of smoke and thunderings of Sinai, gave to Moses a law which should be for the glory and blessing of all people down to all time. No man who understands the moral degradation of our race in the days of Moses can study and comprehend the Decalogue and come out an honest infidel.

Besides, we are to remember that the Decalogue is but another single link in the unbroken chain of marvellous events which occurred under Moses in his relation as leader of Israel. And still further, he makes no pretensions to originality, but proclaims to Israel and to the rest of the world that these laws are of divine origin. To regard his testimony as false is to conclude that the best code of moral science the world ever saw rests upon the foundation of a lie.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BIBLE AS RELATED TO REASON.

Section (I). Faith—how established.—Section (II). Mistaken judgment.—Section (III). Mistaken interpretation.—Section (IV). Mistaken verbal criticism.—Section (V). Reason not to be subordinated.—Section (VI). Interpretation the personal right and duty of all.

SECTION (I).

Faith—how established.

TESTIMONY is the groundwork of faith. There is and can be no intelligent faith without evidence. As well suppose that a man can form an intelligent conception of various colors without the organ of vision, as that the mind can exercise an enlightened faith without testimony. Neither can there be evidence unless comprehended by the mind. Testimony may be offered, and even understood by many, but to the mind that fails to understand it there remains nothing but a blank. Evidence sufficient to establish guilt may be offered in a court; but if the testimony be given in a foreign language, the court has no right to pronounce the sentence of condemnation. Faith, therefore, rests not only upon testimony, but upon such testimony as may be clearly comprehended by human reason.

Moreover, the increasing strength of faith is in the

ratio of the increasing testimony. The sum of our conviction is the measure of the evidence which the mind comprehends. While the court may be half doubting and half believing as to the guilt of the prisoner at the bar, there comes additional testimony, which removes the last reasonable doubt, and fixes a conviction firm as a rock.

And still further : faith may be the result of one or the other or both of two classes of facts, viz., *external* and *internal*. The former comes through sensation ; the latter is the result of reflection. One is external observation ; the other is internal experience. There need be no antagonism, however, between these two classes of facts, nor yet between the two kinds of testimony which go to establish them ; but rather, as with all truth, there should be perfect harmony, each helping to strengthen the force or modify the extravagance of the other.

So in matters of religion : faith may and of right should be rooted and grounded in the twofold testimony of *objective* and *subjective* evidence ; and that, too, more especially for the reason that spiritual truth, in the nature of things, is largely a matter of *experience*. A conclusion, therefore, upon the question of revelation based upon purely external testimony, without regard to the evidence of internal experience, may be entirely dissipated when all the available testimony is in. Reason asks for "a stay of judgment," until both the objective and subjective testimony have been heard.

Subjective testimony, being nothing short of the mind's own consciousness, is not only evidence which the mind can comprehend, but it is of the most convincing character. What faith so strong as that based upon the experiences of consciousness? Faith, however, founded only upon subjective testimony may be and often is wholly blind as to the external facts. Illustrations of this are not wanting, if we look into the history of heathen mythology. The polytheist may think that he has clear and honest convictions of the existence of the various gods that he worships. But these convictions may and will be dissipated by the presentation of external facts. Hence it is that much of the faith of mythology will not stand the test of enlightened reason. Religion, if true, will not only endure the light of scientific facts, but it courts their favor and is greatly helped by their presence. True science may be regarded as the touchstone of the true and the false of all the religions of the world. The unity of the universe, and the consequent unity of God, may be regarded as fixed facts of science. As science, like all truth, is never contradictory, so likewise nature and revelation must and will harmonize. Our faith, therefore, in the Bible's divinity of origin must rest not on subjective evidence alone, but, if we would be able to give a reason for the hope that is in us, we must also have objective testimony,—both conscious conviction and external facts. In the absence of this twofold testimony our conclusion on a sub-

ject of religion will be either heartless or superstitious.

For it is equally obvious that, as the subjective evidence of religious truth may be dissipated by the presentation of external facts, so also the seemingly objective testimony must often give way to internal consciousness. External things are not always what they seem to be. Much, very much, depends upon the internal condition of the mind which looks out upon those external things. Two men may look at the same object, and to one it is most beautiful, while to the other it is hideous. To the stoical heart there is no evidence of beauty and glory, while to the Christian philosopher "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." The astronomer may stand in the midst of the great "power hall" of the universe, and watch the revolving worlds as they proclaim the wisdom, power, glory, and boundless love of the Infinite, and yet if there be no corresponding spirit of love in his heart, to him "there is no speech nor language : their voice is not heard."

SECTION (II).

Mistaken Judgment.

The concession of the foregoing facts makes it apparent that the infidel at best is only half competent to criticise the Bible's divinity of origin. The head is incompetent because of the heart's inexperi-

ence. If it be conceded that, as a matter of philosophy, human reason may, and of right should, be enlightened on the subject of revelation by the twofold testimony of external facts and internal experience, then the conclusion reached only through objective evidence must of necessity be *ex parte*, and hence wholly unreliable.

While there is and can be no contradiction between science and revelation if rightly understood, it must be distinctly observed that they present two entirely distinct fields of thought. While nature offers to the intellect nothing but abstract science, revelation comes to the heart with moral and spiritual truth. It is thus that God would meet the necessities of man's two-sided nature. The mind obtains abstract science largely if not mainly through objective testimony, while it receives spiritual truth largely if not mainly through subjective evidence. One is chiefly the result of external observation; the other eminently that of internal experience.

As science differs from spiritual truth, so also the process by which we obtain the one is different from that by which we receive the other. The law of the intellect is one thing, while the law of the spirit is quite another thing. It is the "law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" by which we are able to judge of spiritual things. It is a philosophical as well as a Biblical truth, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know

them, because they are spiritually discerned." That is, the conviction arising in the carnal mind from objective testimony may be altogether changed by the presentation of subjective evidence: external theorizing may give way to internal experience. So before the infidel can become a competent critic on the evidences of Christianity, he must first obey the divine injunction, "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." If there be a godly infidel, let him step to the front, and his testimony on the subject of spiritual truth will challenge the respect of Christian philosophers whose reason demands the twofold testimony of objective and subjective truth. Spiritual truth must not be judged by a court before which nothing but *ex-parte* testimony is heard. Better that the judge decide the question of "life or death" when he has heard but one side of the testimony, than that the world should be robbed of its richest treasure by the sacrilegious hand of such one-sided pseudo-criticism.

Moreover, as a matter of fact, the subjective evidence of godliness has always been, and always will be, the dissipation of infidelity's objective testimony. The criticism of a heartless intellect cannot stand in the presence of the soul's richest and deepest experience. At best, the mere theory of the head as compared with the knowledge of the heart is like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Let the infidel, therefore, show proof of the experience of godliness

before he offers his testimony on the subject of "Reason and Revelation."

The foregoing philosophical facts clearly justify Professor Stowe's scathing criticism, where he says: "Nor do I believe that an irreverent, ungodly critic is the man to do justice to the Gospels, or tell the truth about them fairly, in any sense. He may investigate their language, examine their history, and give correctly the results of his verbal criticisms; but the real substance of the Gospels is far above, out of his sight: he can have no sympathy with Christ; he can have no conceptions of the motives which influenced the Apostles; he can have no idea of the feelings which animated the sacred writers; he is a total stranger to the whole soul of that which he criticises. When a man who has never seen can accurately describe colors, or one who has never had the sense of hearing can give a good account of sounds, or a horse with iron-shod hoofs can play tunes on a church-organ, then will I not refuse to believe that an ungodly critic can write a reliable book on the New Testament. It is only the very lowest part of the work that such a critic can perform; and when he comes to the higher criticism, the interior life of the word, he is wholly out of his sphere. How can a man with no poetry in his soul review a poem? How can a man with no mathematics properly estimate a treatise on fluxions? How can one destitute of the first principles of taste be a critic in the fine arts? And how can a man wholly

irreligious be a fit judge of the most religious of all books? . . . We will not idolize intellect which has no heart, nor allow profane hands to filch from us our choicest treasures." It is the cold intellect with no loving heart which has for all these years been setting up the Bible as "a man of straw," while reason, enlightened only by objective testimony, which is purely one-sided, has been shooting its missiles at a creature of its own creation. God intended that a man should have a heart as well as a head, and that by their united testimony Reason and Revelation should go hand in hand.

If the foregoing suggestions be in keeping with the facts of mental science, then may infidelity be disposed of by the following syllogism :

(1) Before the infidel's testimony on subjects of moral and spiritual truth be entitled to respectful consideration, his reason must have been enlightened by the twofold evidence of objective and subjective testimony ;

(2) But the infidel lays no claim to any such twofold enlightenment ;

(3) Therefore the infidel's testimony touching the Bible's divinity of origin is not entitled to intelligent consideration.

SECTION (III).

Mistaken Interpretation.

The Bible has been made a text-book of science, and has been criticised accordingly. The sacred

pages have been read and studied as if the paramount object of revelation was to make known the facts of geology, astronomy, and philosophy. For the two following reasons, we aver that it was no part of the object of revelation to make known the facts of science, much less its paramount object: First, God discovers to man by direct revelation only such truths as, in the absence of such direct revelation, are beyond human reach. But the facts of history have clearly shown that man, without any such direct divine interposition, has been competent to the task of discovering the facts of geology, astronomy, and philosophy. Therefore we are not at liberty to suppose that science is any part of revelation.

Secondly, God discovers to man by direct revelation only such truth as will elevate and save the race. But observation and experience have clearly demonstrated the fact that mere abstract science, in the absence of moral and spiritual truth, does not tend to the development of a perfect symmetrical manhood. Therefore the revelation of moral and spiritual truth was a necessity to man. God having thus supplied to man through revelation the necessary saving truths of morality and religion, science becomes henceforth not only the mind's natural attainment, but even the handmaid of religion—as it has ever proved to be. Intelligence is ever the precursor and handmaid of Christianity.

On account of failure to make the obvious distinc-

tion between the facts of science and the truths of revelation, there has been great labor of mind in seeking to reconcile the discrepancies between Genesis and geology. It has been assumed that Moses was inspired to tell the date of creation, and the exact number of days required to complete the sublime work of making the sun, stars, planets, and satellites of the solar system. But the sacred author does not even attempt to fix the time when God made the heavens and the earth. He only says, "*In the beginning* God created"—that is, in the indefinite past. It may have been thousands or even millions of years ago. Moses in this expression makes no pretension to know as to the time when "God created the heavens and the earth." As men at that time almost universally believed that creation was the work of a vast number of gods, Moses only wishes to emphasize the fact that "*One God*" was the direct Creator of all things. As to the time required in the great work of creation, he only uses the words "*Yom Ehhad*"—day one, or one day. He does not stop to explain as to whether he means a day of twenty-four hours or a "day of very long period." He leaves the world's wisdom to speculate upon that,—as perhaps it may have been doing for ages preceding his time. The only fact that he states is that creation was but a succession of results arising from the wisdom and power of "One God," as against the notions of polytheism.

As the thought of the Unity of God and the con-

sequent unity of the universe were fundamental in laying the foundation of a religion which should eventually root out all forms of error, we may readily suppose that this man of God made reference to science only by way of accommodating himself to the prejudices of those whom he would educate up into the sublimer thought of "One God" as the Creator of all things both animate and inanimate.

Having made the Bible what God never intended it to be, the task of adverse criticism has gone on. Not only infidelity but even Christianity has worried itself over the discrepancies of Genesis and geology. As if geology was all or even a part of revelation! God knew that man by searching could find out the facts of geology; hence it was no part of the mission of Moses to reveal them to him. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." When we cease to look in the Bible for that which God never put there we shall find no invincible difficulty in learning the great spiritual truths of revelation. We may concede that Moses knew little or nothing of the science of geology, and yet maintain, in the light of all the accumulated wisdom of the ages, that he *knew more of God than all the world beside*.

When "the world by wisdom knew not God," there was an opportunity and a *necessity* for a divine utterance. The world's wisdom, so far from discovering God, had led to the worship of "gods many and lords many." As the fact of one infinite Creator is not only at the foundation of all religious

homogeneousness, but also the center of all natural science as well, polytheism was sapping the very foundation of all truth. Hence the divine method was to begin, not with geology, but with the source of all science and the foundation of all true religion. Moses was divinely charged to stand in the presence of a polytheistic world and uncompromisingly declare, "Hear, O Israel: the Lord Jehovah our God is ONE LORD."

Genesis is not an anticipated thought on geology, which the world's wisdom may supersede, but it is the mighty and all-comprehensive thought of "GOD," to which the world has been coming for over three thousand years, and toward which it will advance through the cycles of an endless age.

The infidel's man of straw is the Bible as a book of geology, of astronomy, and of philosophy; while the intelligent Christian's man of "flesh and blood" is the Bible as a revelation of the character, attributes, and will of God—of the nature, origin, duty, and destiny of man. And we can safely say, in the light of history, that these are truths which the world's wisdom had utterly failed to comprehend, but truths which the Bible has set forth so clearly and fully that all the scholarship of the nineteenth century has not been able to shed an additional ray upon them. Against these truths, fundamental and indispensable to the civilization and elevation of our race, infidelity may continue to hurl its missiles, but with no more hope of success than the bellowing

bull of Bashan might hope to blow out the sun. Though it were granted that the discrepancy between the first and second chapters of Genesis is, in the light of modern science, absolutely irreconcilable, still it may readily be supposed that Moses was more than willing to make use of different or even discordant views as to the details of creation, if by so doing he could dissipate the world-wide curse of polytheism, and establish the fact that one God, and not many, was the absolute Creator of all the varied phenomena of the universe both animate and inanimate. Being surcharged with the only one supreme thought of God, like Paul, he was willing to be "all things to all men, that he might by all means save some."

The Bible deals not with the details of human ignorance, but it seeks rather to establish a fundamental truth, and thus in process of time dissipate all forms of error. To predicate truth in detailed particulars upon an uncertain foundation is to build the house upon the sand, only to topple and fall when the floods come. Nor does the Bible go into all the particulars of human duty, but rather its chief object is to inculcate the *spirit* of right living. The best system of ethics and theology the world ever saw is the life which flows out from a loving heart. That the streams of human thought and life might ultimately become pure, the divine method is thoroughly to cleanse the fountain. Only let the rubbish of polytheism, which had crushed all the

families of the earth, be swept away, and the fundamental truth of one God be laid at the foundation, and the temple of truth will steadily go up until its base shall fill the earth and its top reach to the skies.

We might concede then, if need be, that Moses knew nothing more of the details of the created universe than his countrymen, and yet maintain that he was a messenger in the hand of God to bear a message from heaven to earth that must be conceded to have laid the foundation of our present advanced and future advancing ages of civilization.

What has been said touching Moses and the Pentateuch may be said also of all the books of the Old Testament and their authors. Suppose that Joshua knew little or nothing of the science of astronomy: his ignorance did not hinder him from being a messenger of God in establishing honesty by making an example of the hypocritical and treacherous Achan, and in hurling the divine thunderbolts against the most degrading idolatry of the ancient Canaanites. And even suppose that the Oriental and graphic poetry about the sun standing still (Josh. x : 12, 13)—which, by the way, are not the words of Joshua, nor of the author of the book, whoever he may be; but of an unknown poet called Jasher—will not endure the ordeal of our cold Western scientific criticism, does that in any wise affect the great fact of history, that Joshua was instrumental in the hands of God in driving out those

wicked nations whose degradation was complete, whose cup of iniquity was full, and whose impious and abominable wickedness loudly cried to heaven for divine removal?

Is it objected that such bloody war was a cruel outrage upon the rights of those people? We answer: It is just like God to sweep off the wicked, and thereby wickedness, by pestilence or otherwise, and thus give place to the righteous and righteousness. Seemingly cruel death often comes as the immediate result of violated law, even upon those who have not offended. Instead of pestilence or famine, Joshua served the double purpose of preparing the way and establishing a nation whose theocracy would dissipate the polytheism and corruption of the Canaanitish nations, and lay the foundation of a "religion of progress and universal unity."

In the defense of the Bible, no one need claim that Joshua or any of the sacred writers was omniscient, or even good authority in art, science, or literature. It is quite enough to know that these men of God were divinely charged with the duty of making known to our race only such truths as were fundamental to the well-being of mankind, and such, too, as the experience of three thousand years had proved to be beyond the reach of human grasp. Whatever superstition may require, certainly reason does not demand that in defending the Bible we should claim for the sacred authors that which they never claimed for themselves. It is in this special

particular and for this stereotyped reason that the sacred Scriptures have suffered more in the house of their pretended friends than in that of their avowed enemies. Their allusions to physical fact were obviously more for the purpose of illustration than of scientific statement. As suggested, they deal with fundamental spiritual truth, which if believed and obeyed must eventually correct all mistakes, and fill the world with truth and righteousness.

While Paul could clearly comprehend the divine logic by which he could write the Book of Romans, in which he sets forth the relation of the creature to the Creator, and the obligations imposed by such sacred relation to love and obey God; while he could show that in the presence of the universal Father there was neither Jew nor Gentile, but all children of a common origin; while he could point out the relation of man to universal man, and the consequent obligation of helping each other up into a nobler manhood; while all these truths, fundamental in binding man to man and the race back to God, were divinely set forth, Paul made no pretensions to any art but that of tent-making. Nor did his divine commission require that he should be able to construct a telescope or number the stars. A man may be eminently qualified by divine appointment to comprehend and reveal spiritual truth, and yet be entirely ignorant as to the methods of constructing a kaleidoscope or of making a steam-engine. So, on the other hand, a man may know

very much of geology and the stars, and yet have but precious little knowledge of the character and requirements of God, or of the duty and destiny of man.

Biblical criticism should proceed upon the claims which the sacred Scriptures have made for themselves, and not upon the claims which men have superstitiously made for them. Every effort at defending the Bible other than as a book of spiritual truth must, in the nature of things, prove a hindrance rather than a help.

Granting, if need be, that the sacred writers knew nothing more of art, science, and literature than was taught in their day: the sublime truths which they were commissioned to reveal will not only stand all the more secure, but by the very comparison they will appear all the more beautiful. With the seeming view of impressing us with the infinite sublimity of spiritual truth, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise: and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty: and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things which are: that no flesh should glory in his presence." Had science discovered to the world the moral and spiritual truths of the Bible, then man might have had whereof to boast.

Certainly Reason must regard Revelation as man's

necessity and God's opportunity. Only necessity and incompetency on the part of man will God supplement. In the discovery of science there was no necessity of divine help other than that which God gives to every earnest seeker after truth; but not so in regard to moral and spiritual truth. We only voice the facts of history when we say that the world's increasing wisdom in science was only equaled by its growing ignorance of God. Egypt, the mother of science, was most prolific in her multiplication of deities, and her constantly increasing idolatry, superstition, and consequent degradation; while in Athens, the metropolis of learning, their vocabulary of names was not equal to the number of their gods. When the resources of the worldly-wise were exhausted, and the race was rapidly tending to the lowest depths of infamy and ruin, Divinity interposed. "When the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believed."

SECTION (IV).

Mistaken Verbal Criticism.

Infidelity, as it flatters itself, having disposed of the Bible as a book of science (which it nowhere claims to be), next proceeds to the task of verbal criticism. And here again we find the "man of straw." Reason, in accepting the Bible as containing a revelation from God, does not demand that

the inspired authors should have been always divinely perfect in the use of language or in the choice of their illustrations of the truth which had been divinely given to them. To do this would be not only to destroy individuality in the use of speech and imagery, but to suppose that each and all of these authors used the best possible words, and in every case made choice of the most happy illustrations in conveying the divine thought. But this the meagerness of the Hebrew language, however graphic it might be, rendered impossible.

And this concession, so far from reflecting upon the fundamental truths of revelation, only imparts new luster to the divine thought, as in contrast with the imperfections of human speech and imagery. We readily imagine that God's saving truth is as far beyond the limits of man's speech as the heavens are above the earth ; but the finite mind can comprehend nothing more of this infinite truth than can be conveyed by human language. Hence it is that speech and illustration must, in the nature of things, be adapted to the varied capacity of human understanding. And as we go on to comprehend more and more of these sublime truths of revelation touching God, duty, and destiny, so will human speech and imagery be transformed more and more into the likeness of the divine thought. God implants an instinctive love in the mind of the parent, and then allows the mother to use such words and illustrations as in her judgment will best

convey that loving thought to the mind of the child. So the heavenly method of educating a race up to the sublime truths of revelation is to fill the mind with the thoughts of saving grace, and then allow it to choose its own methods of conveying those thoughts. Yet as a matter of fact the human method of conveying the divine thought has in no essential particular marred the sacred truth; and this for the obvious reason that when the mind has once clearly comprehended the truth it finds no insuperable difficulty in conveying that truth to others. "Human minds are unlike in the impressions which they receive from the same word; and it is certain that one man seldom gives to another, of different temperament, education, and habits of thought, by language, exactly the same idea, with the same shape and color, as that which lies in his own mind; yet if men are honest and right-minded they can come near enough to each other's meaning for all purposes of practical utility" (Stowe: "Books of the Bible"). Hence, as there was no necessity for the inspiration of language and illustration, it is enough to believe that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."

Besides, saving truth was to be conveyed to an infinite variety of minds, and it appears most reasonable that the divine purpose would be best attained by allowing each of the inspired writers to maintain his personal individuality in the use of words and explanations. No stereotyped method of in-

struction is best adapted to all ages and to all countries. It always has been, is now, and always will be true, that a variety of style in the use of language and illustration can best meet the necessities of the public mind. God has met this necessity in allowing the sacred writers to maintain their individuality. Verbal criticism has discovered to us peculiarities of style in the writings of Moses, Paul, John, and others of the sacred fraternity. We determine the author of a sacred book largely by his style of utterance. This is a fact conceded by all Biblical critics. And yet the concession means to admit that the authors of the Scriptures, having received from God spiritual truth which human effort could not attain, were then left free to convey that truth by just such methods as were at their command. Hence the Biblical student must not look for verbal exactness, even in the original manuscript, if we had it,—much less in any of the various copies and translations therefrom.

But even though the words and imagery as well as the spiritual truth were originally the direct gift of God, unless we suppose the divine hand to have equally directed the translation of the original from language to language, however perfect the first copy, the succeeding versions have all been more or less subject to mutilation by human hands. It is certainly obvious that if verbal correctness was a necessity with the first manuscript, it was equally a necessity in after translations. If not, then it

would seem that only a part, and that a very small part, of the world has been favored with an unmixed revelation. If the divine plan of saving a race involved the necessity of not only revealing spiritual truth, but language and imagery as well, it would seem to have failed of its purpose, unless the work of inspiring speech and illustration be continued from language to language and from generation to generation.

But such a supposition is as groundless as it is needless. The necessities of the world were divinely supplied when the fundamental truths of saving grace had been clearly made known. As the suggestions of this section not only dispose of the infidel's "man of straw," but remove a difficulty over which intelligent Christians have had no little worry, it is important that they be distinctly understood. We therefore dismiss the subject of verbal criticism with the following syllogistic propositions:

(1) God directly inspires no man with that which the human mind can obtain without such divine interposition.

(2) Purely human effort can obtain language and illustration to convey any truth which the mind clearly comprehends.

(3) Therefore, inspiration having given to the mind of the sacred writers a clear comprehension of spiritual truth, the language and imagery are no part of revelation.

It only remains to be observed that while the

doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the holy Scriptures came out into the light of the Reformation decked in the costume of the dark ages, and sanctioned by the Church as fundamental to orthodoxy, it has, nevertheless, in passing through the ordeal of sense and reason been "stripped of much of its plumage," so that its former self is not now recognized as the standard of the higher and better criticism. This is the view entertained by Dr. Stowe, whose orthodoxy no one will question. After giving some illustrations of differences of reading in the different manuscripts, he says: "Nor do they in the least degree necessarily change or even modify our ideas respecting any scriptural fact, doctrine, or precept. They somewhat disturb those who hold the notion of a strictly verbal inspiration, and exact *verbum verbo* dictation by the Holy Spirit in the composition of the Scriptures; but these I suppose are very few in number, and not the most thoughtful or intelligent." ("Books of the Bible," p. 79.) At least we must conclude that the process of eliminating the superstitious from the true is not complete.

SECTION (V).

Reason not to be Subordinated.

Human reason is the touchstone to the Bible, both as to its origin and its interpretation. Every effort at subordinating reason has been at the ex-

pense of the Bible and in the interest of a vulgar superstition. The sacred book is nothing more than the Koran or the Zend-vesta; nor is its language anything else than the foolish gibberish of a foreign tongue, except as it is adjudged at the bar of reason. The plainest matter of fact is that we receive the Bible as the book of God in one of two ways: either, first, reason is convinced of the truth of revelation on the ground of objective and subjective testimony, or, secondly, we blindly receive it on the "say-so" of somebody else, whose traditional blindness may have been transmitted from generation to generation. Such credulous assumption has been the bane of revelation and the curse of the Church. Wicked men "love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil." So likewise a false religion can only be perpetuated by dwelling under the shadow of a dark superstition. Nor can the nightmare of religious falsehood be dissipated except by the introduction of religious truth. But the price of such truth is "eternal vigilance." Nature is most sparing of her best gifts. If we would stand upon the hill of science, we must not sit at its base hoping to be carried to its top by the hand of another; but we must chisel out every niche into which we place our feet, and thus, by dint of our own effort, stand upon the summit, achieving a personal victory. So likewise if we would stand as the peer with angels, looking into the face of the infinite Father and exploring the endless fields of spiritual

truth, we must not, with stupid credulity, accept the Bible on the blind say-so of tradition, but we must make use of our best and most enlightened reason.

Show us the most pitiful little soul that has ever disgraced our holy religion, and we will point you to the man who, under the blighting influence of credulity, has committed the keeping of his thoughts to the hand of the priest or Church. Write the history of the man who has challenged the hatred of wicked men and moved the world God-ward, and it will be but the biography of him whose enlightened reason has accepted the Bible on the ground of its overwhelming testimony. Little faith is the child of little effort, while great faith is born of great travail of soul.

From this it would seem that God would not stultify reason, his best gift to man, by requiring the present generation to accept the Bible as a divine book on the ground of its great antiquity, and for the reason that it has been so accepted by the best scholarship of the world. This may, of right, be received as evidence *à priori*, and yet such antecedent probability might be wholly dissipated by the facts of objective history.

Nor are we required to accept the Bible as of divine origin on the ground that it has developed a spirit of large benevolence and universal philanthropy, such as the world never saw. Even infidelity must allow that the central thought of Bible religion is "love to God and love to man," and

that, despite both ignorance and bad blood, it has built up asylums for the poor and helpless of the great family, and stretched out its arms to lift up the fallen and to elevate and civilize the race in a way that, outside of Christianity, was never known under the sun. This, too, is strong presumptive evidence in favor of revelation, but the price of such testimony is too cheap to be of greatest value.

Thus the Bible, by the very mystery with which it is surrounded, challenges our reason on to sterner effort. As previously suggested, we are not at liberty to reject revelation until reason has been enlightened by all the available testimony, both objective and subjective. Nor are we required to receive it on any less grounds. God says, "Come, let us reason together." And he that refuses to accept the heavenly invitation must rest under the curse of a degrading superstition, or else (what is no better) through moral cowardice accept the Bible at the hand of another. In this age of infidelity and widespread skepticism there is an urgent demand for more reason and less stupid credulity. Christ, when he warns his disciples against impostors, would encourage the most thorough investigation as to religious truth. It must be obvious to every thoughtful mind that the very question of "Bible or no Bible" is a question that can only be answered at the bar of reason. Otherwise the hideous monster of blind superstition will settle down upon the Church, and the world soon be deprived of that

sacred book whose highest appeal is to human reason, and whose sublimest object is to bind all hearts together and all souls back to God.

SECTION (VI).

Interpretation the Personal Right and Duty of all.

Having determined the question of "Bible or no Bible," it is the province of human reason to proceed to the task of interpretation. As we have no means of determining the origin of the sacred books except by an enlightened reason, so neither can we know the "mind of the Spirit" but by the "spirit of a sound mind." All else is the assumption of another's faith and the surrender of individual manhood. We are not justified, much less required, to accept these sacred books as explained by the Church of Rome during the dark ages, nor by the Protestant Church in the sixteenth century. Any such requirement on the part of the Church or individual is sacrilegious and profane—robbing God of his truth and the soul of its divine rights.

The truth of this proposition is clearly seen in the light of a twofold testimony: first, while the individual conscience was disregarded, and the common people were denied the right of reading and understanding the sacred oracle, each for himself, history shows that the world was proportionally robbed of the Bible; and, secondly, just in proportion as the many have been required to submit to the judgment

of the few have ignorance and stupidity disgraced the Church. This twofold evil has been, and is now, a legacy entailed upon the Christian religion because of a gross violation of the divine purpose. God has revealed spiritual truth, not to the Church of Rome, nor to that of Protestantism, but revelation has been made to the individual soul, to one as to another. "Let every man be fully persuaded *in his own mind*," and not in that of another, is the teaching of inspiration, as it is the philosophy of the soul's individual right. Hence, so far as any man or set of men have, by purpose or otherwise, circumscribed human reason in its honest search after God's truth, by exactly so much it has been an insult to revelation and an outrage to the individual soul.

Moreover, that God has made a revelation not to the Church, but to the individual, and has imposed with it the right and duty of each to read and understand for himself, is seen not only in the fact that every abridgment of such personal right has been attended with a twofold evil, but, furthermore, that as the Bible contains a great variety of truth, so there is a corresponding diversity in the world of mind; thus indicating that, in order to the discovery of this inexhaustible treasure, each individual mind must contribute his part. Though the sacred book has been the subject of profoundest thought for more than three thousand years, it remains to this day the storehouse of never-failing truth. It is in this that the Bible is unlike any other book. The orations of

Cicero the Roman orator, the teachings of Socrates the sage of Athens, the wisest books of the wisest ages, have all been exhausted. But whose self-assumption will presume to say that he has scaled the heights, fathomed the depths, and comprehended the broad grasp of Biblical truth? He that truly comprehends most of revelation appears in his own eyes to know the least, while he who arrogates to himself the standard of completed orthodoxy may be regarded as of least authority. And yet nothing but the assumption of such exhaustive knowledge would dare to say to the honest seeker after religious truth, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther."

It would seem then that the most enlightened reason must regard the Bible as the book of all books, in that it comes down with its childlike thoughts to meet the necessities of the most feeble mind, and then soars aloft to challenge the profoundest thought of the most giant intellect. Imagine a scale reaching from the weakest up to the mightiest mind of earth. Mark on that scale every degree and every millionth part of a degree, and you will find men in point of native and acquired ability occupying every conceivable point on that long scale. Then turn to the Bible and you will observe that religious truth has been so divinely graded as to exactly meet the necessities of each of these individual minds. The Bible in this peculiarity has nothing approximately equal save the old book of Nature written by the hand of the same Infinite Author.

But if that truth, so eminently adapted to the health and growth of that individual soul, answers the purpose for which it was given, it must be honestly sought after and tenaciously clung to by that soul. Objective philosophy cannot measure the mind's capacity, nor can any system of theological manipulation put religious truth into the head. Nothing, absolutely nothing, can do it but honest personal effort. To interfere with this, by creed or otherwise, is to rob God and commit an outrage upon the individual. Better stay the mind in its earnest seeking after science than to hedge the soul in its honest "feeling after God." Were it possible to write out a confession of faith, in the most abridged form, embracing all the truth of revelation, and to have every man on earth tacitly subscribe to that confession, the only conceivable result would be to encourage the most degraded ignorance and to intensify the darkness of religious superstition. Let there be as many creeds as there are men who have the ability and courage to think. But let no man or set of men trespass upon the God-given right of another by assuming to put metes and bounds to his theological thinking, whether it relates to Trinity, Depravity, Atonement, Baptism, or any other doctrine of disputed theology.

If, then, revelation was made to the individual and not to the Church, and if, furthermore, religious truth is to be life and health to the soul because of honest personal effort in obtaining it, then the obvious duty of the Church is to encourage the largest possible

personal liberty in earnestly and honestly seeking after the truth of God. Instead of laboring to cram the mind with a dogmatic theology which nobody can understand, let the pulpit aim to excite the spirit of individual honest investigation, and truth will be discovered, the soul enlarged, and God glorified.

Nor need we fear that such liberty will jeopardize the Bible or in any wise endanger the truth of revelation. As well suppose that an honest philosopher will endanger science, as that an honest reader of the Bible will endanger that sacred book. The danger must be looked for in the other direction. The bloody pages of ecclesiastical history show that it is repression of thought that stands as a menace to the Bible's religion of love, and as a burning outrage upon the individual conscience. The spirit of dogmatism has not only encouraged a vulgar superstition which is alike soul-degrading and God-dishonoring, but it has been most prolific in the production of infidelity.

We have yet to learn that the spirit of dictation as to what an honest seeker after truth shall believe has ever been productive of love and good-will; rather it has led to the bitterest hatred. It was that which burned Michael Servetus; and it is the same spirit, in kind though not in degree, which does in this more enlightened age unchurch a man for no other cause than that of his honest opinion of Bible truth. This effort at robbing the individual soul of its divine right, and sacrilegiously constructing reve-

lation into a yoke by which to bind the individual conscience, has led even thoughtful men to say, "Behold, how these brethren *hate* one another!" Infidelity has interpreted the Bible, largely, not from what it says, but from what men have said about it; not from what it is, but rather from the spirit and life of those who profess its faith. The intelligent reader will not fail to observe that the criticisms of such men as Paine and Voltaire relate largely to popular theories of interpretation and to the outgrowths of human depravity, rather than to the Bible in the light of reason. When, therefore, the Church shall cease from publishing a theology which stultifies common-sense, and instead thereof, give to the world an open Bible, urging the right and duty of each to read and understand as God may help to understand; and when the spirit of dogmatism, which genders strife, contention, and often the bitterest animosity, shall become a thing of the past, and the Church shall manifest a charity as broad as our humanity, and a spirit of love akin to that of the Divine Redeemer, then shall skepticism retreat, and infidelity hide itself for very shame. He who would unchristianize his brother because of his opinion touching Bible interpretation, needs to remember that the difference is mutual, and that his crimination leads to recrimination and endless disputation. "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God." Only let professed Christianity become Christianized, and the days of honest and intelligent infidelity will be numbered.

PART III.

THEOLOGY.

(i) AGNOSTICISM.—(ii) PANTHEISM.—(iii) ATHEISM.—(iv) THEISM.

INTRODUCTORY.

THERE is no thought coming within the scope of human reason that is so vast as the thought of God. It is the foundation of all true religion and the center of all natural science, simple as causation, and yet boundless as the universe. Words, meditation, and even imagination must alike fail to compass this mighty subject. Like science, it comes to us in the simplest form, and then stretches out far beyond our reach. But because in its momentous outgoing it evades our grasp, shall we therefore cease our efforts to ascend its heights? If so, then *thinking* is vain, for all thought deals with mystery. Nay, more, every step in advance is but a mystery solved. Man's mission on earth seems to be to unravel the numberless threads of mystery. And as the thought of God is the mystery of all mysteries, and as the human soul seems to be infinite in its capabilities, we may well imagine that man is to

have an eternity in which to unravel the endless thread. The ceaseless energies of the Infinite must of necessity forever elude the comprehension of our grasp.

Moreover, the thought of God is not only the greatest of all thoughts, but it is of more practical importance than all else put together. We have sought to show (Part I., Chap. III.) that man's very being, for weal or woe, depends upon his conception of Deity. As we have limited views of God, so will our vision of human possibilities be circumscribed. But if we have an exalted conception of the Creator, then the creature will be correspondingly magnified. Moreover, if we regard the Infinite as being vindictive and hateful, so certainly as effect follows cause will the finite become tyrannical and hateful. But if we conceive of God as a being of "too pure eyes to behold iniquity," then shall human passions be bound, and the soul will be nerved to a life of active purity.

Nor can we hope to escape this ever-present thought of God. Though it were true that

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

we are not at liberty to avail ourselves of the blessedness. If we seek not by a determined effort to obtain an exalted view of God, then such are the environments of our life and the nature of our being that the sordid thought will possess the mind.

Under the light of this sentiment we may clearly trace the steps of civilization. The most degraded peoples of the globe are those whose conceptions of God are the most circumscribed. Fetichism is the nearest atheism to which any people have ever been known to come ; and the moral character which they have attributed to their fetiches is only equaled by their degradation. On the other hand, the greatest measure of human completeness is the conception of *God as Father* ; and the sum of this thought is the measure of the highest civilization known to our race.

As the thought of God is not only the greatest of all and the most practical of all, and a thought, moreover, that will impress itself upon the human mind in some form or other, so the privilege of determining the character of that conception is of infinite moment.

The history of our race illustrates two facts: first, that without mental activity we are, by the necessities of our nature, led to a low and degrading view of the Infinite ; secondly, that the price of an exalted and elevating conception of God is " eternal vigilance " under the light of revelation. And this is in perfect keeping with the law of compensation which everywhere prevails. Its results are clearly seen in all the departments of practical life, whether in agriculture, science, art, or literature. God yields his best gifts only into the hand of unyielding will and indomitable perseverance. We need not hope,

therefore, to obtain the truth of all truths and the blessing of all blessings with folded hands and a soul of sordid indifference. The wisest man of earth, for all that enriches human nature, is the man who knows most of the true character of God and the administration of his divine laws; while the man who is most ignorant of all, however worldly-wise, is the man who knows least of the Creator and the uniform methods by which he controls man, body and soul. And he who exhibits the most practical good sense is the man who has succeeded best in bringing himself, physically and psychologically, into the most perfect harmony with the administration of the laws of his being; while the most stupid and senseless of all is he whose infamous life is an open insult to the Deity and an outrage upon humanity. Therefore, true wisdom and practical good sense are the measures of our knowledge of the divine character and our obedience to his will. God has made it so, and we might as well hope to drag the sun from his orbit as to expect to make it otherwise.

Having said so much as to the vastness of this subject, and its practical bearing upon human life, we are now prepared to enter upon its more critical examination. While the varied phenomena of the universe, as so many results, are facts universally conceded, the cause or causes of these phenomena are problems which in the mind of some seem difficult to solve.

The earth, suns, planets, satellites, and a world of

animated beings exist, as all can see. The question which presses for an answer on every hand is, Whence are all these, and whither do they tend? Are they from eternity and to eternity, without causation? The time was when these questions might have been answered in the affirmative, for aught that was known; but now these inquiries cannot thus easily be disposed of. Science has clearly discovered to us the fact that not only animal life upon the globe is of comparatively recent date, but even the earth itself is known to have had a beginning. Everything with which we are surrounded, both animate and inanimate, bears the marks of *time* and not of *eternity*. Moreover, worlds are going out of existence, while others come to take their place. During the last two or three centuries upward of thirteen fixed stars have disappeared. One of them, situated in the northern hemisphere, presented a peculiar brilliancy, and was so bright as to be seen by the naked eye at midday. La Place supposes that it was burned up, as it has never been seen since. New worlds are being discovered in such position as to indicate their recent origin. Creation is going on *now* as ever before. A world springs into being, then by a long series of progressive steps it reaches its highest destiny. And having served fully the divine purpose, it may collapse into chaos or be consumed—not annihilated, but reconstructed into higher organisms; as Kant has well said, “a phoenix, which but consumes itself

in order to rise rejuvenated from its ashes." Mutability as to organism and immutability as to the grand total of materials which are ever in the plastic hand of the Infinite Creator is the law which seems to pervade the universe. All about us we see innumerable vegetables and animals springing into life; they mature, decay, and die, to be replaced by others. "In the same manner," says Kant (*Hist. and Theory of the Heavens*), "worlds and systems of worlds perish and are engulfed in the abyss of eternity: meanwhile creation is ever active to erect new structures in other parts of the heavens, and to replace the loss with profit; and if a system of worlds has, in the course of its duration, exhausted every variety of life of which its constitution will allow,—if it has become a superfluous link in the chain of being,—then nothing can be more fit than that it should now play its last part in the drama of the successive transformation of the universe,—a part which is but the due of every finite phenomenon—that of rendering its tribute to mutability. Creation is so infinite that we may unhesitatingly regard a world or a galaxy of worlds in comparison to it as we would a flower or an insect as compared to this earth."

All analogy suggests that as our world has had a beginning it will likewise have an ending. In the economy of infinite wisdom it will play its part, and then contribute its due to the never-ceasing change. For long, long ages it has been coming up through its successive stages of development. In the com-

ing future it will reach its zenith of perfection. Then, at the hand of an eternal agency, it will be transmuted and fashioned into a likeness of superior glory. So we cannot say "these phenomena are from eternity to eternity."

Without an intelligent doubt, all these worlds and animated beings had a beginning. The question to be solved is, By whom or by what method was this beginning accomplished?

In seeking the solution of this question not less than four different *isms* have been advocated, viz., Agnosticism, Pantheism, Atheism, and Theism.

As truth is made more transparent by comparison with error, we shall carefully examine these different theories of creation in the following chapters.

CHAPTER X.

AGNOSTICISM.

The theory.—In what true, in what false.—Hegelianism.—
Contradicted by experience.

THE agnostic theory is, that while all the varied phenomena of the universe, both animate and inanimate, may be accepted as the direct result of causation, yet such is the nature of that great first cause, that it is not only unknown, but *unknowable*.

The Rev. Warren Hathaway epitomizes the theory thus: "The agnostic, or know-nothing, says, Why talk of spirit and spiritualities? Why talk of that which no science nor sense can reveal? There may be a God, but he is unknowable. There may be a heaven and immortality, but of these we can have no knowledge, no assurance. We cannot look beyond the *nature of things*, and all investigation is bounded by the chain of cause and effect, forged by necessity, that prevails around us."

While this agnostic statement is somewhat complex, yet it may be as intelligible as the system will allow. If it means only to say that "God is unknowable" in the sense that the finite mind cannot comprehend the Infinite in its entirety, nothing can be more true. Reverently may we exclaim, "Who can comprehend the attributes of infinity? Who can grasp the infinite wisdom that guides the stars in their trackless way? Who can measure the power of that omnipotent Heart whose mighty throbbing pulsates the universe? Who can look into the vista of the past, and out into the depths of the future, and grasp the thought of "without beginning and without ending"? We acknowledge that both "science and sense" unite in illustrating the utter impossibility of the finite comprehending the Infinite in all its completeness.

But if it is meant to say that "God is unknowable" in the sense that the creature can know *nothing* of the Creator, then it must be regarded as a colossal

instance of baseless assumption. Every discovery in natural science is but a revelation of the wisdom and power of contrivance. And the measure of our discovery of this contrivance is the sum of our objective knowledge of the infinite contriver. The more we learn of nature and its laws, the more we shall know of God and his methods. Every step of coherent thinking reveals the presence of a designing mind. Moreover, the complete adaptedness of the human mind to the discovery of these methods would seem to indicate most clearly that man's task, for time and eternity, will be to unravel the thread of mystery that we may know more and more of the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Infinite. The thought, therefore, of knowing God objectively is not a question of fact, but rather one of *more or less*. We know much, but the secret is still in advance.

If it be alleged that man's inability to know God in his entirety is evidence that "God is unknowable," then with equal propriety may we affirm that there is nothing in the universe that is not "unknowable." There is absolutely nothing that the Infinite ever made that the finite can fully comprehend. The least of all the works of God is an elementary particle of matter. But where is the mind that can comprehend that infinitesimally small thing? Divide and subdivide until your apparatus fails, and then imagination takes hold of the possibility of its being divided again. No process of thinking can rid

us of the supposition of the endless divisibility of matter.

It is, therefore, in perfect keeping with "science and sense" to believe that while we may know much of God and his laws, yet the secret is still before us, challenging us on and still on to the unknown heights.

The very existence of a Creator must be evinced by the subjective evidence of the creature. As a necessity, man could know nothing of Omniscience but for the conscious wisdom of his own mind. The thought of Omnipotence would never enter the soul but for the subjective fact of its own power. Nor would man ever think of an intelligence and strength outside of and above himself but for the objective testimony everywhere to be seen. If there were no manifestations of design, then the supposition of a designer would be wholly gratuitous. But when fitness, adaptation, and design are everywhere manifest, then it is folly intensified to say that there is no designer. Nothing is more reasonable, therefore, than that we can know nothing of God outside of the domain of his creation and government.

If the agnostic expression "we cannot look beyond the nature of things" means that we cannot look at causation as above and independent of the effect, then we demur. We aver that it is a mental impossibility to conceive of *cause* and *effect* as identical. An effort to think of a contriver and a contrivance as the self-same will at once convince us that we are grasping after a phantom. Every human

accomplishment has taught us to distinguish between the one and the other. Nor is it possible for the mind to recognize an effect without supposing *an adequate* cause. To conclude, therefore, that the mind cannot "look beyond the nature of things" for an adequate cause of the varied phenomena of design is to contradict all observation and experience, by supposing that the Creator and creation are identical. It is possible to conceive of the Creator as being greater than the creation, but we can no more think of a manifest design as being greater than the designer, than we can imagine, with the Hindoo cosmogony, that "the globe rests on an elephant, the elephant on a turtle, and the turtle on nothing at all." But if in the expression "we cannot look beyond the nature of things" is meant only that we can know nothing of God except as he has manifested himself, objectively and subjectively, in the works of creation, physical and spiritual, and in the management of them, then we heartily concur.

If when the agnostic says "all investigation is bounded by the chain of cause and effect" he means to say that cause and effect are necessarily related as antecedent and subsequent, then the statement is in perfect keeping with the facts of science ; but if he means that "cause and effect" are identical, that the universe is the cause of its own phenomena, that "by any method of logical reasoning we cannot get beyond the thing created"—if this is what is meant

to be said, then certainly nothing can be more grossly unscientific.

If this know-nothing, when he speaks of the chain of cause and effect as "forged by necessity that prevails around us," means only that the chain which binds our investigation has been forged by the necessities of God's immutable methods of operating the universe, then it is in perfect keeping with the faith which accepts the Creator and Ruler as a being "too wise to err, and too good to do wrong;" but if he means to say that this necessity inheres in the nature of things, that it is a cosmos without a cause, a creature without a Creator, then it is as sacrilegious and profane as it is stupid and senseless.

The foregoing comparisons clearly indicate the line of thought which separates agnosticism from theism. While the term "agnosticism" is of recent date, it represents a theory that has grown out of a philosophy which is as old as the skepticism of Germany, and older.

Hegel, Fichte, Kant, and Strauss were not agnostics, but rather in their own estimation they were omniscients. In referring to Hegel and his followers Dr. Stowe says: "The enormous self-conceit of these men, the self-conceit of Hegel himself, the pitiful folly of his admirers who pronounced their eulogies over his grave, are among the greatest monstrosities which ever existed on this planet of monsters—comparable to nothing but lizards larger

than ten whales, and to frogs bigger than elephants, which are said to have existed on the pre-Adamite earth." Referring to the infidel philosophy which turned Germany upside down, he says, "Self-conceit is a symptom of the disease." And again, quoting from Neander, he pronounces it "the philosophy of a one-sided logic of intellectual fanaticism and of self-deification."

While the spirit of self-deification doubtless entered largely into the skepticism of Germany, these men must be conceded to be men of "sense and science." Hence we can best serve the cause of truth by giving them the full benefit of an honest statement of their position.

The Hegelian philosophy of religion, which assumed definite form about the beginning of this century, was so excessively speculative, that after Hegel's death it became divided into not less than three distinct schools, called severally "the right, center, and left, according as they represented supernaturalism, mysticism, and rationalism." With a view of making these three distinctions more obvious, they have been formulated, "religious, non-religious, and anti-religious."

Under this chapter nothing need be said of the extreme right or left, but only of the center—the non-religious. It is in this school of philosophical "mysticism" that we find the germ of agnosticism. While the agnostic says that "God is unknowable," the mystic gives the same thought when he says,

“By any method of logical reasoning, we cannot get beyond the thing created.” And again, “The knowledge of God is the knowledge of ourselves.” And still again, “There is no God; and the devout man, when he thinks he is worshiping God, is simply worshiping himself.”

According to this philosophy, every effort of the human mind to go out after the thought of an infinite God must of necessity fall within the line of its own finite nature. We cannot think of a God outside of ourselves. We can think of a creature, but not of a Creator; of a universe, but not of a God. It is this “mystic” or “agnostic” philosophy which has done more to unsettle the faith of Germany and France, and to diffuse a spirit of religious indifference all over Europe and America, than all else put together. While bald atheism or even infidelity would be looked upon as “a monster, horrid, huge, and blind,” this mystic philosophy has served as a religious opiate to lull to sleep the soul’s aspirations after God. Besides, it is so modest, humble, and unpretending, that it insinuates itself into the soul of the sluggard. Thus for more than three quarters of a century it has been stealthily sapping the very foundation of our holy religion, tending to lead all coming generations to live without hope and die without God. It is most important, therefore, that we carefully examine this philosophy, which has been so destructive of a “religion of unity and universal progress.”

We give this mystic theory the full benefit of an honest statement when we say that it proceeds, first, upon the premise *that the human mind cannot think of itself as a personality independent of the body*; and that therefore, secondly, the human mind *cannot think of God as a spiritual personality outside of the universe.*

One of the most eminent of this center school of philosophy says, "As soon, especially, as we endeavor to conceive God as existing before or without the world, we become conscious at once that all we have left is an unsubstantial fantasy." While we grant this to be a conclusion entirely logical from the premise, we nevertheless declare the premise to be a false assumption, and hence the inference untrue. As a matter of philosophical fact, we aver that the independent, personal existence of the soul is as susceptible of proof as is that of the body. The fact that the human body exists is made known to the mind purely through the objective testimony of figure, extension, solidity, etc. These physical evidences are conveyed to the mind through the senses, and in the absence of this testimony all we have left "is an unsubstantial fantasy."

The soul recognizes itself as a personality independent of the body, not by the objective testimony of "figure, extension, and solidity," but by the subjective evidence of faith, hope, fear, love, etc. But because these attestations are purely spiritual are they any the less convincing? Can

the mind any more doubt the existence of the immaterial thing which we call *love* than it can question the existence of the body? Nor is it possible to think of the body, or any part of it, as this thing which hopes, fears, loves, and hates. The effort at such thinking will convince us of the impossibility.

To illustrate further the fact that the soul is a personality independent of the body, it may be observed that as the material lives on physical food, so the immaterial must exist on *spiritual* nourishment. These things which we call faith, hope, and love are as indispensable to the well-being of the soul as is bread to the body. Deprive the soul of *faith*, and its energy is gone. Remove the last vestige of *hope*, and dark despair will fill the soul with unutterable dismay. Let love, the source of all felicity, be removed from the mind, and be replaced by bitter hate, and consequences worse than death must follow. Strict obedience to our sense of right is to the soul what bread is to the body, while a conscious violation of it is to the soul what poison is to the body. As we determine the physical nature of the body by the *material* character of its food, so we learn of the spiritual nature of the soul by the *immateriality* of its nourishment. "Like produces like."

Is it possible to think of this spiritual identity and its spiritual food as *identical* with the physical body and its physical food? The very effort at such thinking can but illustrate its impossibility.

The material universe is constructed out of the sixty two or three "elements," more or less. Now if we attempt to conceive of this thing which loves and hates, thinks and doubts, as being any one, or even all, of these elementary particles of matter, we at once become conscious that we are grasping after an "unsubstantial fantasy."

While philosophy teaches us that matter is *inert*, and that all power is in mind, our own consciousness is a standing witness to the same truth. Our first conception of power is associated with a conscious effort of will. For example, we will to move the hand or foot, and at once we observe motion, or the manifestation of power. But can we, by any possible imagination, conceive of this will-power being inherent in flesh and blood? The man who is able to think of the "I," or "me," that he calls himself, as being solely flesh and blood, whether in the foot or head, is eminently qualified, by his elastic imagination, to take in all the absurd stories of the Scandinavian mythology, while his friends may offer an apology for such thinking on the ground of his mental imbecility. Certainly no one who is capable of observing a distinction where there is an absolute difference can fail to see that "the *I*, the *me*, that each man calls himself," is a personality distinct from the body, and that this spirit-person uses this material-person as but an instrument in the hands of its power. This is not theory, nor even faith, but conscious knowledge. And by

parity of reasoning, all manifestations of wisdom and power must be attributed to spirit-personality. We can no more think of manifest wisdom and power as being *matter*, much or little, than we can think of our own spirit-personality as being the body or any part of it. Moreover, we can think of the finite and the Infinite only by comparison. The wisdom and power of soul-personality are measured by our observation of results; so, likewise, we conceive of the omniscience and omnipotence of the great Spirit-personality by the manifestations of its infinite wisdom and power. We say "infinite," for the reason that while we can clearly comprehend much of this wisdom and power, yet by farthest stretch of imagination we fail to compass it in its fullness. Though with the devout Psalmist we may exultantly say, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork," yet when human thought has reached its boundary the soul is overwhelmed with its far-stretching vision, and reverently exclaims, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints; who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?"

When we think of the skepticism and infidelity which has spread all over Europe and America, and that all this has grown out of a philosophy which is as false in fact as it is modest and unpretentious, we are reminded of that scripture, "How great a

matter a little fire kindleth!" But this agnostic thought, which crazed the head of Germany, and was supposed to undermine the very foundation of all religion, like all other forms of infidelity, when it has played its last part,—a part which is but the due of every finite phenomenon—that of rendering its tribute to the law of mutability,—then will it remain for all time as the psycho-theological wonder of the world. Whatever else we may doubt, let us never call in question the absolute existence of an ever-presiding Mind, who is *now and ever* seated upon his own exalted throne, controlling his boundless universe, in the councils of his own infinite wisdom.

CHAPTER XI.

PANTHEISM.

- (1) Spiritualistic Pantheism. (2) Materialistic Pantheism.
 (3) German Pantheism.

PANTHEISM (from *pan*, all, and *theos*, god ; Everything-God-ism) represents a trinity in unity : unity, in that all the different phases of it start out, in some sense, with the theory involved in its etymology, viz., that "the Universe is God and God is the Universe;" trinity, in that the different schools may be classified under three heads—the Spiritualistic

or Idealistic, the Materialistic, and that which for want of a better name we call the German. These different forms we will consider in their order.

(1) *Spiritualistic Pantheism*.—This form of pantheism—the whole universe absorbed in the infinite Spirit—characterized the Hindu religion. The material universe, in the mind of the Hindu worshiper, is absorbed in God. “The Hindu thinker regards man as born into a world of illusions and entanglements, from which his great aim should be to deliver himself. Neither sense nor reason, however, is capable of helping him. Only through long and continued rigorous and holy contemplation of the supreme unity (Brama) can he become emancipated from the deceptive influence of phenomena, and fit to apprehend that he and they are alike but evanescent modes of existence assumed by that infinite, eternal, and unchangeable Spirit who is all in all. Hindu pantheism is thus purely spiritual in its character. Matter and finite mind are both alike absorbed in the fathomless abyss of illimitable and absolute being.”

As the human soul is but another mode of existence of that infinite Spirit, when man dies his soul will be resumed by the eternal soul of the universe. As this Brahmanic pantheism conceived all things in the universe, both animate and inanimate, as but so many manifestations of the great indwelling Spirit, it is not wonderful that Brahmanism represents a polytheism without limit, and an idolatry

most cruel and degrading. As the human soul was but an Eon (or subordinate personality) of the Infinite, it made God the author of crime and source of wretchedness. And the degradation of India during these thousands of years is but a living illustration of the fact that a people's conception of God is the true index to the state of their civilization.

Any view that in any wise makes God, Adam, or the Devil responsible for the spirit we manifest, the words we utter, or the life we live, must, in the nature of things, lessen personal strivings towards a noble manhood, and by so much degrade our humanity. Adam's transgression was greatly intensified in the fact that he charged his crime to the woman, while it would have been greatly to the credit of Eve if she had had the womanly courage to reproach herself, instead of charging all to the account of the Devil. The key to Hindu character is found in the fact that they regarded all human souls as but so many evanescent modes of existence assumed by that eternal Spirit, who himself is responsible for all that is. Hence their degraded condition.

(2) *Materialistic Pantheism*.—While spiritualistic pantheism regarded the whole universe of matter and mind as being absorbed by the infinite Spirit, that of the *materialistic*, on the other hand, conceived of God as being absorbed by the universe. Brahmanism, or Hindu philosophy, represented the

former, while that of the latter characterized Buddhism or the Chinese philosophy.

Brahmanism conceived of God as absolutely *all and in all*. All the different manifestations, whether of mind or matter, were but so many distinct modes assumed by the infinite Spirit. Buddhism, assuming the other extreme, claimed that God had absorbed nothing, but that everything had absorbed God. Thus we observe that while spiritualistic pantheism makes God the author of all crime and the source of all wretchedness, materialistic pantheism represents God as under a fatality from which he cannot escape. And each view is thus seen to be alike degrading to humanity, in that both alike deny the freedom of the human will and the duty of man to abhor evil and cleave to the good, and thus, when life's labors are ended, be found worthy to receive the "Well done, good and faithful servant." Here is the beauty of Christianity. It presents man as absolutely free and responsible.

(3) *German Pantheism*.—While the distinction between spiritualistic and materialistic pantheism is clear, that of the German is not so easily seen.

Bruno, the Italian, may be considered the author of the modern pantheistic thought which has swept over Europe and America, and which has held a firm footing in Germany during the last fifty years. But, like all departures from truth, one mistake has led to another, until now we find theories *ad infinitum*. "The universe, in the eyes of the unfortunate Ital-

ian, is not, properly speaking, a creation, but only an emanation of the Infinite mind—the eternal expression of its infinite activity. And hence the Infinite Mind penetrates and fills, with different degrees of consciousness, all the heights and depths of the universe. To see God everywhere, to realize that he alone is, and that all else is but a perishable phenomenon or passing illusion; that there is but *one* intelligence in God, man, beast, and what we call matter—this should be the aim of all true philosophy.” (*Chambers's Encyclopædia.*)

But this philosophy of Bruno, maimed and disfigured as it is, has been further mutilated by such critics as Spinoza, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and still later by such philosophers as Voltaire of France and Strauss of Germany.

The metaphysical mysticism of Hegelianism has been so wrought upon by the spiritualists, who deny the existence of matter, and the materialists, who deny the existence of mind, and the skeptic, who denies the existence of either matter or mind, that in their “multitude of counsel” they have succeeded in making darkness more visible and confusion worse confounded. They agree in nothing, save in the proposition that the “universe is God, and God is the universe.”

Though they have no All-wise, All-powerful, and Ever-present, personal God, who has made them, body and soul, subject to law, and who imposes upon them the duty of striving to bring themselves into

blissful harmony with that law, yet if all their varied philosophies were allowed the benefit of their own logic, they would have a God that would awe them into holier thought and move them into a more worthy effort.

The last departure in this pantheistic thought is that given by Strauss, in which he concludes that there is "a self-centered Cosmos, unchangeable amidst the eternal change of things," as the cause of all the varied phenomena of the universe of matter and mind. But that "Cosmos" is but another name for God is clearly set forth by Dr. Edward Thomson*: "Let us admit," says he, "that nature by its own inherent force produced the universe, and reason on the supposition, what follows?"

"(a) Nature is a great architect. How insignificant all others in comparison !

"(b) It is also a great *astronomer*. For out as far as the eye or telescope can reach the laws of Kepler and Newton are found, bringing the worlds above to their appointed stations with the regularity of clock-work. No chronometer like that of the skies.

"(c) Nature is a great *chemist*. For throughout the world the law of definitive proportions prevails, and every atom is weighed and labeled as by the hand of the manufacturer.

"(d) It is a great *physiologist*. For no animal comes into the world all trunk or all extremities, all

* "Evidences of Revealed Religion."

brain or all heart. But each has organs of life, of motion, of sense ; and each organ has its proper place and relations.

“(e) It must be a great *psychologist*. For every man comes into the world with a well-constituted mind. No man is all will, or intellect, or passion ; but each is in himself a perfectly constituted government, having reason to legislate for him, conscience to judge, passion to impel, will to execute.

“(f) It must be a great *conservator*. The sexes, also, are properly balanced. In no island do we find all the children either male or female. No two human countenances are alike ; no two animals or vegetables. Were it otherwise, the social relations and the rights of property would be disturbed.

“(g) Nature is a great *moralist*. For in all ages and nations men are prosperous and happy in proportion as they keep the Ten Commandments.

“(h) It is even a great *religionist*. For everywhere and in all ages men have temples, priests, sacrifices, prayers. They act as though God regulates the world and interferes for his praying children. He is the truly contented man, living or dying, who is truly religious.

“If nature brought us into this world without asking our consent, it may take us by the same liberty into another ; if it respects moral and religious considerations *here*, it may *there*; if it makes this world look and feel like a state of probation, it may carry

forward its own system, and make the next look and feel like a state of retribution.

“Indeed, Nature is only another name for God; and we delude ourselves if we think to get rid of God by calling him Nature. A mere abstraction cannot build even a hat-box.”

In the mind of the pantheistic philosopher, “death ends all” so far as the individual is concerned. He may be resumed by the great unthinking soul of the universe, but death to the individual is an eternal sleep. Man comes upon the stage of existence with a most intense desire for life, only to look down into the dark valley, without a ray of light shooting up from the black horizon of the great Beyond. The only practical result of *spiritualistic*, *materialistic*, or Germanistic pantheism is stagnation and death to every nobler impulse of man’s nature. If the soul’s native possibilities are to be evolved into their possible and superlative glory, we must regard ourselves as heirs of immortality. This life must be regarded as the seed-time, while eternity must be viewed as the harvest, and thus the sowing and the reaping will be in the relation of cause and effect.

The fact that any conceivable method of reasoning must inevitably lead to the thought of God will be further illustrated under the next chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

ATHEISM.

- (a) The Theory of Natural Law.—(b) The Nebular Hypothesis.—
(c) Evolution.

THE word "Atheism" is from the Greek word *Atheos*, no God, or denying God (No-God-ism).

There is no word in the English language, perhaps, whose meaning has been so misused as this. As an epithet, it has been hurled indiscriminately at any who may have the temerity to dissent from the popular sentiment.

Among the ancient Greeks, the man who refused to believe in all the gods which the popular thought had deified was branded as an atheist. The pantheist, who conceives the universe as Spirit, denounces the materialistic pantheist with the odious name of atheist. And as crimination is followed by recrimination, the epithet is hurled back upon the spiritualistic pantheist.

Bruno was burned as an atheist because he did not believe in God according to the general conception. Spinoza was pronounced an atheist, when nothing could have been farther from the fact. And even now among many Christians there is such a lamentable lack of Christianity, that the stigma is branded

upon all who may chance to differ from the popular thought and who have refused to submit to the iron-bedstead creed. The fact that humanity shudders at the name of atheist accounts for its promiscuous use by the bad angel of our nature. Hume, with all his infidelity, spurned the title of atheism with indignity.

As a belief in the existence of God seems to be inwrought in the nature of the soul, the whole history of the world has presented us with but very few who have had the courage to avow atheism. And even those isolated cases may properly be regarded as freaks of evolution, if not "fools" by nature. So nothing need be said of atheism in its root-meaning, because those who confess it have gone beyond the reach of "sense and reason" or any reasonable process of recovery.

But the term atheism has, very properly, been used in an accommodated sense, having reference, first, to those who declare that though God may exist, it is a fact which is incapable of demonstration (agnostics); and secondly, to those who affirm that the fact of such existence is susceptible of being disproved. The former represent what has been termed *speculative* atheism, while the latter advocate what has been styled *dogmatic* atheism.

Kant and other German philosophers, while they were not atheists in the true sense of that term, were nevertheless of the speculative school. It would, perhaps, be no injustice to them to call them

agnostics, since to them God was unknowable from any available evidence either objective or subjective. But as agnosticism has already been reviewed, we need only refer to "dogmatic atheism." And our only object in referring to this speculative theory is, not to brand its advocates with atheism, but rather to relieve them of its odium. For it will be observed, we trust, that the very efforts that they make to disprove the existence of God only go to demonstrate the truth of the proposition which they have denied.

As previously suggested, the varied phenomena of the universe, both animate and inanimate, are facts universally conceded. Moreover, it is no longer to be doubted that all these things had a beginning and therefore a beginner. The only dispute is as to whether this beginner is a person or a principle. That there is an infinite Energy at work, none can question. And the thought which we wish to impress upon the mind of the reader is, that any conceivable method of reasoning with a view to assigning an adequate cause for creation must of necessity lead to the thought of an Infinite Mind, in which alone such wisdom and power can be found. We have seen that the cosmical power which is supposed to be inherent in nature is but another name for God. We have also shown that the thought of God was well-nigh base and apex of the structure of both spiritualistic and materialistic pantheism. It now remains for us to see that even the atheistic efforts at disproving join the universal testimony in

establishing the precious truth that there is a personal Being of infinite wisdom and boundless love.

(*α*) Seeing the dilemma of the cosmical, the spiritualistic, and the materialistic theories, the atheist of dogmatic tendencies rushes to the rescue, assigning *Law* as the inherent cause of all that is. He has no difficulty in accounting for both the material and immaterial universe by this fixed and unalterable Law. The perpetuity, order, and universal harmony which prevail everywhere may be easily accounted for on the supposition of an inflexible and unchangeable Law. The chronometer of the stars is absolutely perfect, for the reason that all these mighty worlds fly along their trackless way because of the power of stable and changeless Law. Vegetables and animals innumerable spring into being, live and mature, decay and die, at the hand of omniscient and omnipotent Law.

How insignificant all words as compared with this high-sounding word Law! Nor is there a word in the English language more misused than this word Law. We hear it from the pulpit and the bench, read it in books and periodicals. While it is a little household word with which we are perfectly familiar, in its promiscuous use it comes to be a word of very doubtful meaning. Is it meant that power inheres in Law? Is it the nature of Law to be infinitely wise in contrivance and omnipotent in execution? If this be its meaning, then it is simply another name for God. So that when the atheist says, "All

worlds and the fullness thereof are but the result of immutable Law," he means, if he means anything, precisely what the theist means when he says that "God created the heavens and the earth."

But such a definition of the term Law is wholly gratuitous. Law is simply an abstract principle of action. When we say that the state is governed by law, we do not mean that the law has wisdom and power to govern; but we only mean, if we mean anything, that it is the fixed *method* by which justice is administered. We say that the house is built by a fixed law. Not that the law has an inherent energy, but simply that it is the method of procedure which is to be faithfully observed by the builder. So, likewise, when we speak of the fixed laws by which the universe has been built and by which it is sustained, we only mean the fixed method of procedure by which the Maker of the universe controls all nature, animate and inanimate. But if we speak of law as having an inherent power of production and preservation, we speak pure nonsense. Whenever we attempt to think of law except as a mode in which some force regularly acts, we at once become conscious of the fact that we are grasping after a fantasy.

Thus we observe that this whole notion of Law, which has been substituted with a view of dispensing with the existence of God, only argues in favor of the truth which it purposed to deny. The universal presence of this uniform and changeless law or method of action declares unmistakably the omni-

presence of an omniscient and omnipotent Architect of the universe. The absolute and endless harmony of all material worlds, the ceaseless pulse of an animated universe, concordantly speak with un-hushable tongue of an immutable law which is but the omnipotent Jehovah's mode of working in the creation and government of the universe. We may therefore safely aver, without dogmatism, that no man can be a philosopher and deny the existence of a God, for every step in the divine process only goes to demonstrate the truth of the fact which he seeks to deny.

(*b*) Again, when the "nebular hypothesis" was first presented by the eminent astronomer La Place, it was thought by some less scientific men that it would once and forever dispose of the God of the Bible. This nebular hypothesis goes upon the supposition that our solar system was at a time in the unknown past one mass of confused matter revolving upon its own axis, in which there were two opposing forces,—centripetal and centrifugal,—the one tending to condensation, the other to separation.

After a long process of time this body of matter became condensed. From this central sun, because of its rapid circular motion, the planets were thrown off, and in like manner were condensed. Likewise, the satellites were thrown from the planets and in turn became solid. Thus, after countless years, our solar system assumed its present beauty, order, and harmony. But by intelligent reason it was seen

that the nebular hypothesis involved the necessity of infinite wisdom and power no less than the older theory. The only new question to which it gave rise was not that of the existence of an all-wise Architect, but simply one of time and method. The law of gravity and of circular motion, in the light of reason, are but modes of the divine operation. Nor can we conceive of this nebular hypothesis of creation as requiring any less wisdom and power than would have been displayed if all these worlds had been spoken into being instantaneously. The miracle is absolutely as great in the one case as in the other.

(c) Again, as, when the nebular hypothesis was first advanced, atheism blindly rushed to the conclusion that we had a universe of design with no designer; so likewise, when Darwin's theory of evolution was set forth, short-sighted atheism again joyously accepted it as presenting a world of animated creation with no Creator, deeming that it had obtained its long-sought victory of having a two-fold world without a God. When La Place's nebular hypothesis had accounted for the suns and planets, and Darwin's evolution-theory explained the incoming of all animal life, the skepticism of Europe and America was most jubilant over its long-sought liberty. In the hope of the soon-coming freedom of atheism (the veriest slavery ever known to the race), one of Germany's ablest skeptics exultantly declared that "There could be no permanent freedom till the idea of God and all responsi-

bility to God were entirely banished from the human mind.”

This evolution-theory seeks to “trace all organized form of life to a single parent germ or molecule out of which we have all existing developments.” But, though we grant all that it claims, that all the fish, great and small, the fowls of unnumbered variety, the quadrupeds and bipeds, all the animated world, have been evolved from a few parent germs, this admission in no wise contradicts the Bible statement that “the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air:” nor does it affect the truth of the statement that the “Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground.” Like the nebular hypothesis of the creation of worlds, this evolution-theory of the origin of the animate universe only raises a question touching the divine *processes* of creation, and in no wise touches the truth that “the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof: the world, and they that dwell therein.”

Were God by the fiat of his power to speak, and instantaneously the sturdy oak were to stand erect to defy the storms, he would display no more power and wisdom than he does in wrapping the mighty trunk and its branches up in the acorn, and year by year unfolding this germ until the full-grown tree shall speak in unmistakable language of the glory of its creation. So if it could be shown, which it never has been, and the probabilities are that it never will

be, that man was evolved from a molecule, yet this would only show the stages through which God has produced the crowning work of his hand. So far from disproving the existence of a Creator, the creation of a man would be made only more marvelous by the supposition that the soul's infinite possibilities were once an embryo germ, which in the process of development has had to pass through fishes, reptiles, birds, and monkeys. "The primordial cell, from which animated creation is slowly evolved by progressive mutations, must have possessed the vital properties, powers, instincts, and reason of the whole living nature, including man's rational and immortal soul;" else the "parts are greater than the whole." As the acorn contains the oak in embryo, so this molecule or parent germ must have had in it all that has grown out of it; else, further, the creative hand has been at work ever since evolution began. But, as suggested, such embryonic possibilities would as clearly prove the divine presence as all the succeeding developments. That primordial cell, from which endless variety has been evolved, would only illustrate in a marvelous degree the infinite wisdom of the Creator's method of procedure.

It is gross injustice to Darwin to suppose that his evolution-theory involves a denial of the existence of God. To the mind of this great scientist his views reflect the greater honor. "There is a grandeur in this view of life," says Darwin, "with its several powers, having been originally breathed by

the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, while this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms, most beautiful and most wonderful, have been and are being evolved."

Thus it would seem that every conceivable process of reasoning must inevitably lead to the conclusion of a God, and that all differences of opinion relate, not to the fact of God, but only to duration of time and the methods of his operation.

While but few men have had the temerity to avow the theory of atheism, yet there is a practical atheism which is as greatly to be deplored as it is widespread. We profess to believe in the omnipresence of an all-seeing God, who takes cognizance of the life we live, the words we utter, and the very thoughts we entertain; and yet, in the holy presence of Him who is of too pure eyes to behold iniquity with allowance, we dare to think evil thoughts, speak blasphemous words, and even live in open rebellion; while conscience, which is but the hand of God in man, flourishes a sharp scourge within the soul, that it may be kept from the consuming fire of sin, which, "when finished, bringeth death." The man who lives in this age of reason and revelation and yet cherishes wicked thoughts, utters obscene blasphemy, and lives an ignoble and unworthy life, only manifests a practical atheism which is as dark and damning as it is stupid and senseless. The discrepancy between faith in the

divine presence and an ungodly life is absolutely irreconcilable; the two things cannot exist in the same soul at the same time.

When, therefore, we look out upon the multitude, whose feet are swift on the road to ruin and whose hands take hold on death, we sadly realize that, while theoretical atheism is such an absurdity in reason that few profess it, practical atheism stalks abroad, like Satan of old, seeking whom it may devour. Nor can we account for hypocritical and dead formality at the sacred altar upon any other supposition than that of religious atheism. Implicit faith in the absolute presence of the Holy One would awe us into devout and holy thought, and breathe upon our ceremonial dry bones the breath of life, that we might come up out of the wilderness and shine, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." The moral degradation of society and the lifeless formality of religion speak, trumpet-tongued, of an atheism which is alike degrading to the creature and dishonoring to the Creator. It must be obvious to every thoughtful mind that implicit faith in the presence of an All-Wise, All-Powerful, and All-Loving Father will do more to elevate the nation and the individual than all the universe of truth beside.

CHAPTER XIII.

THEISM.

The Argument from Design.—Objections under this head.—The Atheistic Theory of Chance.—The Theistic Argument from Nature.

THEISM is the doctrine of one personal God; or, more fully stated, the doctrine that apart from and independent of the material universe and the intelligences that inhabit it, there is a personal God who is the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all.

The world in which we live is teeming with life in its multiplied forms, with analogies the most perfect, with philosophies the most profound, and with ten thousand times ten thousand manifestations of design, all of which, under the light of divine revelation, conspire to present to the reflecting mind an open book, on every page of which is written, "Omnipotence, Omniscience, Omnipresence, Benevolence." From base to apex naught else can be seen by the intelligent eye of the devout soul but manifestations of power, wisdom, and beneficence, and all seek to unite with the Bible in challenging our implicit faith, in exciting our profoundest reverence, and in filling us with fervent and unfeigned piety towards the great Father. And the man who rejects such faith, spurns such reverence, and sneers at such

piety, certainly placards a most senseless stupidity, and calls for the commiseration of the thoughtful.

Any person of sound reason and average common-sense can, as it seems to us, understand the following logical propositions and see the force of the logical conclusions to which they lead:

(1) Every manifestation of design indicates an intelligent designer who existed before it and independent of it. The world everywhere manifests design: therefore the world must have had an intelligent designer existing before it and independent of it.

(2) Every effect must have a cause existing prior to the effect, and adequate to produce it. The world is an effect. Therefore the world must have had a cause existing prior to it and adequate to produce it.

These arguments are closely related, and dependent one upon the other: if weak they are doubly weak, if strong they are doubly strong—a twofold cord, at least, and the less easily broken.

The manifestation of design implies the intelligent causation of that in which the design is manifest: if no design is manifest we cannot infer intelligent causation. Where there is no active cause and so nothing caused to exist, it is not possible that design can be seen; so causation and design are intimately connected. We who believe in theism deem these arguments strong enough to suggest if not to positively prove the existence of

a God, the great original cause and designer of the universe—at least to confirm beyond any warrantable quibble or doubt or successful controversy the innate conviction that such a being exists.

The first of these, the argument from design, is sometimes called the “teleological” argument, from the Greek word “*telos*,” end, because it is based upon the manifestation of an *end*, purpose, or design manifested everywhere we look. This is the argument of Dr. Paley and others, and would seem sufficient of itself to settle the question of a designer.

The second is called the “cosmological” argument, because it is based upon the “*cosmos*”—the universe of order, beauty, and grandeur—as implying an infinite cause adequate to produce it.

It has been claimed by skeptical objectors, however, that these arguments from causation and design, if carried to their legitimate conclusions, would prove that the Creator himself must have had a *cause* and a *designer*: that thus they prove too much, and hence fail to prove anything. This has been most ingeniously set forth by Strauss, who states his objection thus: “According to the law that everything must have a sufficient cause, the so-called argument infers from the existence of the world the necessary existence of a *personal* God. Of all the various things which we perceive in the world not one is self-existent, each owing its origin to something else, which, however, is in like predica-

ment of owing its origin to some other thing. Thus reflection is ever sent on from one thing to another, and never rests until it has reached the thought of One Being, the cause of whose existence rests not with another but in himself, who is no longer a contingent but a necessary existence."

Having stated the proposition entirely to his own liking, Strauss proceeds to answer thus: "If we invariably arrive at the conclusion in regard to every individual existence or phenomenon in the world, examine as many as we please, that each has the ground of its existence in some other, which again stands in the same predicament as regards something else, then we justly conclude that the same law obtains with regard to all individual existences and phenomena, even those which we have not especially examined. But are we then justified in concluding the totality of these individual existences and phenomena to be caused by a being not similarly conditioned, which has not, like these, the source of its existence in something else, but in itself? This is a conclusion devoid of all coherence, all logic." ("The Old Faith and the New," p. 131.)

According to this statement and answer, we should be obliged to admit that the argument drawn from design is "devoid of all coherence, all logic." But both statement and answer are wholly at fault in that they assume that God himself is but another manifestation of design, which in turn must in like manner be accounted for—another effect which it-

self must have had a cause. They assume that God is a "being similarly conditioned" with all other phenomena of design. But we aver that there is no such similarity. While fitness, adaptation, arrangement, and design may be seen in all the works of nature, we reverently ask, "Who has so compassed the parts of the All-mighty as to be able to trace in his organism the marks of design?" The story of the stars is but an endless tale of infinite contrivance, the half of which has never been told. The science of physiology and anatomy is but a treatise upon the various manifestations of most skillful device in the physical organism, in which all the parts are perfectly adjusted each to the other, so as to produce the most perfect and harmonious results.

"According to a definition already quoted," says Bowen, "an organism is that of which all the parts are mutually ends and means. So perfect is this correspondence of the parts with each other and with the whole, that the eye practiced in the study of them can from a minute portion supply what is lost and build again the entire system. Give to the comparative anatomist a section of a single tooth, and he will tell you to what animal it belongs; give him one scale of a fish that no longer exists except as imbedded in red sandstone, and he will reconstruct that fish, though he has never seen its entire fossil remains.

"Which is the worthier of admiration here, the intellect which infers the shape and organization of

the whole structure from so small a remnant of it, or that which so fashioned and ordered all the parts with minute correspondence and relations that any one of them is a key to all the others? Sagacity and skill in their highest degrees were required to find the key to the fabric; and is there no proof of intelligence in the fabric itself, and in the creation of the means by which the discovery was rendered possible? As well might we say that the ability to read a book was indeed a proof of intellect, but not the ability to write it."

Seeing these obvious manifestations of design, the human mind is instinctively and irresistibly led to the conclusion that there is a designer, and one, too, adequate to such manifestations. If we undertake to think of a designer in the absence of all manifestations of design, we at once become conscious of the fact that we are reaching after a fantasy. As a matter of philosophical fact, the Creator has manifested himself to the creature, not as a design, but only as a designer. To grasp the thought of God is to think of a contriver, and not of a contrivance; a deviser, and not a device; an inventor, and not an invention.

We dismiss this atheistic criticism with the following plain statement of the proposition, viz.: The Paline argument in favor of an infinite Contriver rests wholly on the foundation of manifest contrivance. But for these manifestations Nature would offer no objective argument in favor of an infinite

Creator. This atheistic criticism, therefore, is wholly groundless, in that it assumes that which is fundamental in the argument, and that, too, which it cannot prove: viz., that when the human mind has compassed, somewhat, the world of manifest contrivance, and has assigned an adequate contriver, it then apprehends the infinite Creator as being himself a contrivance which in turn must have had a contriver. "This is a conclusion devoid of all coherence, all logic."

Again, this foundation of our faith has been assailed with the argument that though man may have a conscious conception of a design, we must not from this conclude that the seeming manifestations of design in Nature must, in like manner, have originated in an intelligent Creator.

"We, being men," says Strauss, "are only capable of a work the parts of which shall harmonize for the attainment of a certain result, by means of the conscious selection of means; but we must not therefore conclude that natural works of a like description can only have been produced by the corresponding agency of an intelligent Creator. This by no means follows, and Nature herself proves the fallacy of the assumption that adaptation can only be the work of a conscious intelligence."

The only proof from "Nature" offered for this incoherency of logic is a quotation from Schopenhauer, who says, "Just as instinct is an activity apparently displayed in obedience to a conscious aim, and yet

acting without any such aim, so is it with the operations of Nature."

This reference to instinct, so far from disproving the actual existence of an infinite Creator, only goes to illustrate the truth of the proposition which it seeks to contradict. The bee, for example, constructs a symmetrical hexagonal cell, which "is an activity apparently displayed in obedience to a conscious aim, and yet acting without any such aim."

In this proposition there are two facts conceded: viz., first, that there is apparent a "conscious aim," and secondly, that the *bee* acted "without any such aim." This double concession leads to the conclusion that the "conscious aim" must have been in the mind of the Being who implanted the "instinct;" for it is no more possible for the human mind to witness such manifestations of contrivance without associating with it a contriver equal to the task than it is to think intelligently of any other effect without an adequate cause. The mere effort at such thinking will convince any one that it is not thinkable.

The bee-cell, together with the bee-hive, as conceded, speak not of "conscious aim" on the part of the bee, but rather they declare plainly the matchless wisdom of the Creator of the bee, who is too wise to make a mistake.

"The skill and ingenuity, then," says Bowen in his Lowell lectures, "which appear in the works of the lower animals are not referable to the animals them-

selves, but must proceed from some higher power, working above the sphere of their consciousness."

The simple fact that the little, tiny bee, with almost no brain, manifests a skill of contrivance which baffled human philosophy for over three thousand years, is a truth of itself in favor of the existence of an infinitely wise Creator, which stands as the Gibraltar against which the missiles of atheism have been and forever may be hopelessly hurled.

To suppose that Nature, in all its parts, is but an obvious manifestation of design, and yet is without an infinite Designer, is to suppose that "the universe is constructed on a lie," in that it manifests "an activity displayed in obedience to a conscious aim" when in fact it is only a hypocritical pretension. Such incoherency of conclusion destroys the very foundation of all philosophical reasoning, and belongs only to those whose obliquity of vision is incapable of discerning the relation between "cause and effect." Thus this atheistic argument, which has been most ingeniously wrought up with the view of disproving the existence of God, is clearly seen to join the universal testimony in proof of that ever-presiding Wisdom. From the foregoing it would seem that reason has no resting-place but in the conclusion of a personal God; all else is blind *chance*. The common sentiment of mankind, in all ages and countries, has been, and now is, that there is a Supreme Intelligence, who created all worlds of mind and matter, who contrived all the analogies of animate and inanimate

nature, all the philosophies of physical and mental science, and all the unnumbered manifestations of design which are everywhere to be seen. Simple faith in the existence of one Supreme Being will account for all worlds, together with all their varied phenomena. The "fool," who "hath said in his heart There is no God," has in his folly forced himself to believe an almost infinite catalogue of the grossest absurdities. For example, he will not deny the existence of these external worlds, nor reject those obvious manifestations of analogies, philosophies, and designs ; but, when called upon to account for all these significant expressions of infinite wisdom, as reason has no resting-place, he blindly concludes that all these things are the result of chance, or that they have somehow fortuitously made themselves.

Having denied the existence of a Creator and Contriver, he has lost his moorings, and is therefore driven, as we have sought to show, from one indefensible position to another, until he comes at last to the end of his sacrilegious logic, where he is forced by his own superlative folly to declare that all things are but the result of "a fortuitous concourse of atoms."

We shall be amply repaid for the service of analyzing this atheistic thought if by so doing we shall not only see the utter folly of atheism, but, moreover, be made stronger in our implicit faith in the ever-present God.

The atheist, to have the benefit of his own conclusions, must believe that all worlds, together with all their varied phenomena, are but the result of an infinite succession of accidents. He must believe that the sun accidentally shines, that the rain accidentally falls, that the grass accidentally grows, and that thus the wants of the accidental animal kingdom are all met by the accidental vegetable kingdom. He believes, too, that all this innumerable host of animals, from the lowest to the highest, together with the world of instinct and of mind, all of which bear obvious marks of infinite wisdom—yea, even man, with his boundless capabilities—all, ALL are but the result of an “infinite succession of accidents,” happening among the primal “atoms.”

But the credulity of an atheist is elastic beyond comparison. Calling himself a man of science, he believes that this earth is accidentally revolving upon its axis at the rate of over one thousand miles an hour; that it swings around the sun at the swift rate of over sixty-eight thousand miles per hour; and that each and all of these mighty worlds are accidentally flying with a velocity which far transcends our present limited attainments. He believes, too, that all this superlatively grand concourse of accidental worlds is accidentally observing the most unchangeable law of order and harmony; still more, he believes that if but a solitary one of this vast assemblage of worlds was to accidentally miss its trackless way in its rapid flight,

then the entire system, which during all the ages past has presented not one solitary discordant note, would at once collapse into a universal discord, in which worlds would rush upon worlds with the rapidity of a thunderbolt, presenting a scene so terrific that even our highest imagination would utterly fail to conceive the merest outline of a spectacle at once so wonderfully fearful and so awfully sublime.

The fool, who "hath said in his heart, There is no God," believes all this, and ten thousand things besides which are equally absurd.

Now if there be a man on the globe whose credulity accidentally enables him to believe that all these things are the results of a "fortuitous concourse of atoms," then, in the same "infinite succession of accidents," we accidentally regard him as being the most credulous compound of atoms which his fortuitous ancestry ever accidentally produced.

That this atheistic darkness may be more visible and its confusion more confounded, the atheist has been made to say: "Talk of providence! There is no such thing. I have been through the universe, and there is no God. God is but a whim of man; nature is only an accidental concourse of atoms; thought is simply an accidental function of matter, an accidental secretion from an accidental brain, an accidental result of an accidental result—merely a chance shot from the great wind-gun of

the universe, which itself also is only a chance shot from a chance charge of a chance gun, accidentally loaded, pointed at random, and fired off by chance."

Though atheism, as an avowed faith, has ever been, is now, and ever will continue to be a subject of supreme ridicule, yet what humanity needs most in order to excite it to exalted thought and urge it to worthy deeds is, not mere disbelief in the superlative folly of atheism, but that every faculty of the mind be absorbed with the infinite thought of the ever-present, all-powerful, all-wise, and holy Father.

We are told that when Lafayette was cast into prison and thrust back into a dismal cell, he could not even peep through the keyhole of his dungeon-door without meeting the eye of a sentinel directed upon him. So likewise we, if we would be excited to exalted thought and to the most noble deeds while in our earthly prison, must so train our mental vision as to see the eye of God during all the dark hours through which we are called to pass. As the Israelites, while passing through the wilderness to the promised land, needed the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night, so we need to see the All-Father in all his glorious manifestations, above all, and in view of all, beckoning us on and still on, higher and still higher, until our redemption is complete, and we stand as peers with those who sing :

“God ! let the torrents like a shout of nations
Answer, and let the ice-plains echo, God !
God, sing ye meadow-streams with gladsome voice ;
Ye pine-groves, with your soft and soul-like sounds ;
And they too have a voice, yon piles of snow,
And in their perilous fall shall thunder—GOD !
. . . . Tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth, with her thousand voices, praises God.”

That we may contemplate God as everywhere present, let us remember that “the laws of the universe are but the tracks of his chariot-wheels, and their rumbling marks his everlasting goings.” The vast machinery of the universe, great and small, speaks in language which cannot be misunderstood of the ever-present “I Am that I Am.” When you visited the grand Exposition in the city of Cincinnati, and stood in “Power Hall,” where the art of man seemed to have culminated,—where you saw steam-engines great and small, wheels within wheels, pulleys upon pulleys, bands interwoven with bands, and yet all running with such exactness as to bring about one harmonious result,—where mechanism and genius seemed to vie with each other for the mastery,—what would you have thought of the wisdom, or rather supreme folly, of a man who would stand up there and gravely tell you that all that manifestation of power, wisdom, skill, and genius was but the result of a long succession of accidents? Doubtless you would regard him as a fit subject for an insane asylum.

But such manifestations of skill in contrivance dwindle away into comparative insignificance in the mind of the true philosopher, as he stands in the midst of God's great "Power Hall," gazing up into the heavens, resplendent with the beauty and glory of an infinite skill, looks down into the bowels of the earth, teeming with manifestations of wisdom and benevolence, observes earth, sea, and sky, all full to overflowing with an infinite variety of expressions of wisdom, power, and glory. He sees God's vast machine-shop, with its wheels within wheels without number, with its pulleys upon pulleys innumerable, with bands interwoven with bands, as they run off through the immensity of space—and yet all unitedly conspiring to bring about one grand and harmonious result, speaking to the mind of the Christian philosopher with ten thousand tongues, uttering the praise and glory of God, so that he can join with the harmonious universe in the beautiful language of inspiration, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints: who should not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name!"

How comparatively insignificant are all the manifestations of man's power and wisdom in the mind of the Christian astronomer, as he stands amid the stellar system, contemplating the harmony of the spheres! He beholds the sun as the grand center, around which are revolving sixteen planets, of which

our earth is one, thirteen satellites, of which our moon is one; and as he calculates the rapidity of their motions, he perceives that each and all are observing such regularity and harmony of movement as to enable him to look forward into the depths of time and tell every eclipse that will happen for thousands of years to come, and then look back into the dim vista of the past and recount every eclipse that has occurred since the creation of Adam. And, while contemplating the manifestations of the omniscience and omnipotence of Him who first brought these mighty worlds into being, and who still controls and guides them in their rapid flight along their trackless way, he may well break forth in the sublime words of the immortal Addison:

“ The spacious firmament on high,
 With all the blue ethereal sky,
 And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
 Their great Original proclaim.

“ In reason’s ear they all rejoice,
 And utter forth a glorious voice,
 Forever singing, as they shine,
 ‘ The hand that made us is divine.’ ”

In calling attention to the arguments of Nature in favor of the existence of a God, it has been no part of our purpose to enter into the details of facts, but rather to excite to a general view of the whole broad field of philosophy. For the same divine wisdom and power which are witnessed in

the flying of a world may be seen all the way down through Nature, to the little morning dewdrop as it quietly reposes on the tiny grass. It may therefore safely be said that no man can think in a straight line and deny the existence of a God, for every mental step in the divine process, from the first to the last, must go to convince him of the truth of the proposition which only the fool in his heart has denied.

Furthermore, all these manifestations of the Supreme have *always* characterized the works of Nature. But the darkness of the human mind was unable to comprehend the "Light of the world." Hence, "when in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God" to make these manifestations of his thought "Flesh, and thus he dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Thus God would speak to us in such unmistakable words, both in nature and revelation, that we can no more deny the existence of an ever-present God than we can deny our own being. And yet men speak and act as if they had no faith in any such sublime and awful truth. For a mean, sordid, and vulgar life, with any profession of faith in the ever-present, holy One, presents an inexplicable paradox. For instance, suppose that we were placed in the midst of a great amphitheater, around which are a vast number of seats, rising one above another, stretching off in every direction.

Imagine these seats filled with an immense assembly of the wisest and best men of all ages and countries. Suppose, further, that we were fully conscious that the thoughts and eyes of this noble multitude were intently fixed upon us, hearing every word we utter and witnessing every act we perform. Think you that under such gaze we would be likely to utter an obscene or blasphemous word, or do a base and unworthy thing? We instinctively declare that the man who would disregard such noble presence is lost to every sense of propriety. But how paltry and ignoble are the eyes and ears of the best of our poor humanity, when once compared with the seeing and hearing of the Infinite One, who is seated upon his own exalted and holy throne, witnessing every act we perform, and hearing every word we utter, yea, knowing every thought and motive of the soul as they pass in awful review before the divine presence! "Let the idea of God be cherished until it becomes the chief thought of the soul, the center of its affections, the source of its joys, the foundation of its hopes, the circumference of its knowledge. Let it be the first article of our creed, on which all others depend, and which, though all others be given up, must remain. Whatever else we may doubt, let us never look up into the midst of this universe of order, harmony, and grandeur, to call in question its presiding Mind."

Only let the soul in its meditations hover about

the thought of the All-Father as the bird flutters about its nest, and then it will matter but little whether comes wealth or poverty, health or sickness, life or death. The infinite Spirit "no man hath seen or can see," and yet he comes to meet the soul's capacity and necessity in the person of Him who "spake as man never spake," and who has promised the "Comforter, that he may abide with you forever." Under the light and inspiration of the "God manifest in the flesh," both Nature and Providence speak to us with ceaseless voice of the ever-presence of Him who is the maker of our bodies and the giver of our spirits.

"Beyond, beyond that boundless sea,
Above the dome of sky,
Farther than thought itself can flee,
Thy dwelling is on high ;
Yet dear the awful thought to me,
That thou, my God, art nigh."

PART IV.
ANTHROPOLOGY.

INTRODUCTORY.

Activity in physical research.—Importance of the study of man.
—Spiritual hinderances of a low view.—Man's nature, or shifting his moral responsibilities to Adam or Satan.—Origin and destiny of man.

WE live in an age of unparalleled mental activity. Since the beginning of the Adamite creation, there were never such long and rapid strides taken in the discoveries of science and the development of art as at this hour. Men are delving into the bowels of the earth that they may break the seals of the old book and present the open history of a wise and beneficent Providence, while others are ascending the skies that they may tell the story of the stars, which is but an endless tale of glory and God, and still others exploring the broad field of philosophy.

Christian civilization is but a vast university, in which there is a world of books and apparatus, and in which the coherency of work is a logic almost divine. The workers and the work are so perfectly classified

that every possible field of thought is being occupied. Biography, history, and law ; geology, mathematics, and astronomy ; logic, oratory, and poetry ; agriculture, mechanism, and political economy ; mineralogy, zoology, and chemistry ; physiology, psychology, ethics, and religion—all these open doors of thought are being entered with an enthusiasm which promises success. And such, too, is the sharpness of division and the earnestness of work, that no man need hope for success unless he chooses his field and prepares to have every inch of his ground contested.

But while the outer world is being explored, discovered, and revealed as never before, there is an inner world to which too little attention has been given. Into this inner world we invite you. It is well that we know the world and the men that are in it, but infinitely better that each man should know himself, as to his origin, his distinguishing characteristics, his unique organism, and his consequent duty and eternal destiny.

Next in importance to the thought of God is that of man. The second greatest "study of man is man." Ancient Greece reached the zenith of her glory largely under the inspiration of that motto, "Know thyself." This inscription was engraven on the temple of Apollo at Delphi, in such a position that the worshiper, coming from any point of the compass, might be urged to self-examination as to his competency and consequent duties. Could the individual soul but clearly see its inwrapped possi-

bilities, in its germs of intellectuality, sociality, morality, and religiosity; could it but fully comprehend the inexorable laws under which these germs may be developed into their possible glory; and could it but will, "with a will," that these native powers of soul shall be brought into harmony with the administration of these laws of its being—then would life become sublime, and the kingdoms of this world would "become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ"! Seeing this goodly soul-heritage as it came from the molding hand of God, if the individual could but also see how sin will despoil all that is beautiful in nature and lovely in virtue, and how, if persisted in, it will destroy the native energies of the soul until hope is all gone and a dark cloud of despair shrouds the specter with "the blackness of darkness"—could the soul but see this picture of beauty and deformity as Christ and angels see it, doubtless it would turn from sin as from the deadliest poison, and cleave to that which is good.

Nor is it well to regard the soul as being too mean and ignoble to claim the attention of its Divine Father. Any teaching, whether from the pulpit or press, which leads a man to put a low estimate on the native abilities of his soul must of necessity hinder him in his God-ward strivings. That this is true of the intellect is hardly a subject of dispute. The teacher who has succeeded in convincing the little boy that he is by nature the most stupid child in the school has gone far in the direction of help-

ing him to remain sluggish and stupid. And if he is further successful in making him believe that he is not only most obtuse, but moreover that he has no native ability to be anything else than a senseless idle-pate, then the work of discouragement is complete, and the boy has not even the courage to make an effort to be anything else than a dull-witted thick-head.

Analogy suggests that what is true of the intellect is also true of man's moral and religious nature. And what analogy suggests observation and experience demonstrate. Let a man be made to believe, first, that he is practically a devil, and, secondly, that he has no ability to be anything else than a devil, then of necessity a devil he will be. For example, if a man be chained to the ground until he is convinced, beyond even the shadow of a doubt, that it is absolutely impossible for him to move either hand or foot, the argument is that then he cannot even make an intelligent effort to stir either. There may be spasmodic or involuntary exertion, but no intelligent effort, for his reason has been convinced that he cannot succeed. So, likewise, if a man be told, by speech or print, not only that he is first by nature a devil, and, secondly, that he has no native power to be anything else than a devil, but shall so be convinced that he is left without even the ghost of a doubt as to the truth of what he has been taught, then from necessity he cannot even try to climb from the pit of hopeless despair. One of the

hopeful "facts" is, that men do not believe all, and often not half, that they hear and read. If a good man should chance to teach, by tongue or pen, that such is the nature of man that it is not possible for him to "think a good thought, speak a good word, or do a commendable deed," the thing for which that good man should be most thankful is that the *world does not believe one solitary word of it all*. If it did, alas for human hopes and goodly endeavor! We are not saying this in defense of the man who, by his own wicked choice, has so perverted his God-given nature that he has become "totally depraved," but to vindicate the wisdom and goodness of Him who "made man in his own image." The soul, now as ever, as it comes from the hand of God, is endowed with a divine legacy of germinal power, which if trained under appointed law will achieve its prescribed destiny of superlative glory, and sit down under the approval, "Well done."

As it is not well to regard the soul as being too ignoble to challenge the love of its heavenly Father, so neither is it helpful to charge our misdeeds to the account of Adam, the devil, or any one else. If we would allow the Father's scourge of conscience to do its perfect work, we must have no scapegoats for our sins. If from senseless stupidity or vicious purpose we have violated the laws of our being, it will be both creditable and helpful to confess that we, not Adam nor Satan, were responsible for the violation. And however much we may be inclined

to shift responsibility, conscience, the "voice of God in man," will hold us to strict account.

So far as we may be led to regard the soul as ignoble in its birth and native possibilities, and (to the extent that we are influenced) to charge our misdeeds to some one else than ourselves, by so far we shall be deterred from entering upon a career that will make life grand, death triumphant, and heaven an achieved reality. If we would have an exalted view of the soul's nature and clearly comprehend its consequent obligations, it is well to trace our lineage and our destiny. What is the history of our origin? What distinguishes us from the rest of animate nature? What the unique character of the soul, and what its consequent duty and destiny?

CHAPTER XIV.

ORIGIN OF MAN.

Mosaic account of creation distinct ; scientific accounts at variance.—If Evolution is God's method of creation, it will prevail.—But it rests on Analogy, which proves nothing.—Reason demands proof of transformation of species.—Degeneration as plausible as Evolution.—Darwin's labors of priceless value, but not conclusive.—Evolutionary theory not sustained.—Even if granted, it fails to account for the mental and spiritual Man.

WHILE the origin of man as reported by Moses is clear and easy of comprehension, the theories

of modern so-called Science are both complex and irreconcilable. Not that revelation and true science give two distinct and contradictory accounts of creation, nor that Nature is antagonistic in its reports, but rather scientific men are at war on the question of the origin of man.

Until the teachings of nature are so clearly comprehended that scientists are perfectly agreed as to the when and how of man's creation, we might safely believe that the Mosaic account will stand the touchstone of science for the ages to come as it has stood that of the ages past. With a view to casting oil upon the troubled waters of popular faith, however, it may be well to institute a comparison between these conflicting reports of the origin and history of man, especially when neither the one view nor the other reflects upon the creative wisdom and goodness of God, nor in anywise compromises the religion of the Christ of the Bible.

When the theory of evolution was first set forth by Darwin, it was thought by those who had pet theories of Bible exegesis that in the event of such heresy becoming universally popular, then, as the "fittest must survive," religion must render its tribute to mutability and, as a fossil, be consigned to the past. But such periodicity of human theological fright has always characterized the history of those whose interpretation of the Bible was of the "iron-bedstead" pattern. The time was when Bruno was sacrificed, Spinoza consigned to infamy,

and Galileo required to recant his heresy or to be burned at the stake, all for the reason that their theories contradicted a man-made theology, and hence were supposed to be destructive of the Bible and its religion. But the time *is* when men of generous thought will not go into a flutter over new theories of science, nor into a spasm because orthodoxy is laid up for repair and human theology is rapidly being reconstructed. Truth may down for the time, but only to arise, phoenix-like, with new and increased vigor in its conflict with error. So we may joyfully hail every new theory, whether true or false, with the hope that the unequal contest may go on, until truth, which is the "fittest," shall "survive," and until all forms of falsehood shall succumb.

The theory of evolution seeks to maintain that man, together with all species and varieties of animals, was originally, in the dateless past, wrapped up in a few embryonic germs; and that in the process of development the principle of "natural selection" played so important a part as to destroy the weaker that the fittest might survive. Darwin, after illustrating the principle of modification in animal descendants, says: "Therefore I cannot doubt that the theory of descent with modification embraces all the members of the same great class or kingdom. I believe that animals are descended from at most only four or five progenitors, and plants are from an equal or less number. Analogy

would lead me one step farther, namely, to the belief that all animals and plants are descended from some one prototype."

Before accepting this new theory, which is so subversive of the old faith, it will be well to look carefully at the logic of its conclusion. While thinking men will not hold to a doctrine because it is old, neither will they reject a conclusion because it is new. If this new hypothesis can be shown to be God's method of creation, then we should most heartily conclude that it was and is the wisest and best possible process. We want simply to know the quantity and quality of any speculation, whether old or new.

If we adopt the evolution-theory of "The Origin of Species," we must grant that the original molecule or germ had wrapped up in its tiny folds not only all multiplied forms of animate physical organisms, but the peculiar instincts of reptiles, fishes, quadrupeds, and those of a world of both useful and pestiferous insects; and still more, and stranger by far, we must believe that "one prototype" held within its folds not only all varieties of physical shapes, and all peculiarities of instinct, but that the human soul also, with its infinite possibilities, was there to bide its time and trust to its chance in the course of "natural selection."

If this endless variety of bodily forms and instincts, together with this sensitive soul, were not wrapped up in that first progenitor, then the crea-

tive hand must have been at work ever since the creation of the first molecule. But to concede "special creations" of body and mind is but the opposite of the theory of evolution. As between these two theories of the origin of man, we are left to choose between probabilities. It is a conceded principle in physico-theological exegesis, as well as in Biblical interpretation, that between two miracles we should always choose the lesser. Trained under the influence of immutable law, we are slow to believe miracles, and hence naturally take to the least.

Certainly "great is the faith" of him whose mind can take in all the conclusions of this new theory of evolution. In referring to Darwin's theory as to the origin of species, an eminent divine says: "This view is unnecessarily minute. If the first life was the production of a Supreme Intelligence, it is more rational to suppose the creation of the various essential forms. If of blind chance or Nature, it is more reasonable to suppose that Nature gave birth to existing types at first than that she first made a molecule, and then of the molecule a jelly-fish, of the jelly-fish a mollusk, of the mollusk a vertebrate of the secondary age, of this vertebrate an air-breather, of this an amphibian animal, of this a monkey, and of the monkey a man. Nature would as readily produce men at once as in this tardy operation, and a million as one, and now as anciently."

To this criticism the evolutionist may with propri-

ety reply that the question is not as to what the Infinite *can* do, but rather what he *has* done. While we are not at liberty to set limits to the divine possibilities, we may, however, seek after the divine methods. It may, moreover, be replied that while it is possible for God instantaneously to produce the stalk, blade, and the full-grown corn, yet such is not the divine process of producing corn. And the fact that the stalk, blade, and full-grown corn were by divine economy wrapped up in and developed from the embryonic germ is suggestive of the new theory. And it may further be observed that this analogy may be seen running through both the animal and vegetable kingdoms. All animals and plants, with all their possibility of complete development, were at first held within the folds of their respective embryonic germs. Besides, we must grant that all the varieties of any given species have been evolved from one prototype.

While the most able scientists of the world claim direct creation for the different species, they concede that Nature's method of producing varieties has been and is by the "tardy operation" of germinal development. Doubtless Nature could "as readily produce men at once as in this tardy operation, and a million as one, and now as anciently;" but we are to bear in mind that the question in dispute is not that of divine *possibility*, but of divine *method*. And it will be in the interest of truth to allow that the "tardy operation" is usually the divine plan. God

works slowly but surely to the accomplishment of his wise purpose.

A careful study of this new theory of the "Origin of Species" and "The Descent of Man" will clearly discover the fact that the entire system rests upon the foundation of Analogy. And while we are not to ignore the force of analogical reasoning, yet we must remember that analogy proves nothing. It may raise a strong presumption in favor of a proposition, and, in the absence of conflicting testimony, may even carry conviction to the mind as to the truth of that proposition. But the presence of a single fact may entirely dissipate all the arguments of analogy.

For example, though analogy suggest, with the force of conviction, as we may grant it does to many, that all existing forms of animal life have been evolved from one original prototype, yet if in the face of this reasoning from nature the fact of the immutability of species be demonstrated or even shown to be highly probable, then the analogical argument is not worth a fig. If it can be shown that species are fixed, that God has not only "determined the bounds of their habitation," but has said by the law of propagation, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther," then all the presumptions of the new theory founded upon analogy are blown to the winds.

But the difficulty of establishing such proposition may be readily seen in the fact that it is in the

nature of proving a negative. Scientists of the old school have waited long, but in vain, for those of the new school to present one solitary instance in which a clearly marked species has produced another entirely different type of animal. Preparatory to a well-grounded faith in the marvelous theory that all forms of animal life, together with all the variety of animal instincts, and a human soul of boundless ability, have all been evolved from a single germ, it is not enough to have the suggestions of analogy: reason demands at least one fact going to show the mutability of the law which has always appeared to be changeless. Reason suggests that our faith be reserved until such fact be produced.

Meantime, it may be observed that there are weighty arguments going to show that convincing testimony in favor of the new theory will never be forthcoming. These arguments are twofold: First, the Special Creationists too have the suggestions of analogy. Skilled mechanists once supposed that perpetual motion was not only possible but even probable. And such was the common faith, that wise statesmen offered large premiums to the man that would invent a machine of perpetual motion. But a more perfect understanding of Nature's laws, and an almost endless number of foolish experiments, have shown that perpetual motion is an impossibility in the nature of things.

Again, the suggestions of analogy once led even scientific men to believe in the doctrine of the

“transmutation of metals.” In the light of this new hypothesis men confidently expected to make great gain by evolving the finer from the baser metals. But, after wasting no little time and money, they sadly concluded that Nature was refractory, and that the only way to get gold was to procure it according to the divine plan.

Again, the seeming facts of observation once led even the wisest of men to the conclusion that wheat was transformed into chess (cheat). But here again Nature proved rebellious, and men of “science and sense” have pronounced the theory as wholly without foundation in fact. That wheat will change into chess is plausible as a theory, but as the fact of such mutability has never been well attested, to believe such a proposition is to exhibit a remarkable degree of credulity.

Illustrations suggesting *à priori* the fixedness of species might be multiplied; but we pass to say, secondly, that the facts of observation go to corroborate these suggestions of analogy. If the theory of the transmutation of metals was exploded by much and costly experimenting, for the same reason we may conclude that the “transformation of species” is likewise an absurdity. While the law of variability obtains *within a given species* in the production of many varieties, the law of immutability is as clearly seen *between distinct species*.

Darwin says: “It cannot be asserted that organic beings in a state of nature are subject to no varia-

tions." Certainly not, for we see great and varied varieties whose relationship can be traced to a common progenitor. Having stated a fact of common observation, he then asserts in the same sentence that which is contrary to all observation, viz.: "It cannot be proved that the amount of variation in the course of long ages is a limited quantity." If chemical experimenting proved that the hypothesis of the transmutation of metals was groundless, so by repeated effort and common observation it has been proved that "variation" in the production of animals "is a limited quantity." We may take animals of different species of the same genus and make a successful cross, but the offspring are generally sterile; and sometimes the same is true of a cross between two varieties of the same species. Nature's law says: "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." This is a substantial argument, going to show that "variation" is "a limited quantity."

The great apostle of natural history, Agassiz, says: "Nothing furnishes the slightest argument in favor of the mutability of the species. On the contrary, every modern investigation has only gone to confirm the results first obtained by Cuvier, that species are fixed." And the author quoted above says: "No man can, on Darwin's theory, account for the absence of present spontaneous generation." And we may further add: Nor can Darwin, or any one else, on the hypothesis of evolution, account for the well-known sterility of hybrid animals, or the absence

of the transmutation of distinct species. It is just at this point that the whole theory breaks down. If it be assumed—for at best it is only an assumption—that during the pre-Adamite ages the law of the transmutation of species was in force, how is it and why is it that the law has been abrogated during all these post-Adamite ages? No one claims that since Adam monkeys have been known to develop into men, or into anything else than monkeys.

But even though we concede that the theory of evolution will account for the existence of all the lower orders of animals, yet it utterly fails to account for the origin of man. Not only is the “missing link” undiscovered, but the very nature of the human mind, as will be shown in the next chapter, shows that it is philosophically absurd to suppose that it ever will be found. Nor is it necessary, in proving special creation for man, to even claim fixedness of species among lower animals, but only as it relates to the human species. On this subject nothing more need be said.

But though we should admit the plausibility of the theory that all the higher forms of being have been evolved from the lower, it may also be said that it is even more plausible to suppose that the lower forms have come from the higher. If we are ready to suppose—for it is only a supposition—that man has been evolved from a primordial cell, in which all sorts of beasts, both clean and unclean, were involved with him, may we not as readily sup-

pose that God epitomized all his work when he created man? The reasonableness of the supposition is found in two facts, viz.:

First, it is a concession of philosophy that man is a "little world"—the microcosm of all created things. While it may be truthfully said that all the possibilities of the world of instinct are to a greater or less degree found in man, it cannot be said that the human soul's intellectuality, morality, and religion are to be found in any or all of the lower orders of animals. Under the next chapter we shall have occasion to show that not a vestige of these distinctive qualities of man is to be found with any other animal, from the lowest to the highest. How then, we may well inquire, could these distinguishing qualities of reason, a sense of right and wrong, and this disposition to worship, have been developed through animals which have not the slightest trace of these qualities?

Is it philosophical to conclude that the oak is a development of qualities not contained in the acorn? As man has some characteristics in common with the baboon, we may more readily suppose that the latter was degenerated from the former than that the development of the baboon has brought to the man marvelous qualities of which his progenitor was entirely destitute. If between two miracles we should choose the lesser, it is certainly less credulous and altogether more logical to suppose that the man

is father to the monkey than that the monkey is father to the man.

Secondly, under the law of development and growth, and with the principle of "natural selection" in full force, we observe degeneration as well as improvement. We see animals running up to a high state of perfection, and then retrograding until it is said that the "breed has run out." The same is true of the vegetable kingdom. Illustrations of this proposition are everywhere to be seen. Nor is the race of man an exception to this law of deterioration. While the Anglo-Saxon race has been steadily coming up from the degraded condition of savages, the African race, with "natural selection" in full force, has descended from a comparatively high state of civilization to that of semi-barbarism. Under the influence of evolution and natural selection, whole tribes, and even nations, have become extinct.

While evolution utterly fails to explain the divine law both of development into noble manhood and of retrogression into a state lower than the beasts, the Bible is as clear as a sunbeam.

To further illustrate the hypothesis of evolution reversed, we quote from Dr. Thomson: "Why not suppose the fish a degenerated man as reasonably as the man a developed fish? May we not reason downward as well as upward? Here is a poor, miserable, ignorant man, placed in the meanest society, or forced, it may be, into the wilderness, having as much communion with the beasts as with

man, soon constrained to emigrate to Africa and dwell in huts on the coast of Guinea. What shall prevent him from getting a feeble mind, tame spirit, dark skin, receding forehead, and curly hair? May not his son be more like a negro than himself, and his remote descendants, in a few generations, be pure negroes? Then placed in circumstances less and less favorable, nourished by wolves, for example, may they not grow less and less human, until they become gorillas, and so on, through innumerable generations (for we are allowed as many as we need for the purpose), become fishes?"

After referring to appetences, desires, etc., which play so important a part in the theory of evolution, and showing that they work downward as well as upward, the Doctor applies the principle to man. "Many men," says he, "are whimsical. Here is one who has a fondness for foxes. He admires their character, studies their habits, imitates their ways—so much so that his friends say 'he is foxy.' His attitude, his walks, his looks, his practices, all resemble those of the fox; and whenever we see him we are reminded of this scripture, 'Go tell that fox.' It is easy to see that his son may be more of a fox than his father, the grandson than the son; and so, after centuries, or millenniums if you please, a real fox may be produced.

"Another man has many of the propensities, tastes, wants, and movements of the monkey: he has monkey attitudes and monkey pranks. His son

may be still more of a monkey, and so on, in a far-distant future, he comes out in a remote descendant a genuine monkey, caudal appendage and all. Another man is 'a snake in the grass.' He crawls rather than walks, stings rather than talks; the poison of asps is under his tongue; he delights in concealment; he never does anything directly that he can do indirectly. He has no sense of gratitude, but will bite the bosom that warms and protects him. Suppose that his feelings strengthen in his posterity from generation to generation, until they become a generation of vipers—a nest of copper-heads!"

It may be said as an objection to the theory of degeneration that we see no example of the changing of one species of animal into an inferior species; but the same objection holds to the theory of development, for, according to this, it would seem that the universe is a great university, in which the fishes are freshmen, the birds sophomores, the monkeys juniors, and men seniors; but on commencement-day, when man graduated, some calamity fell upon the undergraduates by which they were fixed *in statu quo*; for, as a matter of fact, during this long sub-Adamite age the "juniors" have never been known to graduate into manhood—a monkey has remained a monkey since ever he was known, and a monkey he is most likely to remain until his final demise.

In the light of common-sense and all the known facts of natural history, it appears more reasonable

to suppose that the gorilla is a degenerated man than to allow that the man is a developed gorilla. Until we can believe that the creature is superior to the Creator, the effect greater than the cause, and that the stream can rise higher than the fountain, we shall hardly be able to believe, in the light of "sense and reason," that the soul's ethics and religion have been developed from an animal which has not the slightest trace of those God-given faculties.

While we are pleased to grant that Darwin was eminently scientific, and has left to the world a legacy for the unfolding of natural history which is of priceless worth; and while we conceive, furthermore, that nine tenths of all he has said touching "descent with modification," "evolution," "variability," "natural selection," "sexual selection," etc., are true; yet when, without facts, he jumps to the conclusion of the "transmutation of species" and, regardless of his conceded "missing link," leaps to the inference that the monkey is father to man, then, to us, he reaches a conclusion that is devoid of all coherence of thought, all sound logic. And but for the reason that this false conclusion is mixed up with such an array of truth, and the further fact that we live in an age when men's ears are wide open to the clamorings and vociferations of men, and their feet swift to follow in the steps of metaphysical speculation, the new theory of "The Descent of Man" would have fallen still-born upon the popular mind.

The conclusion of the whole matter at this stage

of the argument may be summed up thus: First, the evolution hypothesis of the origin of man is not sustained by one solitary fact in natural history. There is not a single case on record in which an animal belonging to a clearly-marked species has been developed into one of another species. Nor has it even been claimed by those who are most enthusiastic for the new theory that, at a given *time* and *place*, a monkey, or any other animal, was transmuted into a man. Geology, philosophy, "sense and reason," are as mute as the grave touching the occurrence of a fact so marvelously strange in natural history.

Even if it were shown that species are not fixed, but that mutability is the law which has obtained among all the lower order of animated nature, from the molecule to the monkey, yet it would prove nothing as to the origin of man. So that in seeking to maintain special creation for the human race we need only claim fixedness for the species of man. And in claiming this much we can hardly be considered as occupying disputed ground, at least until the missing link is found, or until man has been known to degenerate into a lower or to develop into a higher order of animal. Whatever may be the necessities of the new theory, certainly reason demands a stay of judgment before we pronounce against the Mosaic account of the origin of man. If an absurdity "is the contradiction of all known facts," then to conclude that man has been evolved

from the baboon is a most preposterous conclusion—one devoid of all sound reason, and exhibiting a credulity which eclipses the Scandinavian's faith in his mythology.

Furthermore, if we grant all that the theory of evolution claims, even then it most signally fails to account for the origin of man. Even if, for the sake of completing the system, the missing link be supplied, and it could thus be clearly shown that man's *physical* organism has been evolved from that original germ or molecule through the lower animals, yet the theory is as mute as the grave touching the origin of man. It might point us with unerring certainty to the original material germ from which, after a long and tedious process, the human *tabernacle* was finally brought forth in all its symmetrical beauty, and yet it reports nothing and suggests nothing as to the origin of the *occupant* of that tabernacle. No one who has given any serious attention to mental science thinks of this body or any part of it as being himself, or even a part of himself, only as a tenement or an instrumentality; while the *I*, the *me* that thinks and doubts, loves and hates, is the *tenant* and only active agent.

So after Evolution has accounted for man's physical organism, and we inquire whence this intellectuality, morality, and religiosity which constitute MAN, the new theory, which has crazed the heads of many modern scientists, is speechless. When we think of the untiring zeal with which evolutionists have

worked with the view of tracing the lineage and origin of man, and then look at the conclusion of the whole matter, we are reminded of the fable of the mountain in labor. After all the labor-pains of Evolution, it only *pretends* to trace the origin of a man's body, but proves nothing and intimates nothing as to the origin of man *himself*.

Secondly, the origin of man as given by Moses is in keeping with all the known facts of natural history. He represents man as having been made in the image of God, with all the natural attributes of mind which have ever distinguished him from all the lower order of animated nature. He introduces him as the highest type of all the creation of God, and as having dominion over all the rest of the animal kingdom. Geology, history, and common observation tell the same sublime story of man's native superiority.

As a monkey has been a monkey ever since he was anything, so man has been a man, with intellectuality, morality, and religion, in all ages and in all countries, ever since the earth was fitted for his coming, and he was created "male and female," and pronounced very good.

In the light of all the known facts, "Reason and Revelation" go hand in hand "in proclaiming the truth of man's distinctive creation."

That the theory of evolution is false in mental philosophy, as it is groundless in fact, will be further illustrated in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XV.

MAN'S DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER.

Man the highest animal.—(1) The human mind progressive.—(2) Other animals stationary in intelligence.—(3) The difference one of kind, not degree only.—Man's native endowments: (I). Intellectuality; (II). Morality; (III). Religiosity.

HOWEVER much we may differ as to the natural steps which have been taken in our argument, all are agreed that man, with his sensitive soul, now occupies the highest altitude of animal life on the globe. The theory of evolution as considered in the last chapter goes upon the following suppositions, all of which are fundamental, viz.: First, that in the dateless past an embryonic germ held within its molecule folds all varieties of fishes, reptiles, insects, birds, animals, and men that now inhabit the earth.

Secondly, that the principle of evolution, under the modification of "appetencies," "natural selections," "sexual selections," etc., will account for all the lower and higher forms of animal life, either existing or extinct.

Thirdly, while, on the long scale which reaches from the lowest to the highest, each degree and each thousandth part of a degree is occupied by some form of animal life, man's chief glory is found in the

fact that his position is in the highest degree on the scale—that in this long chain, in which, however, there is a “missing link,” his supreme honor is to be seen in that he forms the last link in this almost endless continuance.

It is worthy of observation, however, that the hypothesis involves the conclusion that it is but a question of time when man's present attainments will be superseded, and the fame to which he has attained be eclipsed by the superior glory of his successors.

Fourthly, that the law of development and growth, with modifications and helps, is in full force with all forms of animal life from the meanest to the best.

The Darwinian theory of the “Descent of Man” has been said to represent the whole animal kingdom as but a perfectly graded university, in which each class of animals stands directly in the line of promotion.

Fifthly, that the mind of man, therefore, is the same in *kind* with that of all other animals, and is superior only in degree.

From the five foregoing suppositions, all involved in the theory under consideration, it must logically follow, sixthly, that the position of intellectual thought, moral attainment, and religious development now occupied by man will, in the far-off future (for we are allowed an eternity, if necessary), be too insignificant, comparatively, to claim the attention of

what is now a mollusk. Moreover, the theory of evolution anticipates the time when man shall have played his part in the drama of life, and shall render his tribute to the law of mutability.

And still more, the logic of this philosophy, despite the paralysis which keeps the sub-senior classes *in statu quo*, forces reflection on, and still on, until that original embryonic germ has all been unfolded, and all classes, including the lobster, alligator, lizard, and rattlesnake, have passed on to a zenith of glory which baffles thought and description.

In the light of common-sense we wonder that a man so great in natural history as Darwin was should have been led to a conclusion so marvelously absurd. But we are to remember that this is but one illustration among the many going to show that the mistake of a great man is only equaled by his greatness. The greater wonderment, however, is that semi-popular sentiment should have so rudely jumped to a conclusion that is so out of keeping with all known facts. With the view of counteracting this wide-spread thought we ask attention to the following facts of observation :

(1) That the human mind was made for progress is a fact that none will doubt. Nor can we, in the light of all known facts, set limits to its capacity of going out after and discovering new truth, and receiving a corresponding development and improvement.

While the human infant is among the most help-

less and apparently the most insignificant of all new-born creatures, yet there are divine possibilities wrapped up in that infant mind which know no limits of attainment nor, as we may well infer, of duration. This thought will be further illustrated in the sequel of this chapter.

(2) While the whole history of man goes to show that his mind is capable of indefinite enlargement and improvement, all other animals, without exception, were nearly if not quite as perfect at the beginning of their existence as they are at the present. This is especially true of them when left to themselves and in their native state. We may reasonably suppose that in the divine economy many of these animals were designed for the use of man. Hence they have been endowed with powers, not indeed to be dignified with the term "reason," but powers by which they can be trained to useful purposes. But in the absence of such training, and left wholly to the guidance of their nature, they advance to no new contrivance—make no new discovery. The bees that constructed their cells and waxed their honey-comb in the carcass of the lion in the days of Samson displayed the same mechanical genius in their marvelously perfect work that is exhibited to-day. Had they been observant and capable of improving on such observation, they might, when wax and propolis are scarce, have used mud in cementing their combs to the top of their hives, in imitation of the swallow. But since the days of

Aristotle and Pliny they have not learned one new trick. The beaver constructs his dam now as he has done ever since he was a beaver. And to show that his skill in contrivance is outside of himself, and that he is constitutionally incapable of reasoning from cause to effect, he may be placed in a room with a wooden floor and he will construct his dam with the same methodical exactness as if he were on the stream where his work could be made available.

Illustrations might be multiplied almost without number going to show that all animals, man excepted, have been endowed with a power fitting them perfectly for the sphere in which they were designed to play their respective parts in the economy of the universe, and with that completed power they have remained *in statu quo* since their creation.

(3) If we make a distinction where there is an absolute difference, as evinced in the two foregoing propositions, then we must see that the distinction between the human and the brute mind is a difference, not in degree, but of positive kind. While reason sits enthroned in the human soul, instinct is the controlling power of all else of animate nature. While instinct is perfect within its sphere of operation, and has neither the necessity nor the opportunity of improvement, reason is imperfect in its field of boundless agency, and can only be fitted for its destiny of infinite scope by seizing the means

within its grasp. Man is largely what he makes *himself*. The animal is what the Creator *made it*.

Having fixed the bounds of its habitation, God says to instinct, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther;" but to imperfect reason, with its involved possibilities of indefinite scope, he says, "Come up higher, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." As instinct is circumscribed in its sphere of operations, and as reason's agency is without metes or bounds, it must be apparent that if the human mind is not superior to that of the animal in *kind*, it has no superiority, but is absolutely inferior.

"If it" [animal intelligence], says Bowen in his Lowell lectures, "differs from human intelligence, not in *kind*, but in *degree* only, it is undoubtedly the superior. Man may go to school to the dog, the swallow, and the bee, but he can never equal his teacher. Let him attempt, for instance, without the aid of any tools or machinery, and with the utmost economy of space and material, to construct a symmetrical hexagonal cell, closed at one end by a trihedral pyramid each side of which is a rhombus, with its obtuse angles measuring precisely 109 degrees and 28 minutes, and its acute angles 70 degrees 32 minutes. Without instruments or pattern he could not cut out such a rhombus with perfect accuracy after a thousand trials. But the bee does this before it is a day old. And in this statement of the task the greatest difficulty of all is left out of

it: we have solved the most abstruse problem in it in order to make the performance more easy. In order to make the cell with as little wax and space as possible, it is necessary that the angles of the rhombus should have precisely these dimensions, and no other. It was only after the invention of the integral calculus that man was able to determine the angles required for this purpose, or, in other words, to discover how far the wisdom of the bee transcended his own. In Virgil's time the bee was wiser than the greatest human mathematician of its day."

Though human reason is the microcosm of all thought, yet when it enters the sphere of the tiny bee it is met with a skill in contrivance which is absolutely supernal. "Take the animal out of its sphere," says Bowen, "and its mental endowments cease to be even comparable with those of man. The bee, which in certain tasks seems wiser than a Euclid or an Arkwright, is, when compelled to labor for any other purpose than that for which nature has specially adapted it, more stupid than an idiot."

As an objection to the fixedness of instinct, it is urged that it often enters the field of reason, not only in the manifest use of means to ends, but in seeming to recognize the relation between cause and effect. As illustrative of this objection, we have a reported case of a gang of monkeys in their native forest, in which one of their number was caught by a snake at the foot of a precipice. His agonizing

cries brought to the rescue a goodly number, who congregated on the summit and designed the plan of letting a stone fall on their common enemy. Having seemingly considered the size of the stone, the distance of descent, and the perpendicularity of the fall, they heaved together and sent the stone directly upon the head of the snake; and on the discovery of the fact that they had saved the life of their comrade and destroyed that of their common foe, they sent up a shout which made the woods ring with their screams of joy.

Another illustration of what is claimed to be reason in animals is given of herds of elephants, which, having consumed the pasturage of the country of their nativity, would unite their forces and pull down small trees, gather up logs, and construct a bridge across a wide lagoon or swamp, when the entire community would pass over it to a land of new and rich pasturage. That these cases, together with all others that may be gathered from the history of animals, come within the sphere of unprogressive instinct, and are in no wise to be compared with progressive reason in man, may be clearly seen from the following considerations:

First, it may be said that this seeming manifestation of human reason only illustrates the limits of instinct, as may be seen in the fact that if these animals have been known to do these manifestly wise things once, the same skill of contrivance has marked their entire history. So far as their biogra-

phy has been revealed, they have never been known to discover any new trick or to invent any new method. If those monkeys did what they are said to have done, then, in the absence of the facts going to show that they have changed their modes of operation, we are led to conclude that they may have done such things ever since a community of monkeys was created, and may continue to do them, but none wiser, till the last monkey dies.

If elephants have constructed bridges, as reported, then, until contradictory facts are forthcoming, we must believe that they have had the instinctive capacity to do such things ever since they were elephants. Before we can rationally conclude that their methods of thought are even remotely akin to human reason, we must be presented with the facts going to show that, seeing the relation between cause and effect, they have discovered new tricks of self-defense, and have adopted new and wiser methods of self-preservation.

Secondly, that the animal is totally blind as to the relation of cause and effect may be clearly seen in the fact of the beaver constructing his dam on the wooden floor of a family-room with the same methodical exactness as if he were on the bank of a river. If he had possessed a tithe of human reason he would have seen at a glance that under the circumstances the cause could not effect the end proposed. That animal instinct manifests a skill in contrivance and a clear knowledge of the relation of

cause and effect is a fact in natural history too obvious to be denied. And the further fact that the animal is totally blind as to the connection between the means to be used and the end to be accomplished, as in the case of the bee, goes to show that such infinite knowledge was in the mind of the Creator; and while he has given the animal the benefit of such knowledge, he has withheld the power of reason by which it might see the relation between cause and effect, and has thus fixed limits to instinct.

Thirdly, this seeming reason in the animal, while it is stereotyped and utterly blind as to the relation between the work it performs and the end to be accomplished, is an instinctive knowledge that is a necessity to its *continued being*. If there were no wise and benignant feet to lead it through the darkness to self-defense and self-preservation—if there were no hands of wisdom and benevolence to supply its wants, then would it, and all its kind, soon become extinct. Though a necessity to the existence of the animal, it is obvious that this faculty is completely circumscribed both in what it does and in its method of doing it. Hence there is no kinship between it and the human reason, whose capacity to improve is as boundless as the universe of God.

With reference to this faculty in domestic animals, such as the dog, horse, etc., it is sufficient to observe, first, that these animals were evidently designed as

companions and helps for man. Of this there can be no question.

Secondly, preparatory to answering the design of their creation, in addition to instinct, which is perfect and therefore cannot be improved, they have been endowed with just such powers as will fit them to fill their domestic spheres of usefulness. They have been endowed with the power of *imitation* or *mimicry*, and can associate rewards and punishments with certain acts, etc. In the absence of such endowments they would utterly fail to answer the design of their creation. But while the dog can imitate the action of his master, he certainly has no conscious perception of the relation between that act and the end to be attained. As suggested by Bowen, the parrot may learn to mimic human speech, but it can never learn to talk. The monkey, seeing the movements of the painter, will "seize the brush and cover the walls with unmeaning scrawls: it imitates the physical act of the painter, but without any glimpse of its intention and real character." The animal may refrain from doing certain things because of remembered punishment, and joyfully do other things in the expectation of reward; but certainly we have no reason to suppose that it has the slightest conscious perception of the intrinsic right or wrong of either one or the other of these acts. Outside of his instinct, the animal does simply what his master teaches him to do, and there stops. Had the Creator withheld this native possibility of being

taught, man would have been deprived of the inestimable blessing of domesticated animals.

Thirdly, this seeming reason in animals is not only bounded by the master's instruction, but it is circumscribed in its native possibilities. So far from grasping the heights and depths of science, it cannot even enter this field where human reason displays its distinctive character. It has neither the aptency nor the capacity for even commencing the endless task for which the mind of man was made, viz., to grasp the thought of the unity of the universe and the consequent unity of its Creator. That human reason was thus designed is as clearly to be seen as that the fish was made to swim or the bird to fly.

To suppose, then, in the light of all the facts of observation, that the mind of the animal is the same in kind with that of man is an absurdity more absurd, if possible, than to suppose that man can make a world. Bearing in mind the fact that when man enters the sphere of the animal he is still in the field of his own operations, and remembering, furthermore, that in the competition with instinct he finds himself unequal to the task, it follows that, unless his mind is superior in kind to that of the animal, he is found absolutely its inferior—lower, that is, than what has been termed “the lower order of animate nature.” To illustrate further man's distinctive character, and to show that God has, in the nature of his creation, fixed an impassable gulf

between the mind of man and that of all other animals, is the object of the following sections.

SECTION (I).

Man's Native Intellectuality.

A very eminent divine, in a popular lecture on "The Ministry of Wealth," with a view of illustrating the kinship between the human and the brute mind, has instituted a comparison between the baby and the pig. In olden time, and in the most degraded society, when the pigs and the babies were housed together, this renowned clergyman supposes that the "base-line of the pig and that of the baby were very near together"—granting, however, that the pig evidently had the advantage.

Imagination, playing upon the supposed situation of the united pigsty and the baby's parlor, will readily suppose that the pig's mind was in the ascendancy. But a little careful thought will clearly discover the fact that the supposition is as superficial as it is unphilosophical. If from flights of oratory we come down to carefully analyze the minds of the pig and of the baby, we will find that while the former has only the possibilities of a completely developed hog, the latter has within its Godlike nature an embryonic germ of potentiality which is as boundless as the universe. With the pig there is only perfect instinct which leads it to self-defense and self-preservation. Having met these necessities of its being, its highest

ambition is gratified, and it can lie down in perfect contentment. We can easily measure the "bounds of its habitation," and see that the sphere of its pig-ship is of very "limited quantity." But in the baby we find native intellectuality, the obvious design of which was to unravel the mystic thread of the universe, and pry into the ways of the Almighty by tracking the steps of his infinite energy. In the absence of the rhetoric of imagination, we aver in the light of mental philosophy that the base-lines of pig and baby are as mutually distant as those of a perfected Berkshire hog and a Newton. Nor was the disparagement any less "in olden time and in the most degraded society." While the pig has only the insignificant capacity of a pig the wide world over, the baby has innate intellectuality, with its appetencies and capacities, whether born in olden times or modern times, whether housed with the pigs or surrounded with all the glory of the queen's court.

A human baby is a human baby in all ages and countries of the world, having the same natural capacities, differing only in degree. The child of a Hottentot as of a Humboldt has a native intellectuality, which is bounded only by the boundless universe, and will end with the end of eternity.

The development of this native germ of intellect depends upon the use of means and the time employed. The child of more favored birth and happier surroundings may have greatly the start, but we can

readily believe that an eternity of existence and an infinity of means may correct the seeming accidents of birth and the misfortune of education.

That the intellectual faculty in man will require an eternity for the unfolding of its native potentiality is clearly indicated by the following considerations:

First, the chief design of the creation of human intellect was that it might solve the various problems of a mysterious Providence.

Our only reason for saying that God has designed the bird to fly is that we observe that it has been endowed with a desire and a capacity to fly. That God's purpose in the creation of the fish was that it should dwell in the water is clearly evinced in the fact that this is its native element and it will perish anywhere else. So, for equally good reasons, we conclude that the chief end of human intellect was to trace the footsteps of the Infinite in natural creation and moral law, as is clearly seen in the fact that this is its normal sphere of action, and the only path which leads to its zenith of glory.

That this is the inexorable law of its nature is obviously evinced in the certainty that its enlargement and improvement are in the ratio of its obedience to this law. The difference in the success of the efforts at following the footsteps of a mysterious Providence marks the difference between the intellect of a negro in the jungles of Africa and that of an American or European scholar.

As the universe is created and controlled in accordance with an immutable method, the human intellect is able to trace the footsteps of a Divine Providence. Nor have we any reason to believe that in the endless journey it will ever be called to a halt because it has reached the limit of its capacity. All that we know of the intellect in its efforts to track the Infinite is that while the pathway grows brighter and brighter the intellect has a correspondingly increasing appetency and capacity to go forward and upward. The finding of these footsteps of the Creator, so far from exhausting, only increases the capacity of the creature to press forward to new and higher achievements. Observation and experience have abundantly proved that the augmented competency of the intellect to discover and assimilate new truth is in the ratio of the truth already received. From this we may affirm without hesitation that the endowment of the human intellect is such that there is no limit to its capacity for finding out new truths.

Secondly, while the intellect is obviously designed in its creation to discover God's hidden methods of operating the universe, it is equally plain that this mysterious but uniform system of operation is designed for the unfolding of the intellect. And while the one is a wrapped-up power of "unlimited quantity," the other is as endless as the ceaseless energies of the Infinite. God's uniform method of operating the universe has no special significance

except as it relates to the training of such of his created intelligences as are able to trace the Divine footsteps. "No intelligent theist can imagine," says Dr. Palfrey, "that there is anything permanent or coercive in an order of nature independent of the will of Him who established it. Why did God at first establish this order? Why does he maintain it? No significant answer can be given to this question, except that he established and maintains it from a benevolent regard to the good of his creatures. No one can doubt that it would be just as easy for God to make the sun rise upon our earth, as we call it, rarely, frequently, generally, as to make it rise as he does every morning. But then what would become of the endless calculations, movements, benefits, dependent on the regularity of that periodical phenomenon? He established this order to the end that men might expect, might arrange, might promise, might provide, might reason, might educate their minds, which, without exercising their minds on something observed in the past and looked for in the future, there would be no such thing as doing."

But for this uniform method of operating the world, man would be utterly at a loss how to conduct himself in the presence of the divine administration. The immutable law is that fire shall burn to-day, to-morrow, and forever, for the purpose, as it would seem, that man may know how to conduct himself in its presence, have "sense enough to keep

out of the fire." But for this immutable mode of controlling the universe there would be no such thing as science, nor would intellect have an opportunity to display its distinctive glory in tracing the steps of its Creator. As uniformity of method of controlling the universe is without meaning except as it relates to the training of God's intelligences, so the germ of intellect is a most insignificant thing, but for the means adequate to development. As each is prophetic of the other, we can only see the infinite wisdom and goodness of God by regarding intellect and science as the counterpart of each other, and observing, as we may, that the unfolding of the one is in ratio of the discovery of the other.

That such has been the paternal care and forethought, and such God's benevolent regard to the good of the chief of his creatures, may be further seen in the fact that the earth was evidently made for man's occupancy. What mean these almost inexhaustible beds of coal that were so carefully prepared, and so secretly hid away until the coming of man? That all this divine painstaking is but an exhibition of God's paternal regard for the creature made in his image is obvious in the fact that man is the only animal that has come to their possession and use. And in the absence of such occupancy and use, these immense coal-fields have no meaning. Why this surface-soil—these banks of sand, gravel, and stone? why the mines of lead, iron, tin, zinc, brass, copper, silver, and gold? While the atheist is

dumb in the answer of these questions, the intelligent theist can readily reply, All these things speak, in language which cannot be misunderstood, of God's benevolent regard for his children in thus preparing and fitting up a home for their coming.

What mean all these domestic animals, which are the companions and helps of man? these secret powers of nature, such as electricity and steam, which are instrumentalities of great usefulness only in the hand of man? These blessed Providences to the stoic's deaf ear and hard heart have no speech nor language; but to the intelligent Christian philosopher they proclaim, with unmistakable voice, God's paternal regard to the good of his children.

With the endowment of intellect and these fatherly preparations, man comes upon the stage of being to play a part which is divinely significant. He may have "seed-time and harvest," and build him up an earthly home with all the conveniences and happy surroundings which make it a type of the heavenly. By community of effort he utilizes the provisions of a wise and beneficent Providence; he opens up the hidden treasures of earth, from which he founds cities, constructs railroads, and builds the ocean steamer; with the endowment of intellect and material resources he establishes schools, founds colleges, erects churches, and thus he carries forward the civilization of the race.

We may reverently ask, What did God mean in these wise and benevolent provisions of this world?

Reason has but one answer to give to this question, and that is, He meant man. Had man never come upon the stage to play his part in the divine economy, then these provisions of our earth would be as meaningless as the Latin mummery of an ignorant priest to the people who do not understand a word he says.

As this world, together with its material resources, has been provided with a view to the occupancy of man, we may also believe that its uniform method of government has been established for the purpose of training and unfolding the germ of human intellectuality. As the intellect is a power of "unlimited quantity," and as these divine modes of operation represent an infinite and ceaseless energy, we joyously conclude that man's distinctive character is for eternity as well as for time.

SECTION (II).

Man's Native Morality.

Darwin's theory of "the descent of man" begins, in the unknown past, with "some fish-like animal," which, after the lapse of hidden time, was, through the influence of appetency and "natural selection," developed into a "reptile-like or some amphibian-like creature;" this in like manner, at the end of mysterious ages, was unfolded into a marsupial animal; this, "through a long line of diversified

forms," expanded into "the Quadrumana and all the higher mammals."

Thus, at the end of unknowable ages, having evolved the monkey from the "fish-like animal," he says, "We thus learn that man is descended from a hairy quadruped, furnished with a tail and pointed ears;" and he might have added, but with little brains and no intellectuality, morality, or religiosity.

Having reached this marvelous conclusion, at the suggestion of analogy, without a solitary *fact* going to show the origin even of the physical man from the animals named, he then frankly makes this confession: "The greatest difficulty which presents itself, when we are driven to the above conclusions on the origin of man, is the high standard of intellectual power and of moral disposition which he has attained."

Had Darwin gone one step farther, after conceding man's "intellectual power and moral disposition," to concede what is equally philosophical and as marvelously distinctive of man, that he is by nature a *religious* being, he would then have presented the three marked characteristics which clearly distinguish man from all the rest of animate nature.

But his fruitless efforts at showing how man came into possession of these distinctive attributes of intellectuality and morality show that, conceding these mental qualities, he had given away his whole theory of "the descent of man." As in the preceding section we have sought to show that this "intellectual

power" was obviously designed to trace the endless movements of the Creator's infinite energy, and that the facts of zoology go to show that this is a distinctive power belonging exclusively to man, so we now observe that this "moral disposition" is a characteristic power, which belongs to no other animal on the globe now, nor ever did at any other time in the past history of the world.

With a spontaneity which shows it to be instinctive, man gives moral character to words and deeds, and decides that while certain utterances and actions are right, others are wrong. Nor can such decisions be repressed or treated with indifference. The very effort to disregard these involuntary decisions upon questions of right and wrong but stirs the soul to its depths by the flourishing of a sharp scourge within. Thus it would seem that this native power of decision has to do with the nature and well-being of the soul. This leads to the following observations:

First, the human soul is made subject to moral law, *which it may or may not obey*. This observation cannot be made with reference to the stars. Suns and planets are subjects of a physical law which they have no power to violate. Having no moral sense and without the right of choice, they remain within their orbits and fly along their trackless way under the guiding hand of a changeless and infinite Energy. Hence these heavenly orbs, from generation to generation, proclaim a universal harmony.

Nor can this observation be made of any other

being on the globe. The animals have no more knowledge of moral right and wrong than has the sun; nor can they any more give moral character to spirit, language, and life than can the earth upon which they live. Having neither power of decision nor the right of choice, they are urged along in their limited sphere of action by the law of instinct, which is as immutable as the Hand that established it. And here again we observe no discord, but all are filling the limited sphere in which they were designed to act, and thus answering the end for which they were created. But man, having been made subject to moral law, with the power either of obeying or disobeying, is the anomaly of all creation, the only discord of the universe. Having abused his "knowledge of good and evil," and violated his sense of right, the charge was justly preferred, "The ox knoweth his owner,"—he knoweth all that he is capable of knowing,—"the ass his master's crib, but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." This leads us to observe, secondly, that the violation of this moral law is sin.

From suggestions made in the foregoing section it must be obvious that this world was made for man, with a benevolent design to his good. From this we must infer that it was for wise and benevolent reasons that man was made subject to moral law, with the power to understand and the right to choose. And though the possibility of violating this moral law has entailed untold misery upon our

race, yet as the soul can only reach its heights of blessedness through its possible obedience to this law, we have abundant reason for supposing that this was the best possible plan that infinite wisdom and boundless love could devise, whereby man could unfold the germ of noblest manhood and be counted worthy of the "Well done, good and faithful servant."

If we admit that the world has been planned and constructed with a benevolent design to the good of man; and also that the soul has been endowed with the power to sit in judgment on questions of right and wrong, and granted the privilege of choice between them, then we are driven to the conclusion that for us to violate our sense of right must be superlatively hateful in the eyes of the all-loving Father. But that such violation is a sin of exceeding sinfulness is further revealed in the legitimate results which follow.

This leads to the observation, thirdly, that "sin wrongs the soul." The soul can no more violate its sense of right with impunity than can the body disobey the laws of health and hope to escape the evil consequences of such violation. The philosophy of experience has taught us that the thinking, speaking, and doing of certain things impart to the soul a new vigor and a more joyous hope, while the thinking, speaking, and doing of certain other things weaken its energy and fill it with unutterable wretchedness. And just here is where we may see

the distinction between righteousness and wickedness.

We are not to infer, however, that our sense of right and wrong is always in keeping with the moral law under which the soul's highest good can be attained. Some things are right and others are wrong in the very nature of things, whatever may be our thoughts in regard to them. The ten commandments, for example, are but the counterpart of the soul's nature and needs, whether we think so or not. We are forced to this conclusion in the fact that the soul reaches its highest good only by strictly obeying them. Licentiousness and covetousness are to the soul what poison is to the body, our thinking to the contrary notwithstanding. Whatever may be our sense of right, if we practice lying and stealing, the soul's weakened energies and crushed hopes will declare in unmistakable words that we are living a life of sin, not only in inflicting a wrong upon the soul, but in depriving it of its divine right to truth and honesty.

"Is it then," it may be asked, "the duty of the soul always to obey its own sense of right?" In answering this question it may be observed that while the soul's first and highest duty is to be true and faithful in its allegiance to its own divine government, yet its decisions on questions of right and wrong may, and often do, first, exhibit a most lamentable degree of mental ignorance of those laws which are the soul's counterpart, and thus,

secondly, impose the necessity of a more thorough study of those laws which are suggested by observation and experience, and obviously made known in the Bible. The heathen, in his moral life and religious consecration, may be as conscientiously devoted to the careful observance of his sense of right as is the most intelligent Christian. What he needs is, not a change of honest purpose to do right, but rather an enlightened judgment as to what is right, intrinsically right, in the nature of the soul. The world sitting in moral darkness needed Him who is the "light of the world," not so much to intensify the people's devotion, or even make it more sincere, as to *enlighten* their judgment as to the nature of the soul and the laws of its life. What Paul needed while persecuting the Christians was, not less consecration to what he conceived to be right, but more knowledge of those moral and spiritual laws under which, after his conversion, he was developed into the grandest man the world ever saw. Reserving the further discussion of this thought for the next section, we observe that the nature of the soul thus seen in its relation to moral law clearly shows that the distinction between the human and the brute mind is one of absolute kind, and not of degree only.

SECTION (III).

Man's Native Religiosity.

As the subject of religion, in its generic signification, is fully presented in the first part of this work, we need only observe in this connection that if observation and experience are to settle the questions of mental philosophy, then have we the most invincible testimony of the fact that religion is a part of the soul's nature. If a man's native appetency and efficiency in seeking after science have demonstrated his intellectuality, then, likewise, his native tendency to seek after God as an object of worship, and his success in it under enlightenment, are proof positive of his religiosity. As certainly and as universally as men have inquired after the facts of nature, so certainly and universally have they sought after God.

This is a fact which cannot be affirmed of any other animal on the globe. No other animal of ancient or modern times has evinced the slightest knowledge of its Creator, or discovered to us the remotest tendency to seek after God. Even in olden times and in countries of semi-barbarism, man was distinguished from the rest of animate nature by the significant title of "a worshiping animal."

If, as we have sought to show in the previous

section, the intellectual world and the scientific world were designed one for the other; and if this world, with its rich mines and all its material resources, was fitted up for the occupancy of man; and if, further, all these domestic animals were designed as companions and helps for man—if all this may be seen,—and who so blind that he cannot see it?—then may we further behold, with immeasurable delight, the infinite significance of this native religious attribute which seeks to bind the free-will offering of intelligence to God that he might have the glory of all created things. But for man's native attribute of religion there had been no intelligent link connecting God with the work of his hand; and hence this world, with all its manifest wisdom, power, and benevolence, could have given no expression of "glory and honour to Him that sitteth upon the throne."

If the world has been constructed and controlled with a benevolent design to the good of man, how reasonable to suppose that a being so favored should be endowed with a power of mind by which he might render a tribute of praise and thanksgiving to the Being who has thus honored and exalted him above the works of his hand! Conceiving thus the exaltedness of our position, standing as we do between God and all the marvelous works of his hands, endowed as we are with the spirit of worship, we cannot refrain from joining in the chorus of the saints above, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive

glory and honour and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

We have thus briefly pointed out the three principal characteristics which distinguish man from all else of animate nature. In the light of mental philosophy and of the science of zoology, we may affirm that INTELLECTUALITY, MORALITY, and RELIGION are attributes peculiar to man in all ages and countries of the world. And with the manifest painstaking of the Creator which is everywhere to be seen, in creating and controlling this world with a benevolent design to the good of man, we are inspired with the joyous hope, even from reasons of nature, that his destiny is eternity, and that the intelligent worshipers of all worlds will be his companions.

Referring to instinct of animals as distinct from intellectual, moral, and religious reason in man, Bowen concludes: "No moral character is attributable to a faculty which is unconsciously exerted, and no moral aim can exist where progress or change is impossible. When deprived of this extraneous power, or viewed apart from it, the brute appears in its true light, as the creature of a day, born not for purposes connected with its own being, but as an humble instrument, or a fragmentary part, in the great circle of animated nature, which, as a whole, is subservient to higher ends."

And those "higher ends" are that man, for whom

this world was made, should bring himself into blissful harmony with the administration of God's laws of love, and thus enjoy the divine approval through all the cycles of a joyous eternity.

It must be clear that the distinctive character of man, as seen in the light of mental philosophy, shows that he has no kinship with the lower order of animals; and to suppose that physical evolution will account for these distinctive attributes is an assumption devoid of all reason. That the distinguishing characteristics of man make him differ from other animals in *kind*, and not merely in *degree*, will be further illustrated in the following chapter.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SOUL A DIVINE COMMONWEALTH.

Analogy between human civil government and the organic self-rule of the soul.—The several governmental departments: (I) The Legislative, (II) The Judiciary, (III) The Witness-bearing, (IV) The Executive.—Benevolence and righteousness of the Creator.

THE object of this chapter is threefold. First, to designate the powers of the soul and the divine purpose in their appointment. Secondly, to represent the soul as a government divinely organized, with a view of punishing sin and rewarding righteousness. Thirdly, to illustrate the benevolent pur-

pose and righteous character of God and the obvious duty of man.

The analogy between the highest form of human government and that divinely organized in the soul is well-nigh perfect. Nor is the purpose dissimilar. Human governments are instituted with a view to the public good. To the end that man may be protected in his natural rights of life, liberty, and property, laws are enacted with penalties attached. So likewise the soul has been organized into a government for its own good. That it may be protected in its birthright to righteousness and saved from the deadly influences of sin, it has power not only to enact laws with penalties attached, but to enforce them.

Moreover, to the end that justice may be administered, the state government is organized with the several departments of legislative, judiciary, and executive. That justice may be justly administered, however, it is necessary that there be included also the department of testimony, which, on account of its importance, we prefer to treat separately. Political science presents to us these three functions of administration, namely, legislative, judiciary,—including the evidence on which judicial proceedings are based,—and executive.

By tracing the analogy that exists between the divine government as instituted in the human soul and the republicanism of the state, it would seem that the latter was suggested by the former, and

that the defects of the state government may be corrected by the careful study of mental philosophy. This thought will be illustrated in the following sections.

SECTION (I).

The Legislative Department of the Soul.

Human reason in its relation to the soul is quite analogous to that of the legislature of the state. It is the province of the state legislature to protect the peace and safety of community, by enacting such laws and attaching such penalties as will restrain the vicious purpose of those who might otherwise interfere with the public good. So likewise it is within the jurisdiction of human reason not only to determine questions of right and wrong and their magnitude, but to enact laws fixing rewards to virtue and punishment to crime according to their merit or demerit.

But while it is the duty of the legislature to decide upon questions of right and wrong and to enact laws accordingly, its conclusions are not unfrequently adverse to what is intrinsically good and evil, and hence it fails to answer the aim and design of its appointment. This unhappy end is often reached through the mental obtuseness of those who are appointed to the service—through the political influences with which they are surrounded, and sometimes, though not frequently, through

vicious purposes. But with all this ignorance, wicked environments, and depraved intention, the popular will has decided that the public good will be best served by granting the legislature the function of enacting laws and fixing the moral statute of the state. The public's only hope of redress is, not to ignore the law-making power, but to elect to the legislature men of more brains and better heart.

As to the legislature has been assigned the duty of deciding questions of public weal and woe and to enact laws for the good of community, so human reason has been appointed by the Creator to the exalted service of determining what is right and wrong, and to enact such laws and attach such penalties as will serve the twofold purpose of nerving the soul to deeds of good, and to protect it from evil purposes from within or without. Human reason, like the legislature, may, and often does, decide adversely as to what is intrinsically right and wrong, and hence largely fails to answer the design of its appointment. This failure may be the result of ignorance, consequent upon the accidents of birth and education, or it may be from vicious intention. But though the decisions of reason may have been grossly perverted because of ignorance or the influence of wicked environments, yet the soul's first duty is faithful allegiance to those decisions on questions of right and wrong. Its only hope of salvation is, not in violating its legislative decisions, but in having reason so *educated* that it may clearly

understand what is intrinsically right and wrong in the nature of the soul, and so enact such laws as will enable man to develop into that noble manhood for which he was designed.

This forcibly illustrates man's need of the Christ, who is the "light of the world." The spirit he manifested, the words he uttered, and the life he lived, as we shall have an occasion to show, were but an answer to the soul's nature and necessities. The divinity of his teaching enlightens the understanding, and thus, under the sanctifying influence of his spirit, the heart is cleansed from every vicious purpose.

SECTION (II).

The Judiciary Department of the Soul.

The similarity between the human *judgment* and the judiciary of the state may be clearly seen. As mental analysis discovers to us a power of mind which we call reason, and which exercises itself on the various methods of human action, and determines that some are right and others are wrong,—a power analogous to the law-making power of the state,—so, likewise the same analysis has revealed a power of soul which we call judgment, and which has been divinely appointed to exercise itself in determining how far the decisions of reason have been violated, thus bearing a marked resemblance to the judiciary of the state. It is not the

province of the judge upon the bench to enact law, nor to attach penalties to violations of it. His sole duty is to determine whether or not legislative enactments have been violated. Nor is he expected or even allowed to decide against the alleged criminal in the absence of testimony: thus showing that the department of justice necessitates that of testimony.

So also it is not the province of human judgment to mark out the line of man's duty, nor yet to fix the statute of rewards and punishments. Its office is well and faithfully discharged if, when the soul is summoned to its court, it has decided justly as to man's innocence or guilt according to the law enacted and the evidence produced.

That God has established a divine court within the soul before which each individual man must stand and hear the sentence of guilt or acquittal is a fact that cannot be gainsaid.

Nor can we hope to bribe this inner court of the soul or escape its decisions. Under the laws of the state we may be arrested for crime and thrust into prison: but it is possible for us to break the jail and thus escape the just condemnation of the judge; or, through the influence of money, prejudice, or vicious purpose, the court may be bribed to pronounce us innocent. But the court established in the soul's divine commonwealth is *omnipresent*. "If we ascend into heaven, it is there; or if we make our bed in hell, it is there." Nor can it be pre-

judged to show favor, or bought to do injustice. The simple fact of experience is that the soul makes its own record of its right and wrong doings, and meets this record at its own bar of justice to stand or fall by it. "They that have not the law are a law unto themselves, which show the works of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing."

In the light of both reason and revelation we may confidently expect, when life's labors are ended, to stand in the presence of this divinely appointed inner court to meet the record of our earthly life, when we shall fall under self-condemnation, or rise to hear the "Well done." As a matter of mental philosophy as well as of Bible revelation, man has only the choice of one of two things: either first to seek and obtain *pardon* which will be recognized at the bar of human judgment as a good and valid reason for acquittal, or else fall under the weight of his own guilt in the presence of his own judge. Psycho-theological manipulating may encourage the incorrigible sinner to believe that at the end of a profane and sacrilegious life he shall hear the false approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant;" but from the divinely appointed inner court of his own soul will inevitably come up the awful denunciation, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."

SECTION (III).

The Witness-Bearing Department of the Soul.

Memory is to the soul's divine commonwealth what the witness is to the court of human government. As in the earthly court the witness is not charged with the duty of making law, nor of deciding as to its violation, so memory has nothing directly to do in directing the course of man's duty, nor in deciding as to the quantity and quality of rewards and punishments which justice demands. Like the witness in court, the memory has faithfully discharged its mission when it has reported to the court "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth."

And here again we observe the great advantage of the heavenly over the earthly appointed courts. In the courts of the state the testimony may be, and often is, largely influenced by the ignorance, prejudice, or bribery of the witness. But none of these imperfections attach to the *memory* in its testimony before the soul's divine tribunal. Memory is not ignorant of the soul's life, but faithfully records each passing event. The words we utter, be they good or bad, the life we live, whether noble or ignoble, the spirit and motive of action, whether loving or vicious, will all be minutely reported at the bar of the inner court of the soul. If mental science has established any one fact beyond cavil, it is that

human memory never forgets any fact after it is once fully attained.

Memory has no selfish purpose to serve, nor can it be persuaded or frightened, or hired to forget some things which took place, or to remember others which never occurred. It is divinely charged with the simple duty of reporting to its divine tribunal not only the outer life, but the inner life as well.

Our enemies may tell us of sins we never committed, and our friends may report virtues and charities which we never performed; but the absolute justice of God is clearly discovered in the fact that he has appointed human memory to the office of recording and reporting to the individual soul an exact duplicate of its outward and inward life. From this we may learn the practical lesson that nothing, absolutely nothing, but truth and righteousness can stand approved in the presence of Him who is "of too pure eyes to behold iniquity."

SECTION (IV).

The Executive Department of the Soul.

Conscience is to the soul's government what the executive officer is to the state. It is proper to observe, however, that we are not caviling as to names, but rather seeking out the several departments of the soul's power, and giving to each the name that seems to be indicated by the office it fills. That the soul is endowed with a power to execute

its own laws in the punishment of sin and the reward of virtue is a fact of universal experience which none can deny.

The soul having grossly violated its own sense of right is at once filled with the consuming fire of remorse and of apprehensions and forebodings of worse to come. This goading, or punishing power of the mind, we are pleased to name Conscience, or the executive officer of the soul's divine commonwealth.

Conscience, under this definition, is not charged with the duty of determining questions of right and wrong, as according to some authors it is. That work, as it seems to us, is more properly assigned to human *reason*. Nor are we at liberty to use these words interchangeably. Some authors speak of the conscience as if it were appointed to the duty of legislating for the soul, and perhaps in the same sentence refer to it as if it were the punishing power. As the soul, like the body, has many members but one soul, and as these members have not the same office, it is well to discriminate where there is an obvious difference, and thus avoid the confounding of terms. We shall therefore consider conscience as the soul's executive officer because it punishes the mind when adjudged guilty of violating its own law. This manifestation of soul power in human experience is as distinct from that which gives moral character to words and deeds, and determines the law of right and wrong doing, as is the legislature of the state distinct from the hangman.

From the vagueness with which terms are used, it seems important that we emphasize the fact that conscience is not the *law-making power of the soul*, *not the judiciary*, nor yet the *witness*; but its only duty is, when the soul has been adjudged "guilty," to inflict the penalty of the law, to flourish the sharp scourge within, and that, too, for the good of the punished.

The sheriff executes the decisions of the court by committing the condemned to the jail or penitentiary, or by subjecting him to the gallows, not from enmity to the prisoner, but for the public good. So likewise conscience has been God-appointed, not out of ill-will to man, but with the benevolent design of saving the soul from the destruction and death of sin. Some of the Greek philosophers supposed that this disturbing power of the soul was but the voice of God in man warning him away from the deadly poison of transgression. The sharp scourge of this executive officer is to the soul what pain is to the body. As racking pain comes to us as a friend in the disguise of an enemy to warn us of the presence of bodily harm, so conscience, though unbidden and undesired, rushes to the rescue of the soul by filling it with remorse, that under the lash it may be warned from sin and whipped into obedience. "No chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby."

God made the way of the transgressor hard, with the benevolent purpose that he walk not therein, for it is the way to death. As pain of body is graded according to the extent of injury being done to the physical organism, so conscience torments the soul in the ratio of its violation. It will never punish the soul for a crime of which it is not guilty, nor inflict suffering which is out of proportion with the wrong committed. Its office is simple justice and unbounded benevolence.

God has marked out a straight and narrow path in which enlightened reason tells us to walk; and if we step to the right or left, conscience is there to gently scourge us back into the pathway of obedience. But if we persist in violating the laws of this God-ordained commonwealth, then, rather than that sin when finished should bring forth death, conscience goads and torments, giving the soul no peace day or night, with the kindly view of bringing it back into willing and blissful obedience to its sense of right. As pain is the life-guard of the body, without which it would soon be destroyed, so conscience is the body-guard of the soul, in the absence of which man made in the image of God would be captivated at every step, and led on from one degree of sin to another, until hope would be extinguished, and a dark night of despair would enshroud the soul, and chains of anguish drag its ghostly image down to the gloom of an endless night, to be reserved unto the "blackness of darkness forever."

This manner of representing the human soul clearly sets forth, first, that God has organized the minds of his creatures into a perfect government, with a benevolent design to man's good ; else why so much painstaking to have him walk in the way of righteousness, which is the way of peace and life? Secondly, it clearly illustrates, not only the fatherly but the righteous character of God ; else why establish a government the object and end of which is to develop his children into righteousness of character? Unless we can believe that the stream can rise higher than its fountain, or that the effect is greater than the cause, we cannot consent to regard the creature as being designed to excel the Creator. Thirdly, from this view of the soul we learn not only the benevolent purpose and righteous character of the Father, but, more and better, we are clearly taught the important practical lesson that our only mission on God's beautiful earth is to strive, by every available providence, to bring ourselves into blissful harmony with his government of love, and thus be counted worthy of the society of the intelligences of all worlds who have wrought well the task which Heaven assigned. As it is our highest privilege, so it is our first duty to strive to bring the soul into harmony with the law of pure thinking and of holy living. If vicious men or wicked environments seek to deter us from the path of uprightness, with the Athenian philosopher we may reply, "Strike, but hear me!"

PART V.

DEMONOLOGY.

PREFATORY.

(1) Universality of belief.—(2) Practical importance of the subject.—(3) Difficult to comprehend.—(4) Its difficulty must not bar investigation.

A BELIEF in the existence of Satan (a Hebrew word meaning *adversary*, or a Devil, from a Greek word meaning *false accuser*) is coeval and coextensive with the race of mankind. The few in the different ages and countries of the world who have denied the existence of such a being are only sufficient in number to illustrate the universality of such faith. As this wide-spread belief has much to do with the weal or woe of man, an explanation of this prevalence is demanded by every thoughtful and intelligent mind.

If any have supposed that the subject of demonology is of no practical importance, it must be because they are ignorant of the influence it has had in shaping the destiny of our race. A man's faith touching the personality and attributes of the Devil largely determines what his real character is and will be. If one regards Satan as being respon-

sible for all his wicked thoughts, words, and deeds, then of necessity he will seek at the bar of justice to excuse himself, as did Adam when he said, "The woman whom thou gavest me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat;" and Eve when she excused herself, saying, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

That such faith in the character and influence of the Devil only tends to stay the hand of conscience, which seeks to scourge us back into the path of duty and personal manhood, is abundantly illustrated in the lives of those whose daily repentance, instead of leading to reformation, is but lip-service, and needs to be repented of. Behind the confession lingers the thought, "The Devil did it."

Again, if any are inclined to regard the subject as being too easy of comprehension to require explanation, they need to be informed that there is no theme coming within the purview of human thought upon which there have been and now are such a variety and discrepancy of opinion as upon this vexed question of demonology. Human imagination has pictured a world of devils. Heathen mythology has demonized all nature, both animate and inanimate. Conway has truthfully said, "Any attempt to catalogue the evil specters which have haunted mankind were like trying to count the shadows cast upon the earth by the rising sun." And such have been the discrepancies of thought in the different ages and countries of heathendom, that

the deities of one people have been regarded as the demons of another.

Nor has the light of Christian civilization dispelled the gloom of mental entanglement. In a conversation between a Calvinist and Theodore Parker, in which the former sought to convert the latter, Parker is reported to have replied, "The difference between us is simple: your God is my Devil."

Even among the so-called "evangelical Christians," the difference of opinion on this subject is well-nigh irreconcilable. While some regard the Devil as nothing but a ghost of human imagination, whose spectral image has frightened the race into intolerable forebodings and apprehensions, others look upon him as a personal monster, huge and horrid, who, in defiance of God, has depopulated heaven, crushed the hopes of humanity, and even threatens to usurp the throne of the universe. Nor can the variety of Christian thought on this subject be catalogued by these two extremes. Many thoughtful people look upon the Devil as nothing less than a power in the moral universe under the control and dominion of the infinite Father, serving simply as an instrumentality in carrying out his wise and benevolent purpose in the creation and government of man.

Once more, if any with agnostic tendencies are inclined to regard the subject of demonology as falling beyond the line of human comprehension, they need only be reminded of the fact that if inability to compass this entire field of thought bars investi-

gation, then all mental research is vain. There is absolutely no theme either in science, morals, or religion, connected with which there are not heights of thought we cannot reach, depths we cannot fathom, and breadths we cannot comprehend. And yet in all these fields of thought we may know enough for our present needs, and entertain the precious hope that future necessities will be met by our having learned more and more of these high, deep, and broad things of God's beneficent providence.

If, then, the subject of demonology has largely to do with human character, and determines to a great extent our well-being for time and eternity; and if the views even of Christians are widely at variance, may we not enter with a genuine interest into the questions, *Who is the Devil? What is his power? What is his purpose?*

CHAPTER XVII.

WHO IS THE DEVIL?

Something more than a ghost of human imagination.

SINCE a belief in a personal devil or devils is as wide-spread and universal as the race of man, it cannot be disposed of upon the supposition that it is merely a superstition. Human imagination may play, and doubtless has played, a most important part in leading to foolish theories and silly extravagances.

but underneath all these spectral images of falsehood there must be some great fundamental truth, the foundation-fact upon which this mighty superstructure of ghostly conception rests.

For example, the system of astrology, as taught and practiced by the Oriental diviners, is now looked upon, under the light of true science, as being largely the creature of mere imagination. But while superstition leads to false theories and nonsensical conclusions, the entire system is known to rest upon some of the foundation-facts of astronomy. In the absence of such truth it would have been impossible for them to build up such a temple of falsehood. Show us a universal superstition, whether in science, morals, or religion, and we will point you to a great truth as its correlative.

Ideality can rest only upon the foundation of possible truth. The temple of a universal superstition may be built, but by no possibility in the absence of material out of which to build it. To convince ourselves of the utter impossibility of thinking of something as having been created without materials out of which to make it, we need only make the mental effort: such experience will at once convince us that we are grasping after a fantasy. If it be possible for the mind to consent to the proposition of "creation without material," it must be the consent of blindness, and not of seeing. Even if we say that "God created the world out of nothing," we must acknowledge that it is a conclusion con-

trary to all known facts. If we reason from observation and experience, it must be observed that there is nothing that we have seen or known that even suggests the possibility of creation without material. All analogy and philosophy would seem to lead to the conclusion that when God created the world he had the materials at hand out of which to create it. If we believe it to be otherwise, we must further conclude that it is a fact known only to God.

When, then, the skeptic seeks to get rid of the Devil upon the easy supposition of a universal superstition, he has conceded a fact which, in the light of reason, proves the existence of the very thing which he has sought to deny; for this universality of belief only proves that however diversified and irreconcilable the theories, the root of the whole matter is innate. The light of the ages has reflected the truth of that saying of Oriental philosophy: "The consent of all nations must be accepted as the law of God." As all nations, therefore, have consented to the belief in a devil, it argues that the foundation of the belief is of divine origin.

This universal belief can only be accounted for, as it seems to us, in one of two ways: either, first, it was incorporated in the nature of the human mind and the providence of God; or else, secondly, there is a demonizing monster in the moral universe who has been allowed by Providence to address himself to the experience of every human being. It is

either inherent or external. And whichever it may be, the great fact of an opposing devil remains the same in the bitter experience of each individual soul. The divine purpose of this internal creation or external power will be fully considered farther on. In this connection we need only observe that the man who considers the Devil to be only a ghost of human imagination has reached a conclusion that is devoid of all sound reason—he contradicts observation and universal experience.

As the myriad rays of light in their going forth are wholly dependent upon the sun, so the legion of devils which have stalked over the earth to haunt the race are dependent upon some central truth. Moreover, as following a single ray of light will certainly lead to the sun as its center and source, so following the notion of any imaginative devil, even of hoof and horn, will conduct us to a great philosophical truth as his progenitor.

It becomes our duty, therefore, to remove, as far as may be, the rubbish of superstition, and to seek the fundamental truth which lies beneath it all, and which has been largely hid from the ages. As our reasoning leads to the conclusion that the Devil is more than a mere spectral image, the question again recurs, "Who is the Devil?"

CHAPTER XVIII.

IS THE DEVIL A PERSONAL MONSTER?

Titles of Satan as set forth in "Footprints of Satan."—(1) Why is such a devil permitted to live?—(2) How was Satan's fall made possible?—(3) Why was he permitted to remain in heaven?—(4) Why precipitated upon an unoffending humanity?—Satan's wretched condition.—Whence the popular theory?—Why does he continue to exist?—Statements at variance with facts.—His supposed power over the elements.—Three wonders!—(a) How rapidly does the wind travel before slipping into the hand of Satan?—(b) He should have credit for all good results.—(c) The popular devil is no devil at all.—(d) Is the Devil the author of science?

IN seeking an answer to this important question we need, as far as possible, to rid ourselves of any preconceived opinions. We say "as far as possible," because it is not within the line of possibility for a man entirely to extricate himself from those opinions which have "grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength." Not only in religion, but in morals and science as well, we believe largely what we have been taught to believe. But though we are, to a great extent, slaves to an education over which we have had but little control, yet we may by personal effort do something commendable in the way of lifting up the windows that light may come in to dispel darkness, and truth to

take the place of what may be a degrading superstition. If we desire to get rid of this mental slavery and come into the true "liberty of the sons of God," we must have the courage of our own convictions. He that follows the lead of popular thought, in the fear of being ostracized for the sin of thinking as God may help him to think, is fit only to be a slave.

Although, then, we cannot entirely rid ourselves of our preconceived opinions, we may at least follow the guide of our own honest convictions. What is needed in the world of religious thought, more than anything else, is moral heroism. If the right and duty of each man to think for himself were the popular grace of the hour, there would come an inspiration like "a rushing mighty wind," that would not only break the shackles that bind us to the interpretations of the sixteenth century, but would dispel the gloom of superstition which has been and now is the progenitor of all intelligent and honest infidelity.

Not a little of this baneful influence has grown out of the sacrilegious superstition which has gathered about this subject of Demonology. It having been assumed that he is a personal monster, his Satanic majesty has been exalted to a rivalry with the Almighty himself. His wisdom, power, and ubiquity, if not absolutely supreme, are of such character at least as to make him a strong competitor with Him who is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. To us such a doctrine is, in the highest sense, sacrilegious and profane. That the popu-

lar theory of Demonology robs God of the honor which rightfully belongs to him, the reader will see by giving a careful reading and an unbiased criticism to the following lines of thought.

We cannot give a better answer to the question Who is the Devil? —as held by those who believe him to be a “personal monster,”—than by quoting the language of an eloquent and representative writer of that school, Rev. Hollis Read, A.M., author of recent works entitled “Footprints of Satan,” “God in History,” etc. Perhaps not all who hold the theory would carry its application to the same extreme that this author does; but we give it as showing the logical conclusion to which the doctrine leads, in order to examine fairly and fully the foundation on which it stands.

The author says in “Footprints”:

“The notable personage in question is known by a great variety of names. Among these are Apollyon, the destroyer; Lucifer, Son of the Morning, or the Morning Star, denoting his exalted station; the old Dragon, Serpent, or Unclean Spirit; Satan, or the great enemy; Belial, or destitution of all goodness; Beelzebub, the prince of devils; Tempter, Enemy, Accuser of the brethren, and a liar. He is also called sinner, murderer, adversary, beast, deceiver, angel of the bottomless pit, prince of darkness, lion going about seeking whom he may devour. . . .

“All seem agreed, as we have seen, to call him by

bad names. True, he is often called an angel, but not in a connection to make it complimentary. He is called the fallen angel, the angel of the bottomless pit, the messenger of evil. The title, though honorable in itself, seems in this case retained rather as a bitter remembrance of what he once was. It recalls his origin and former position. He was an angel: Lucifer, the son of the morning, the morning star. No title like this most honorable one can convey to this fallen spirit so burning a remembrance of the past. . . .

“Can we shield ourselves from his cunning devices? He is not absolutely omnipresent, as he is not omnipotent. Yet he has a wonderful ubiquity. He may be superintending affairs in his Sodom, in London, or in New York, and, apparently at the same moment, be supervising the doings of his minions in his Gomorrah in India or China. Either by his agents or by his own presence, transported thither as by lightning speed, he may, for all practical purposes, be in each and every place at the same time. By his wonderful facilities of locomotion he has a sort of omnipresence. . . .

“His original home was in heaven, the dwelling-place of holy angels, where he was an angel high and holy. The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, who deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. . . .

“Such are his locomotive powers, and such the

number and activities of his hosts, that for all purposes of mischief he is everywhere and in every place at the same time.

“Nor is the Devil omnipotent; yet he is possessor of tremendous powers. In Egypt he wrought miracles. Through magicians, sorcerers, and soothsayers he did wonders. He had power over plagues and diseases to afflict men, as in the case of Job. And to a limited extent, though not within narrow limits, has he power over the elements of nature to do manifest and mighty mischief. And perhaps his greatest power is not that which he has over the bodies and the temporal interests of men. He has a controlling power over the human mind. He presents motives and uses devices which are often all but irresistible. . . .

“Angels are of a vastly higher grade of intellect than men, and the chief of angels is no doubt superior to the common order. Satan took rank with the higher order, and we may not suppose his intellectual caliber lessened because of his moral perversion. He has probably more than made up in craft and cunning and malignity what he lost in moral virtues. His fierce and desperate warfare with heaven and heaven’s King has, we may suppose, quickened his intellect, drawn out the latent resources of his mind, and, as fired by pride, hate, and revenge, he has ever since his apostasy been intellectually growing into a more complete maturity of all that is devilish.”

The foregoing seems to be a fair representation

of the popular thought touching the question Who is the Devil?

A theory should neither be antagonized on account of its popularity, nor adopted because of its conceded orthodoxy. Truth is very often found greatly in the minority.

The answer, as set forth in the above quotation, seems not only altogether too superficial, but if allowed the benefit of its own logic, must inevitably lead to the most absurd conclusions. It goes upon the supposition that the Devil is not only in open antagonism to God, but that he is an unmitigated curse in the Father's moral universe. Besides, such literal interpretation of Scriptures which all concede to be highly figurative, so far from answering the question in hand, only raises others vastly more difficult to solve. From this system of doctrine the philosopher who thinks beneath the surface is led logically to reason thus :

I. If the Devil is in open rebellion against God, seeking to destroy all that is beautiful in nature and lovely in virtue, and without a redeeming quality either in character or work, why is such an unmitigated curse permitted to mar the work of the Father of all, who is infinite in wisdom, omnipotent in power, and boundless in love?

The very existence of a foe of such malignity, and one whose recovery is absolutely hopeless, argues one of two things : either,

First, that he lives in defiance of God ; or

Second, what is worse, that the Father regards his work of destruction with the utmost indifference.

But in the light both of sound reason and of the Bible rightly interpreted, we are not at liberty to adopt a theory the logic of which leads to any such absurd conclusions. In answer to the question, Why does God permit the Devil to exist? it may be said by some that it is a problem too deep for human reason, and one upon which revelation throws no light. But it seems altogether more reasonable to conclude that a speculation which necessarily involves such a dilemma is as false in philosophy as it is contrary to sound Biblical exegesis. Certainly the guidings of truth will not lead to so preposterous a conclusion. A doctrine, however popular, which logically involves any such irrational deduction must be fundamentally false.

II. If this Satan, who is now such a huge and horrid monster, was once not only an angel, but the chief of angels, the question reasonably and necessarily arises, How was it possible for him to fall from such a height of glory to such an abyss of unutterable wretchedness?

If the Devil is to be substituted as the cause of the fall of man, who, we must inquire, was the cause of his own fearful disaster? An effect which has so perverted the purposes of Infinite Wisdom must have had a sufficient cause. But the following suggestions will show that we search in vain for such a

cause, and so may legitimately doubt the whole theory :

(*a*) The cause of his fall cannot be found in his original nature, for he was created of God not only "an angel," but the "chief of angels," pure and spotless. The doctrine under review goes upon this supposition.

(*b*) Neither is it to be traced to his original surroundings. He was not only the chief of angels, but he was in heaven, where there was nothing to harm him or lead him aside from holiness.

The author we have quoted well says: "When sin was first conceived in the mind of Satan there was nothing in all the universe to suggest it—there was no temptation, no occasion for it. Everything was in harmony with holiness." But after relieving heaven of the responsibility of such a fearful calamity, the writer then attaches all blame to the Devil, and says, "The thought came from within. It originated in himself." But he seems to entirely overlook the fact that this proposition utterly destroys the original assumption, namely, that "Satan was an angel." No: "he was originally an angel; and like every other angel he came from the hands of his Maker a pure and holy being."

How, we may well inquire, could the thought of sin, and that of the most malignant character, enter the mind of "a pure and holy being," and that too when "there was nothing in all the universe to suggest it"? We aver, in the light of sense and

reason, that the man or set of men who can believe all this can have no assurance of the absolute security of any being, not even of God himself. Certainly it is not in the nature of things for the Infinite Father to be anything more than an absolutely "pure and holy Being," nor can we conceive of better surroundings than those of Satan's heavenly home, where he dwelt as the "chief of angels," and had nothing to suggest a temptation.

Such doctrine inevitably leads to the conclusion that there remains a possibility for all heaven yet to be turned into hell, and the All-Father to be changed into an omnipotent devil!

The question, What induced the "chief of angels" to become the "prince of devils"? recurs with all its original force. The only answer attempted by the author under review is that this chief of angels was "on trial"—was a "free agent"—"free to sin, free to maintain his integrity." But all this is only a beautiful jingle of words without meaning. When it is said that "he was free to sin," we instinctively ask, "Whence the possibility of such freedom?" As we have seen, and as the writer admits, it was not in his nature to have any such "freedom"! To talk of an absolutely "holy being" having the ability to choose evil is just as sensible, and has just as much meaning, as to speak of studying science without intellect, of deciding between right and wrong with no moral sense, of observing the different colors without the sense of sight. If a

man can see without eyes, hear without ears, and breathe without lungs—if we can believe all this, then we may consent to the proposition that a being can sin when his very nature forbids the possibility.

But, that absurdity may appear more absurd, we are led to inquire, How was it possible that this chief of angels in heaven was free to choose evil when there was no evil to choose? Such terms as “on trial,” “free agent,” “free to sin,” have a sensible meaning when applied to man in this sinful world, but when used with reference to the chief of angels in heaven, then they are like “sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.”

The advocate of the doctrine under review, after stating that Satan’s great sin “originated in himself” while he was “a pure and holy being,” and that, too, when “there was no temptation, no occasion for it,” seeing the dilemma into which he had fallen, seeks to extricate himself by saying, “Here all is chaos.” An evil thought presupposes an evil mind. But his mind was holy. Then how could it conceive an unholy deed? We cannot grasp the conception of a holy nature effecting an unholy thing. And how that nature was so transformed as to transgress defies our understanding. An angel one moment, a devil the next—this is the sphinx of history.

Thus we are brought to the end of this specious reasoning and theorizing, which has broken down of its own weight. Let us conclude, rather, that “this is the sphinx” of a fabulous demonology.

A doctrine, though it be regarded as soundly orthodox, which only makes "darkness more visible and confusion worse confounded," should be abandoned by sensible people and relegated to the dark ages whence it originated.

(c) If Satan's fall, which has entailed such untold disaster upon our innocent race, cannot be traced to any taint of depravity belonging to his absolute angelhood, nor yet to the slightest imperfection of his heavenly surroundings, there seems to remain but one other possible cause, and that is God himself! But the better angel of our nature instinctively spurns this suggestion, unless it can be shown that the Father's benevolent design in the creation of man can be better served by inciting "an angel one moment" to become "a devil the next." But, as we have seen, the whole theory goes upon the supposition that Satan is an "unmitigated curse," "having no redeeming quality, either in character or works."

That this supposition, however, is not only false in the philosophy of human experience, but groundless in the Christian Scriptures, will be shown under the last chapter of this part. Meantime let us observe other difficult questions which necessarily arise out of the theory under review.

The popular faith, having given an interpretation to the Scriptures bearing upon the subject, based chiefly upon Milton's "Paradise Lost," assumes that this chief of angels, after he had become an archfiend, was permitted to remain in heaven until he

had induced a large number of the heavenly host to become his disciples. His following became so great, that he dared to wage war in that celestial land against the Almighty. Just here sound reason suggests a few minor questions.

First: If heaven was in a state of warlike siege, did it not cease to be heaven? The chief-infernal pitting his minions of fallen spirits against God and his holy angels must for a time have changed heaven into hell.

Second: If this theory is true, must we not infer that the devil's work of seduction and the mustering of his hosts were unknown to God?

III. If not, then the great question is, Why did the omniscient, omnipotent, and loving Father permit Satan to remain in heaven until he had tainted everything with the breath of his rebellion?

Even an earthly parent, having a due regard for the welfare of his family, would unhesitatingly eject from his household a character whose very presence would breed moral corruption and end in cruel death to the inmates of his home. The father who would do otherwise would proclaim one of two things: either, first, his inability to protect those intrusted to his care, or, second, his indisposition, which is infinitely worse. If such a course would necessarily reflect either upon the competency or moral character of an earthly father, what shall we think of the efficiency or fatherly character of Him who suffered the chief of angels, after he had become the prince

of devils, to gather an army sufficient to lay siege on heaven with the vile purpose of usurping the throne of the universe? This is the sacrilegious logic which we are forced to adopt if we accept the prevalent view of demonology.

In reply to this, some one may say that the same charges may be preferred against God's providences in relation to this world. "Why," it may be asked, "does the All-Father permit Satan and his legions of devils to do their marauding work over this world, filling it with sin, the result of which is human wretchedness, misery, and the very blackness of darkness?" We emphatically answer that unless the Devil and his minions are in the hands of the Almighty as simple instrumentalities in accomplishing his benevolent designs of developing and purifying, even as by fire, the highest type of humanity, so that man may thus prove himself worthy of the divine approval, then our innocent race has a right in equity to enter complaint at the bar of impartial justice.

We aver that the popular view which represents Satan as in uncontrollable antagonism to God, instead of serving in his hands as a helpful means of accomplishing his wise and beneficent purposes concerning man, is a foul slander which has too long disgraced our holy religion.

While we refer the reader to the next chapter for the defense of this thought, it is proper to observe, in this connection, that there is no analogy between

the conditions of heaven and those of earth. Hence, while the power and benevolence of God may and must be defended in their relation to the affairs of our world, what shall we say of the authority and goodness of a Providence which permitted the prince of devils to remain in heaven until his breath of seduction had polluted and damned thousands upon thousands of God's holy angels, who had always been pure and perfect in their worship?

While we shall farther along defend the wisdom, power, and goodness of our God in permitting in this world the work of moral evil attributed to Satan, we cheerfully assign to the author under review the heavier task of answering the question, Why was this chief-infernal allowed to remain in heaven until he had recruited an army whose only mission was the destruction of God's moral universe?

IV. In the light of the doctrine under consideration, we are led to inquire, Why were the Devil and his army precipitated upon the innocent race of mankind? After having been tolerated until he had, for the time, set all heaven at war and the hour had come when the Devil "must go," the most unaccountable thing of all is that he and his host had not been not only consigned to but shut up in hell, that their polluting presence might no more be a disturbing element in the moral universe. Having relieved the society of angels of a presence so corrupting and damning, why turn this horde of infernal marauders, moral cut-throats, and worse than

murderers, loose upon an innocent humanity, made in the image of God, for whose dwelling-place a world had been created?

If Satan is a huge and horrid monster, answering no design of benevolence concerning our race, we aver that the method of relieving angels at the expense of an unoffending humanity was an absolute injustice, which no sound logic can reconcile with the infinite goodness of an infinite Father.

A doctrine which necessarily involves such a conclusion must in the nature of things be fundamentally at variance with our conception of a father having jurisdiction and power to do otherwise. It is a happy relief to be assured by sound reason, supported by revelation and the possibilities of a sanctified experience, that there is a divine philosophy, coming within the compass of human understanding, which leads to no such sacrilegious conclusions. But before pointing out such philosophy, it will help us to appreciate its beauty and worth by tracing still farther the absurdities to which we are led by the doctrine under consideration.

From the "Footprints" we read: "Now, Satan is all blackness, and he is therefore all woe. I think this view is not usually prominent in our ideas of the Devil." The author has no occasion certainly to give himself any unrest on the score of unpopularity. His views seem to be in perfect harmony with those generally accepted as orthodox. "It is all night with him, but no rest. He has not lost his nature—

his mind, his will, his desires, his sensibilities: but these only serve as instruments of his torture. He wishes, but he never realizes; he pursues, but never wins; he thirsts, but he never drinks. He is proud, but he knows that he is not esteemed. He is ambitious, but he knows he can never rise. He plots, but his schemes always return upon himself. With dire hate he forges chains for the people of God, but ere long those chains are put upon his own limbs. The Almighty meets him in every snare, and doubles his confusion. His very struggles sink him into lower depths. Mighty mourner! There is no respite to his torments. He is ever consuming, yet never consumed; always dying, but never dead. His chains are always on him. The tempest is perpetually raining fire and brimstone upon his pain-struck head; while all of hell's troubled minions are unceasingly wailing harsh thunders in his ears. His very eyes weep blood, and every groan he heaves is big with horror. Blank and cheerless despair is all that is before him. He never smiles. Grim woe never relaxes its hold upon his brow; his only joy is that of the murderer, who falls upon his victim and, tearing out his heart, grates his teeth over its agony. He never sings. The only notes he can utter are imprecations against his Maker, curses upon his victims, and the maniac howl of remorse; and the only music he hears is the echo of his own hollow moans, the widow's sigh, the orphan's curse, the prisoner's groan, and the wild shriek of tortured

ghosts. And such he would be were there no heaven for him to envy, no God to condemn.

“Satan is the great deformity, possessing every abhorrent attribute. He is superlatively wicked, and therefore superlatively hateful. And he is hated, he is abhorred, he is execrated. God the Father hates him; God the Son hates him; God the Spirit hates him; the seraphim hate him; the cherubim hate him; the angels hate him; the saints all hate him. He is the loathsome wretch that heaven has spewed out of its mouth.”

We heave a sigh of relief, and instinctively inquire, Is there any truth in all this? The theory is dramatic—the words admirably chosen, and the style forceful. But will it endure the touchstone of sound reason? Does it not read like history repeating itself? It is certainly a relic of heathen mythology, which has insinuated itself into a religion of more advanced thought! Paganism recognized the universe as being under the control of two deities, who were in open antagonism with each other: one of them was supremely good, the other superlatively mean. Two mighty beings in open antagonism, neither of whom as yet had obtained the mastery, was the doctrine of the old Parsee or Persian religion. We submit if that be not the exact theory of this modern thought. By tracing the analogy, however, we shall find that at the first divergence paganism was not only more in keeping with common observation, but it reflected greater honor upon

the character of him who, in their view, was battling for the right. The old doctrine sought to maintain that the good being "would if he could," while the new goes upon the supposition that he "could if he would"! The former only reflected on the *power* of God, while the latter is a reproach upon his *moral* character.

If, as stated, "God the Father hates him, God the Son hates him, and God the Spirit hates him," we instinctively ask, Why not at once and forever put a stop to his destructive career? For his sake there is certainly no good reason why the omnipotent Father should permit him to live a day or an hour. His very existence must be an intolerable burden to himself, when "the tempest is perpetually raining fire and brimstone upon his pain-struck head, while all of hell's troubled minions are unceasingly wailing harsh thunders in his ears," yea, and "his very eyes weep blood, and every groan he heaves is big with horror."

If Satan is thus filled with such unutterable woe, and if the Almighty "meets him in every snare, and doubles his confusion," even human sympathy would most earnestly pray that the incorrigible wretch might at once and forever cease to be. Having damned to eternal perdition thousands and thousands of once holy and happy angels around the throne of God, and having, without a mitigating reason, sent untold millions of our race to a ceaseless hell, and being himself all these ages a wretch

infernal, with no hope of recovery, would it not have been wise and merciful for such a devil to have perished at the very moment of his awful fall?

How any one can believe a doctrine like this, and at the same time have faith in the existence of a Being who is omnipotent in power and boundless in love, is the enigma of all enigmas, and the riddle of all riddles. The man who can believe in the existence of such a horrid monster, and at the same time have faith in a Being who is infinite in power and benevolence, must certainly be demented. We cover the inconsistency with a mantle of charity, believing it to be poetical oratory, and not the faith of any man.

The reader will perceive by a little careful thought that the whole theory breaks down of its own logic; and more—that many of the statements are widely at variance with the facts of observation. Take this, for example: “He” (Satan) “wishes, but he never realizes.” Looking at the practical results growing out of the fearful conflicts between sin, of which the monster is supposed to be the cause, and righteousness, of which God is the author, is it true that this arch-fiend “never realizes”? If he has not realized all that he has designed, certainly his Satanic majesty has had occasion to congratulate himself on many a success; for he has realized about all the results that were observable.

Again, it is said that “he pursues but never wins.” In another part of the work under review this per-

sonal monster is charged with having instigated all the wars which have ever cursed our race. As the history of mankind, especially in its earlier periods, was largely a record of cruel, bloody butchery, who dare say, in the light of the awful results, that this chief of devils, who has captured the desires and hearts of thousands of the holy angels and been victorious in damning millions of our race, "pursues but never wins"? That this hitherto victorious chief is finally to be conquered does not militate against the fact that he has won, and is still winning, many a victory.

Certainly the author was only indulging his imagination, or else he entirely overlooked the popularity of Satan, when he said "he is proud, but he knows that he is not esteemed." After the first sober thought, the common observer instinctively exclaims, Who in all the wide universe is followed by such an "innumerable multitude" of shouting admirers as is this "prince of darkness"?

The author proceeds: "He is ambitious, but he knows he can never rise." The proposition is subject to two criticisms: first, it is a mental impossibility to have an ambition to do a thing where there is at the same time a conscious knowledge of an entire inability to do it. Faith in the possibility of accomplishing an end is an indispensable incentive to ambition. Take this confidence entirely out of the mind of man or devil, and aspirations are all gone. Convince the mind of the impossibility of doing

a thing, and it at once is so paralyzed that it cannot so much as put forth an effort to do that thing.

Secondly, is it in keeping with the facts of history that "he knows he can never rise"? He may be doomed, and even apparently consumed, yet from his ashes, phoenix-like, he comes forth rejuvenated. If, upon the supposition of two beings in open combat, we are to decide from appearances upon the questions of their comparative wisdom and power, we must conclude that Satan is at least the peer of the Omniscient and Omnipotent.

It is thus that the theory, by the logic of its own conclusions, robs the Almighty Ruler of the universe of the honor due him. In the light of passing events, who can say that Satan is in mourning because of the untimely departure of all his friends and the miscarriage of all his devilish plans? Such flights of imagination, when presented to the world as facts to be believed, are sacrilegious, in that they lead honest but superficial men to doubt the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, whose dominion is universal and absolute. Faith in the existence of an Omnipotent Father will not concede the origin or continuance of any devil who was not planned in the councils of Infinite Wisdom as an instrumentality in carrying out his benevolent designs concerning our race.

As this whole theory is not only a superstition which had its origin in paganism, but is also the progenitor of a ruinous skepticism, it deserves to be

eliminated from our religion and returned to heathen mythology.

That the reader may see the truth, as taught in science and revelation, and appreciate it all the more by comparison with superstition, this popular doctrine seeks to maintain that this arch-fiend, as we have seen, of his own will, has not only plucked angels out of the hand of God, and hurled them down to endless perdition, and, with his "hell-hounds" let loose upon unoffending humanity, consigned millions to an unceasing hell; but, according to this wonderful author, he has been permitted to obtain large dominion over the material universe. This will be seen by the following quotation :

"And what shall we say of those throes and spasms of nature—those anomalies or aberrations which appear in the tempest, in the desolating storm, the tornado, the thunderbolt, and the terrific earthquake and the volcano, if they be not the fearful utterances, the infernal demonstrations and acts of the prince of the power of the air, the old serpent of Eden, the spoiler of all beauty, peace, and happiness; of him who changed Paradise into a pandemonium? But for sin and the rule of Satan there would have been none of these disturbing elements, these devastating conflicts. 'That black-winged tempest that comes up from the wilderness, sweeping down the hills, piling up the forests, and breaking the great oaks as if they were pipe-stems; that frightful storm at sea, churning the waters into foam,

plowing the surface into ugly chasms, and throwing the mariner upon his knees to lift his prayer to the blackened heavens; that scorching simoom that sweeps over the plain, leaving the earth over which it trails a crisp and a cinder; and that appalling plague that visits some great city, dragging its slain to the sepulcher by thousands: did not Satan preside at their birth, and give them all their fury, direct their desolating track, and call them back like hell-hounds from the chase, only at the bidding of the Almighty? And what means that wild alarm that seizes the sons of men when the hurricane presents its wrathful brow, when the earth rocks under foot, when the lightning shoots along the sky, and when the awful thunder utters its voice? Comes it not from the consciousness that the fiend has slipped his chain, that the very spirit of evil is abroad? . . . 'When we see this malignant foe, traveling through space with the rapidity of thought, putting on the disguise of an angel, breathing pestilence and plague upon whole districts, driving the tornado across seas and continents, hurling frightful fire-balls from heaven, and smiting the bones of men with disease, cutting the cords of life and hurling men into the abyss of eternity,' we shudder at a power second only to Omnipotence."

Three wonders here! First, it is a marvelous wonder that a man who had the wisdom to collate and tabulate such an array of facts touching the crimes which curse our humanity and dishonor God,

and then to record "the footprints of Satan" for the good of our race, should have marred that beautiful work with a doctrine which, if it does not contradict, at least ignores, all science, by putting Satan, who is not supposed to work by any systematic rule, largely in control of the physical universe! It is only in the emergency of saving a relic out of the awful wreck that the Almighty interposes to "call back the hell-hounds from their chase." What a reflection upon the moral character of the All-Father, and how absolutely irreconcilable to all the known facts of science!

Second, it is a still greater wonder that a doctrine which is clearly traceable to the darkest ages of pagan worship should have been incorporated, through the influences of a degrading superstition, into a religion which has come to be regarded as the religion of the highest intelligence and common-sense.

The Parsee fire-worshippers "believed that from eternity there existed two beings, Ormuzd and Ahriman. To Ormuzd they attributed the creation of all good beings, and to Ahriman the creation of all evil beings. The one class are the servants of the wicked god, and the other of the good god. One is the author of all evil, the other of all good."

While science demonstrates the unity of the universe and the consequent unity of God, yet this celebrated "two-principles" theory, of pagan origin,

has insinuated itself into a religion which rightfully claims true science as its legitimate handmaid.

Finally, it may be regarded as the great wonder of all that a doctrine which was born and cradled with the cosmogony of the darkest age of heathen mythology—a doctrine as scientifically absurd as it is sacrilegious and profane—should have so popularized itself in this age of reason and revelation, and of consequently unprecedented enlightenment! But as the *ipse dixit* of dogmatism is rapidly giving way before the spirit of moral heroism, and free men are daring to think as God may help them to think, we may confidently predict that this doctrine of a personal monster—an offense to human reason and a hindrance to the cause of Christ—will soon be relegated to the region of darkness in which it was born and nurtured. That it is like the bubble resting upon the bosom of a calm sea, which subsides at the touch, will be seen from the following considerations:

(a) In view of the fact that in the foregoing catalogue of charges preferred against Satan he is accused of getting up “the desolating storm,” reason will necessarily inquire, How rapidly must the wind blow before it may be considered as being in the hands of the Devil? It is a universally conceded fact, that *air in motion* is a necessity of the nature of man, as well as of all other animated beings. All agree that this is a most wise and beneficent providence, reflecting the love and goodness of God. It

is known, moreover, that from the quiet calm to the fearful tornado every conceivable degree of velocity is marked. The question, therefore, is significant, At what particular degree on this long scale between the calm and the tornado does the wind slip from the hands of the Almighty into those of the storm-fiend?

You say the question is ridiculous. Certainly it is; but is it not a question legitimately involved in the doctrine under review? The exclamation, therefore, is not "How ridiculous the question!" but rather, "How absurd the theory which logically leads to such a question!" Consistency demands either, first, that the interrogation be answered, or second, what is vastly easier and better, that the doctrine which necessarily leads to such a question be abandoned.

(*b*) If Satan is to be charged with the responsibility of getting up the desolating storm on the land and the fearful tempest at sea—if by his agency "the lightning shoots along the sky, and the awful thunder utters its voice," is he not justly entitled to be credited with the good results? Why not? If, then, we would make out an equitable account with the Devil in the light of true philosophy, we shall certainly find that his credit side on the balance-sheet is greatly in excess of the debits. And thus, in the aggregate of results, we will be forced to conclude that Lucifer, after all, is only a blessed angel in the garb of a devil.

Who is so ignorant as not to know that but for the storm at sea the mighty deep would soon become an ocean of stagnation, sending out the sickening miasma of death to destroy every living animal upon the globe? While "driving the tornado across seas and continents" may leave desolation in the track, every philosopher knows that this fearful phenomenon is but an instrumentality in the hands of benevolence to save our race from a premature death. While the lightning is but the Father's swift-winged angel of mercy, the thunderbolt is only the rumbling of his chariot-wheels, which marks the everlasting going of his love.

This is not a mere assertion, nor a flight of oratory, but the conceded truth of science. The air, tempest-driven through the falling rain, together with the lightning's fire, is the divine method of purifying the atmosphere. It is a universal concession of philosophy that the storm and pure healthy air are in the relation of cause and effect.

(c) Besides, as this doctrine of demonology maintains that Satan is incomprehensibly more wise than man, even next to Omniscience, we should suppose that his majesty, having observed the good results of the tornado for all these ages, would certainly ere this, if he designed pure deviltry, have once and forever abandoned an enterprise which never fails to result in vastly more good than evil. Sound reason forces us to one of two conclusions, either of which is fatal to the doctrine of a personal monster

as presiding over the storm: he is either stupidly ignorant of the good results of the tornado, or else he works with a benevolent design towards mankind. But Satan's conceded wisdom forever bars the former supposition, while to admit the latter is to suppose that the Devil is no devil at all.

The red man of the forest, as he stands in the door of his wigwam, looking out upon the lightning's flash as it plays upon the face of the blackened sky, shuddering at the awful thunderbolts of heaven's artillery, and trembling with fear as he gazes upon the raging tempest which sweeps over the earth and lays prostrate the tall and sturdy oak, may be excused for supposing that it is some great spirit of evil riding upon the winds in his chariot of fire, taking vengeance unto himself; but for a Christian philosopher, who must know that these are but the ways of the Almighty, established as his immutable laws, with a view of carrying out his benevolent purposes concerning his creatures—for him to believe that all this is the work of the prince of devils is a riddle which common-sense finds it difficult to solve. God's benevolent design is as clearly seen in the raging tempest as in the summer's calm. Under the light of Christian civilization, both speak in unmistakable language of the wisdom, power, and absolute goodness of that ever-presiding Mind to whom every intelligent being should ascribe wisdom and honor and glory, and everlasting and unbounded dominion. If we admit that God is con-

fronted with a rival in his methods of managing the material universe, then we are forced by an irresistible logic to abandon the conclusion that there is an Infinite Supervisor.

As this whole theory of a personal monster seems to break down at every touch of reason, the reader may conclude that nothing more need be said upon a subject that is so out of keeping with all the known laws of nature and facts of science. But on account of its popularity we wish to raise one other question, the answer to which will certainly convince all who have the courage of their own convictions that this doctrine is only a relic of a darker age, and forms no part of a religion which harmonizes with all the suggestions of nature.

But before raising this final question we wish to premise with an explanation as to what we mean by the term *Natural Science*. In this connection there can be no controversy, if we are only agreed as to the definition of terms. And it is hardly possible for us to dispute as to the meaning of this term. By almost universal consent it signifies *a knowledge of the methods by which the world of mind and matter is controlled*. The system or method of controlling the universe is observed to be so absolutely uniform, that it has led to the conclusion that there must be an Infinite Supervisor. And but for the uniformity and system manifested in God's plan of managing his affairs, no such thing as science would be possible. Nor would any of his

intelligences know how to think or what to do. As the germinal power of man's intellectuality can only be rightly unfolded by the study of science, it becomes a necessity that the universe should be controlled by a uniform and changeless method. And this necessity is met in the fact that universal nature is not only controlled by an unalterable law, but by such methods as contribute the "greatest good to the greatest number" of God's intelligences. And such, too, is the complete adaptation of the unfolding germ of the human intellect to the discovery of science, that we are led to the joy-inspiring thought that man's chief business for time and eternity will be to track the changeless steps of the ceaseless going of God's infinite energy. If we are agreed that by the term "Natural Science" we mean the knowledge of the methods by which the world of mind and matter is controlled, and if, further, we grant that these modes of controlling the universe are absolutely uniform in their administration, then we are prepared to inquire,

(d) *Is the Devil the Author of Science?* To suppose that Satan in part manages the material universe to the degree set forth in the foregoing quotation, is to suppose that he must at least have had some hand in making the laws by which it is controlled. Moreover, in the council at which these laws were decided upon there must have been a perfect agreement as to the best possible modes of operating the material world. Had there been any

conflict there in regard to this matter, then absolute uniformity of administration would not have been established, and so could not now be seen. Had Satan been permitted to have his say in establishing any of the laws of science he would doubtless have studied pure deviltry; and hence uniformity, which is in the interest of man's welfare, would have been defeated. His satanic purpose in managing the material world would have been to make consistency and continuity of thought and action an utter impossibility to man. But we observe no such irregularity in the management of our world. That the part which Satan is alleged to play is in perfect keeping with the established laws of nature is a fact which no philosopher will deny. The laws by which the tornado is made to sweep over the land, the tempest to churn the ocean, and the thunders to utter their voice, are known to be the established laws of nature as set forth by science. And such is the regularity of administration in controlling the storm, that all sound philosophy agrees that in this, as elsewhere throughout the vast realm of nature, "the same cause will produce the same effect." Nor does intelligent man find here any difficulty in observing the relation between cause and effect.

Hence, if we suppose that the methods by which these phenomena of nature are controlled are of the Devil, then by so far we must conclude that he was not only a partner in framing the statutes of the material universe, but that his copartnership has

utterly failed to introduce a solitary discordant note in the universal harmony.

Thus this personal monster, when considered as having anything to do in the management of our world, entirely disappears as being but a ghost of human imagination. A doctrine which goes upon the supposition that Satan had anything to do in establishing the laws of science will, if allowed the benefit of its own thinking, inevitably lead to the conclusion that Lucifer's fall not only turned heaven into a temporary pandemonium, but so disconcerted the Almighty that, with a view to saving a remnant from the wreck, he entered into a compromise and copartnership with Satan as to the future modes of governing the world. Can we conceive of a doctrine more dishonoring to God than that which goes upon the supposition that the Almighty was in league with a satanic conspiracy to destroy all that is beautiful and lovely in this sublunary world?

That this superstitious darkness may be more visible and its consequent confusion worse confounded, we now turn to consider a theory of demonology which seems not only to be in perfect keeping with good sense and sound reason, but to reflect all honor upon the one presiding Mind, whose infinite energies, without a rival, control his boundless universe with a view to his own glory and the good of all created intelligences. A careful reading and an honorable criticism of the following section will be expected of the candid thinker. Truth de-

mands nothing more: it should certainly have nothing less. From the foregoing it must be obvious to every thoughtful and unbiased mind that the devil is not merely a "ghost of human imagination," much less a "personal monster of horrid form." The question therefore recurs, What is the Devil?

CHAPTER XIX.

IS THE DEVIL IN HUMAN NATURE?

Is he a principle incorporated in the nature of man and the providences of God for benevolent purposes?—Divine approval or disapproval involves the necessity of human freedom.—Good and evil must be placed before man.—Highest type of manhood evolved only by contact with evil environment.—This the Biblical teaching.

IF it can be shown, First, that the divine approval or disapproval becomes a possibility only in the fact that man has a personal right to choose between good and evil; and,

Secondly, that in the absence of evil environments personal choice would be impossible; and,

Thirdly, that the germinal faculties of man's moral nature can only be unfolded and evolved into the highest type of manhood by successfully grappling with moral difficulties; and,

Fourthly, if the teachings of Scripture are not only in harmony with the three foregoing proposi-

tions, but beautifully illustrate their truth—then we are necessarily led to the logical conclusion that what we call “devil” is only a principle established in the nature of the soul and in divine providence, with a view to the glory of God and a benevolent design to the highest good of man. The vexed question of demonology will be settled once and forever, as it seems to us, if, in the light of “reason and revelation,” the above suggestions are found to be in keeping with the facts of history as founded upon man’s observation and experience.

In seeking the solution of these several propositions we are not at liberty to go behind them and raise the question, “Why has God constructed the human soul so as to suspend its highest good upon the contingency of its right choosing between good and evil? We assume, as fundamental to the foregoing, that the soul of man has been fashioned after the best pattern that Infinite Wisdom could devise. The creature has no right to inquire of the Creator, Why hast thou formed me thus? but rather, What are the divine methods by which the germs of my spiritual nature can be evolved into their highest possible glory? Assuming, therefore, that the germs of man’s intellectuality, morality, and religion, however tainted by sin, are nevertheless substantially, in their nature, what they were when God pronounced them very good, we shall proceed to illustrate the truth of the foregoing propositions.

SECTION (I).

Divine approval or disapproval involves the necessity of human freedom.

Whatever may be our theology, it cannot be said in reason that the divine approval or disapproval can rest upon the individual whose life is the result of necessity. There would be just as much reason in conferring honors upon the sun because of his shining as in pronouncing the "Well done" upon a man for cherishing certain thoughts, uttering certain words, and faithfully doing certain works, when thinking, speaking, or doing anything else was an impossibility.

The sun flies along his trackless way because of a power over which he has no control, and pours his rays of light and heat over all worlds because he can do nothing else. And under the light of Christian civilization the very thought of conferring any praise or honor upon the sun would be regarded as sacrilegious. The "heathen in his blindness" may be excused for worshiping the sun; but the Christian philosopher ascribes all the glory to Him who created the sun, and whose arm of power guides the stars in their rapid flight along their trackless way, and the throbbing of whose heart of infinite energy pulsates the universe. As the sun is under the control of an omnipotent power over which he has no

restraint, he is certainly not the subject of praise for shining or of censure for not shining. Praise and censure belong to the Being whose wisdom and power control his actions.

So, likewise, if man has not the right or ability to choose between good and evil, then it must be equally obvious that he is neither praiseworthy nor blameworthy. Having no right of choice, the praise or blame must of necessity attach to the power which controls his action. No earthly parent of common intelligence and good moral character would even think of conferring praise upon a son who had been forced to do a good deed—much less would he think of condemning him for doing that which he was irresistibly compelled to do. Can we imagine, then, as the remotest possibility, that an infinitely wise Father, in passing judgment upon his earthly children, would pronounce upon one “blessing and honor,” and upon another “Depart, ye cursed,” when neither the one nor the other had the right nor power to choose otherwise than they did, but had done simply what, by the necessity of their nature, they were compelled to do? If man is only a tool in the hands of God for good or of the Devil for evil, then to the former belongs the praise and to the latter the censure; and man has no part nor lot in the matter of commendation nor of condemnation.

Moreover, in the absence of the right and power of choice, the doctrine of a “judgment to come,”

which is world-wide and coeval with our race, must be regarded as nothing but a fabulous superstition.

The very thought of the Creator's judging the creature for a life which the very necessities of his nature compel him to live, is a moral absurdity. The thought of the finite being judged and condemned by the Infinite for having lived a life of sin, involves the necessity of his having had the right and power of choosing between "good and evil." And still more, punishment for sin, with no right nor power to do otherwise than sin, would be an injustice that would disgrace any earthly court. Human laws require obedience only from those who are supposed to know right from wrong and who are not compelled by another to do otherwise. Can we imagine that infinite wisdom and boundless love would establish a divine government to punish man for doing wrong, when the right of choosing between good and evil had never been conferred upon him? Just as well condemn the moon for not shining after the sun had withdrawn his light, and the very darkness of her nature had made it impossible for her to shine, as to condemn a man for not living a life of virtue, when, from a necessity of his constitution, he had neither the right nor the power to choose a life of virtue.

There can be no justice in rewards and punishments where the right of choice has been withheld. But that rewards and punishments belong to the administration of God's divine government is a fact known

in the experience of every sane mind. Whatever else we may question, there can be no doubt nor difference of opinion as to the fact that a sense of right-doing brings the reward of contentment and satisfaction with the certainty of cause and effect—while the violation of our sense of right is with equal certainty attended with unrest and dissatisfaction.

To suppose, therefore, as we must, that divine commendation rests upon man for right-doing and condemnation for wrong-doing; and to suppose, further, as facts of experience demonstrate, that man is rewarded for a life of virtue and punished for a life of sin, and all this when he has neither the right nor power to choose between virtue and vice, is to suppose that the moral universe is not only constructed upon a lie, but that heaven's court has perpetrated an injustice upon humanity which would disgrace an earthly tribunal of even pagan origin.

SECTION (II).

Good and evil must be placed before man.

Having clearly shown, as it seems to us, that the divine approval or disapproval necessarily involves man's personal ability to choose between right and wrong, it follows as a necessary sequence that man must have both good and evil placed before him. If man's condemnation or commendation involves the right of choice, it follows that, in the economy

of God's moral universe, the existence of abstract evil was a necessity, as was that of absolute good. That abstract evil was a necessity, may be seen from two considerations :

First, it was incorporated in the moral universe by the hand of the Creator. The tree of temptation in the garden of Eden was there for a wise purpose, else Infinite Wisdom would not have put it there. The right and the necessity of personal choice was made a possibility with our first parents in the fact that our heavenly Father placed in the garden of Eden "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," with the prohibition from partaking of it, but with the power of partaking or not partaking. Had not the tree of temptation, which made sin a possibility, been a necessity in the economy of God's moral universe, we must conclude that Infinite Wisdom and Benevolence would have planned it otherwise. The divine appointment of that tree and the purpose of its appointment forever dispose of the question of its utility and absolute necessity. And as Infinite Wisdom has caused these trees of temptation to grow, not only in the garden of Eden, but wherever man has existed, it is conclusive to all who believe in a God of infinite goodness that they exist for a benevolent purpose.

But, secondly, God's benevolent design is not only to be clearly recognized in the fact that he has placed man in the midst of these wicked environments, but also in the glorious results that come of

evil, as we shall see in the next section. Meantime let us bear in mind the points already passed: namely, first, that commendation or condemnation, rewards or punishments, can only be awarded where the right and power of choice has been conferred; and that in the absence of the tree of temptation choice would have been an impossibility.

SECTION (III).

The germinal faculties of man's moral and spiritual nature can only be evolved into the highest type of manhood by coming in contact with evil environments.

That the various faculties of the human mind are germinal in their nature none can dispute. Nor can it be denied that these germs are to be developed and strengthened by contending with difficulties in the open field of combat. "Irrepressible conflict" is the price of developed and strengthened manhood in all its phases. All analogy, observation, and experience unite in testifying to the fact that God's method of making a full-grown man is by the burning fire of difficulty. The goal of the highest destiny can only be reached by the way of the heated furnace. That the "tree of temptation" or "devil of difficulty" is a necessity of man's spiritual and moral nature is clearly indicated by all the analogies of our being.

(a) There can be *no growth and strength of body*

without physical strivings. The child may be born with a body perfect in all its parts. It may faithfully observe every other law of its physical being, and yet if the law of labor or exercise be not kept, imbecility and premature death will be the penalty. In virtue of the good results, labor—stern and inflexible labor—may be regarded as a benevolent devil. Alas! too often men are overcome by this devil, and are thus led into the sloth which induces feebleness and often results in untimely death.

Nor can any one take out license against this law of physical conflict by faithfully observing other laws of their being. Even the Gospel minister, who is faithfully devoted to his high calling, may grow pale, sicken and die; and the religious press may publish abroad that he died of overwork, when, if the naked truth had been told, it would have been said that he committed suicide by refusing to grapple with physical difficulties. What he needed was to overcome the temptation to remain in his room of study, and to go forth and meet the devil of difficulty in another field of combat.

We are not to be understood, however, as suggesting that all the laws of our being are equally important to be understood and obeyed, much less that the evil consequences attending the violation of physical laws are to be compared with those which come because of disobedience to moral law. We only wish to emphasize the fact that the growth and strength of the body, other things being equal,

are the good results of its having successfully grappled with physical difficulties, and that these difficulties, which must be met and overcome by the body, are quite analogous to the moral and spiritual difficulties which must be met and overcome by the soul.

Moreover, that the devil of the one is much like the devil of the other, and that both work with a benevolent design, may be clearly seen in the good results. Such is the nature of our physical organism, that not only exercise, but the most violent conflict with physical forces, is the price of the greatest bodily strength. This is illustrated in the superior strength of the blacksmith's strong right arm. But to intensify our conviction of the fact that what we call "devil" in the moral universe is nothing less than the divine method of bringing out the highest type of manhood, may be further illustrated by tracing the same law in the analogy of our mental being.

(b) In the absence of *mental conflict* there could be no *intellectual development*. But for the devil of difficulty which meets man at every effort that he makes to find out "God's hidden power," the wrapped-up power of intellect would remain undiscovered. If this thought can be maintained, our mental conflicts in the process of thinking must be regarded as an angel in the garb, it may be, of a devil. Let it be observed, then, *first*, that every native faculty of the mind, whether of intellectuality, sociality, moral-

ity, or religiosity, is embryonic in its nature. Such is the secrecy of infinite skill, that the new-born babe discovers to us none of these hidden powers. Yet they are there with a potency inwrapped, the measure of which is beyond human discovery. Who can set limits to the soul's native possibilities?

Secondly, these *germs* of hidden power can only be evolved into their highest excellence in the use of the means which Infinite Wisdom has ordained for their unfolding. Man's mission on earth is to find out these divine methods, and to bring himself into harmony with their administration. And if through indifference or stupidity he fails to find out God's ordained means of development and glory, but substitutes those of his own foolish imagination, then at best he can only hope to be evolved into an imbecile or a monstrosity. The infinite Creator's ideal man will never be forthcoming.

For example: the grain contains a germ in which is inwrapped the stalk, the blade, and the full corn in the ear. God's ordained means for the unfolding of this germ are earth, air, sunshine, and the genial rain. Now if the germ be perfect, and these means faithfully applied in their right proportions, the divine purpose will become an accomplished fact. But if through ignorance, sloth, or otherwise, God's methods be not observed, it is barely possible that man's *artificial* means may bring out the sickly stalk and blade; but the full corn in the ear, for which both the stalk and blade were made, does

not appear. So we should be deeply impressed with the analogical as well as the philosophical fact that these germinal faculties of the mind can only be evolved into the highest type of manhood by being trained in perfect accordance with God's ordained methods of growth. He that would make life a grand success, death a triumphant victory, and heaven a glorious reality must consent to the fact that his chief business on earth is, by persistent strivings, to bring himself into perfect harmony with the administration of heaven's plan of bringing him out into the full stature of a perfect man. God's method of making a symmetrical and perfect man ever was, is now, and we are led to believe ever will be the same. Christ's coming was not to alter that method, but rather to make the way of salvation plain. Men were always saved as they are now, by being brought into harmony with the laws of their being. The best evidence of the divine origin of Christianity is found in the fact that its laws are found to be the counterpart of the soul's necessities. Christianity does nothing less, it could do nothing more, than to discover to man his native powers of "faith, hope and love," and point out the way by which these germs of soul may be evolved into their grandest possibility.

And the philosophy of experience, as well as the teaching of Scripture, declares in unmistakable voice that this way leads "through great tribulation." That this is true of man's intellectual faculty

there can be no doubt. The man who would ascend the rugged mountain of science and stand upon its summit of intellectual glory must consent to chisel out of its rocky sides every niche into which he places his struggling feet. The devil of difficulty must be met and vanquished at every ascending step. And the greater the difficulty overcome, the greater will be the mental strength obtained by the victory. Show us the man who is above all, and whose intellectual caliber is without a peer, and we will point you to a man who has come up through great tribulation, and has washed his robes in the blood of intellectual warfare. He that attempts to ascend the hill of science without struggling, must be content with but little additional strength of mind.

As the unfolding of this intellectual germ seems to be the ulterior purpose of God, and as mental struggling is the obvious method by which this end can be obtained, we can readily see the Father's benevolent design concerning man, even in the burning furnace of mental conflict.

And if we reason logically from what we know to what we do not know, we must conclude that the conflict between the world of mind and the world of truth is endless and irrepressible. While the universe of thought is day by day gaining new victories on its field of combat with science, the scope of new truth to be discovered can only be measured by the ceaseless energies of infinite skill. And as God's benevolent design may be clearly seen in the

conflict between the world of mind and that of truth, we may readily conclude that the same divine method will be continued in the world to come. The irrepressible conflict will go on; and moreover we must conclude that difficulty in finding out the divine methods will remain a necessity of the soul's being, not only in this world, but in any world, unless its constitution and mission be entirely changed.

SECTION (IV).

The Scriptures accord with this view.

Nor does the Bible lead to any other conclusion. Revelation only comes to us with the additional thought that heaven will exclude the possibility of defeat and worryment in our ceaseless efforts to find out the ways of God. In heaven the conflict may go on, but it will be without fatigue and mishaps or the sadness of disappointed expectation. While there is nothing to hurt or harm in God's holy mountain, we are not to conclude that it is a place of sloth or indifference. To suppose that heaven is a "great white throne" upon which is seated the Infinite, in whose holy presence we are to strike up a ceaseless and monotonous song of praise over the little that we have learned of the ways and works of God, is to contradict the soul's experience, and is as false in philosophy as it is nonsensical in Biblical

interpretation. If the acquisition of knowledge were to stop with man at the age of forty, and from that until eighty he had nothing to do but to brood over and over again the truth which he had obtained during the first half of his life, we can readily imagine that the very monotony of such reflection would make existence an intolerable burden.

It is not what we have learned, but rather what we are learning and hope to learn, that gives us our best earthly heaven. It is thus that God would entice us to leave the things which are behind and aspire after those things which are ahead and above. The Father grants to the soul its richest experience, not so much in its reflections over victories already won as in its successful grappling with the difficulties which stand in the way of its thinking. Unless, therefore, the mind be wholly changed in its nature and mission from what it is in this life, we may believe that, in the final home of the soul, its heaven will consist in its going on to know more and more of the ways and works of its Almighty Father. The rest that remaineth for the people of God is not a cessation from labor, but rather a complete relief from vexatious toil and defeat. Judging from our present experience, heaven, however beautiful, with no new discoveries, would soon become so monotonous that it would only be an insupportable unrest.

But further, to suppose that heaven is a place of mental inactivity, or even of undiversified song of praise over the little that we may have acquired, is

not only contrary to the soul's richest experience in this life, but it contradicts all the known facts of philosophy, whether they relate to the character of God or to the nature of the human mind. That the Creator is a being of infinite energy and ceaseless activity is shown in the fact that creation is going on now as ever before. Whatever else we may doubt, we cannot call in question the fact that, while old worlds are going out of existence, new ones are coming to take their place. When a material world has fully played the part for which it was made and can no longer answer the design of its creation, it is then, by the hand of Infinite Wisdom and Power, transmuted and fashioned into another, and we may readily believe a better, organism.

Our earth, in the hands of the Almighty, was millions of years being prepared for the coming of man. And though vast wealth was laid up in store for his coming, yet, during these thousands of years of occupancy, much of these mines of wealth have been explored and consumed: and hence we are led to conclude that, when all these available resources of which its constitution is capable have been exhausted, as exhausted they will be, then, at the hand of the same eternal agency that formed it, our world will not only make its contribution to mutability, but will be transmuted into a "new heaven and a new earth."

As God is a being of unremitting activity in

the creation of new worlds, man will have employment enough for time and eternity in finding out those new worlds and the divine methods by which they are to be controlled. That the human mind has an infinite capacity for such discovery may be seen in the facts of its nature. As science is but the rumblings of God's chariot-wheels, which mark his everlasting goings, so it will be man's mission, now and forever, to follow on by never-ending and joyous strivings to know God better and better, and love him more and more. And as action and reaction are equal, not only in the mechanical but in the moral universe as well, we are led to believe that as the mind, in its ceaseless efforts to find out the ways of the Almighty, discovers new truth it will in like degree evolve its inwrapped possibilities into new strength and perfection. The development of the mind is equaled only by its discovery of truth. So it has been, is now, and ever will be.

God's benevolent design concerning man is seen again in the fact that he has wisely adapted truth to the mind's various degrees of development. The infant mind is met at the threshold of its being with facts easily understood. Its struggling with little truth gives it increased capacity to successfully overcome greater difficulties. And thus the development of the mind and the increase of knowledge go hand in hand, until that once seemingly insignificant soul stands amid the stars, to comprehend much of the heights, depths, and breadths of

God's material universe. The universal law of the Almighty is that each man shall do his own thinking. And he that disregards this law must consent not only to remain a comparative imbecile, but also to be ignorant of the ways and will of the great Father. Whatever we may think of the future, we are assured that in this world an indomitable determination to know nothing but victory over the devil of mental difficulty is the price of knowing God's hidden power, and of unfolding the germ of intellect into its possible completeness. As that hidden power is the measure of God's infinity, so the possibilities inwrapped in the human mind are without limitation. So we may hope to spend an eternity in discovering the one and developing the other.

(c) The germinal power of man's *moral faculty* can only be unfolded by successfully combating with *moral difficulties*. The question has been asked, "Why has God permitted evil to exist in his moral universe?" We answer, for the reason that it is the only known, and we may well suppose the only knowable, method by which a perfect man could be made. The nature of the human soul makes evil a necessity. History, observation, experience, and the Bible all unite in testifying to the fact that but for the existence of evil environments a perfectly developed man would be an impossibility. These are the means which Infinite Wisdom has devised for the unfolding of the germs of noblest manhood.

As previously suggested, the creature is not at

liberty to inquire of the Creator "Why hast thou formed me thus?" but rather, "What are the methods by which I may become a true man?"

We aver in the light of all the known facts of observation, experience, and the truths of revelation, that there can be no moral development without moral *difficulties* to contend with, and there can be no moral difficulties without the existence of moral *evil*. This *devil* is omnipresent for a benevolent purpose.

Hence the necessity of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." This necessity, as previously suggested, is found not only in the fact that Infinite Wisdom placed it there, but also in the good results that come of it. But for the existence of that tree in the midst of the garden, there would have been no *moral temptation*; but for moral temptation there could be no *moral difficulties* to encounter; and but for conflict with moral difficulties there would have been no means of evolving the germ of man's *moral nature*.

Whatever may be our theology, these are the known facts of mental philosophy. Though our foolish imagination may call in question the divine methods, we must nevertheless agree that Infinite Wisdom has so planned it that the most perfect man is he who has most frequently met and vanquished the devil of moral difficulty. As the rich ore can only be brought out into the shining gold by passing through the crucible of fire, so the God-like

nature of man can only be evolved into its possible glory by passing through the hot furnace of moral conflict.

The tree of temptation was not peculiar to Adam and Eve; it belongs to man as man the wide world over. God in his wisdom and benevolence has not only caused the "forbidden fruit" to grow "in the midst of the garden" of Eden, but in the garden of every human household. That tempting fruit was a necessity of man's nature then and now, there and everywhere. And to suppose that Adam and his posterity could have answered the design of their creation without the privilege of choosing between good and evil, though involving the possibility of wretchedness and ruin, is to suppose that Divine Providence in creation has made a sublime mistake. As there was but one Infinite Supervisor, we must believe that the event of the Devil's approaching Eve to tempt her must have been known to God as the best and wisest thing to be done. If not, then we are forced to the conclusion that it was either an ignorant or an unjust Providence that permitted such an event.

Moreover, to suppose that "Adam's fall" entailed a legacy upon his posterity which was no part of the original endowment is a most gratuitous assumption. So far as the biography of Adam has come down to us, it appears that he sinned at the first opportunity. Certainly his fall did not entail upon his children a greater degree of "depravity"

than was possessed by their progenitor. If the parent *yielded to the first temptation*, is it possible for his offspring to do worse? If we base our conclusion upon the facts of history, observation, and experience, rather than on superstition, we must say that Adam was placed at disadvantage. During his childish innocence he had no advantages of observation and experience as to the wretched results of violating the laws of God, nor had he the blessed experience of joy and new moral strength, which come as the natural result of successfully overcoming the "temptation of the devil."

While the privilege of choosing between good and evil presents man with the only opportunity of enjoying the greatest blessing of which he is capable, and the only possibility of receiving the divine approbation, it also offers him the privilege of bringing upon himself the "damnation of hell," and the righteous condemnation of a just God. Hence, though the privilege of grappling with evil is a necessity of our being which may be attended with the grandest possible results if by the grace of God we are victorious in the moral conflict, still if we are defeated on the field of combat we shall realize by sad experience that sin wrongs the soul, brings down upon it the curse of God, and, if persisted in, must bring death. As temptation brings the soul into healthy action, it may, through victory, be turned to good results, or, through defeat, bring ruin. Evil environments are a necessity, but sin is

an unmitigated curse. A wise and benevolent providence has ordained the existence of moral evil in the world with the ulterior design of the greatest possible good to man. If we but exercise the moral heroism of which by nature and grace we are capable, and by which we say "get behind me, Satan," the moral faculties will receive new strength, in the exercise of which they will be able successfully to compete with still greater temptation. Thus shall we rise higher and higher in the scale of moral excellency, until we have achieved the last victory, and challenged the admiration of the highest angels.

While moral conflict is the method of producing the best type of manhood, we are not to conclude that this divine providence involves the necessity of defeat and ruin. Whatever may be the misfortunes of birth or the intensity of evil environments, the law of compensation gives each a chance for his life. Where little is given, little is required. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." If in the unequal combat we exercise the will-power which we possess, God will supplement the deficiency. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." We too often judge from sense, and hence too frequently conclude that moral victory and consequent happiness come as the result of the accidents of birth and the seeming fortunes of life. Whereas, if we could look beyond the material and penetrate the spiritual, we would discover that what we had pronounced moral defeat and consequent misery were spiritual

victories, and the best happiness of which man is capable. Each man for himself—no matter for his birth, education, or wealth—must meet the devil on the field of open combat. Nor will the conditions of life determine the question of victory. The grandest moral and spiritual victories ever won by man were achieved by those whose equipments were not of this world. It may be said in truth that there is no disadvantage or evil to which man is heir that may not be turned to his advantage. This leads to the final proposition ; namely,

(*d*) Satan is God's instrumentality of developing man's religious faculty. This native power of mind which has led man in all ages and countries to "feel after" God, like the moral and intellectual faculties, is germinal in its nature, and like them can only be evolved into its possible strength in the use of the means ordained for its unfolding. And both revelation and experience teach us that the moral conflicts of life not only give new strength and vigor to our moral nature, but, by helping us to a knowledge of our own weakness, they press us to seek help from Him who is beyond and above us. And when, because of weakness and ignorance, the soul has struggled in vain to find Him whom it desired, there has come a light as out of darkness, beaming from the face of Him who is the light of the world ; and struggling humanity has leaped from the cheerless region of darkness into the sunlight of "faith, hope, and love." Had man been in a state of ignorant

contentment, without the buffetings of Satan, he would not have been led to seek strength and help from Him who is above all and in view of all. But for evil environments we can hardly believe that the soul would ever have earnestly and devoutly sought after those inspiring and elevating graces of "faith, hope, and love." And yet the old catechism spoke truly when it said that "the chief end of man" was "to glorify God and enjoy him forever." This statement is not only the teaching of revelation, but answers to the highest and best experiences of life. He that knows nothing of the strength and unspeakable joy that come upon the soul because of its faith in God, hope in Christ, and love to the great Father, is utterly ignorant of man's richest experience.

These Christian graces and the soul's strength and nobility stand in the relation of cause and effect, and are largely the result of great tribulation. To be assured of this we need only consult the history of mankind, and turn our thoughts inwardly upon the experience of our own souls.

Looking back over the race of mankind, we observe that those who tower above their fellows as the grandest moral and spiritual heroes the world ever saw were those men who had the greatest conflict with evil environments. Paul was of noble birth, educated, rich, and honored. But when these happy circumstances had failed to evolve his moral and religious faculties into the highest type of man-

hood, he was providentially called to pass through the devil's school of tribulation. Having been deprived of his property and his good name, beaten, scourged, manacled, and thrust into prison, he came out a spiritual giant who could defy the powers of earth and hell. These fearful conflicts had convinced him that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other [created thing], shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." The "fightings without and fears within," which we call Devil, were only an instrumentality in the hands of a loving Father, to bring out the innate powers of his soul. In the nature of man, "it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"

That Paul regarded these conflicts with Satan as blessings in disguise, is plainly set forth in the expression, "we glory in tribulations." Then having stated this fact of blessed experience, he at once proceeds to give the reason for such an expression: "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us." If these blessed graces come as the legitimate result of moral conflict, as thus set forth by this prince of the apostles, who will venture to say that moral evil is not a necessity, and on the

whole a blessing in God's moral universe? And who will fail to see that the Devil is but an instrumentality of benevolent design?

The Bible, as well as Christian experience, represents the Devil as an intense activity, working through the overruling Providence of God in the moral and spiritual interest of mankind. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Not *some* things, nor even *many* things, but absolutely *all* things. Not only the obviously good things, but the seemingly evil things; not only good men, but wicked men, angels and devils, all work for good. Good and evil, in their antagonisms and through their antagonisms, "work together for good to them that love God."

The obvious design of man's creation was that he should learn to love his Creator and bring himself into harmony with the laws of his being. The only discord in the music of God's universe is man out of harmony with the divine law of "love to God and love to man." When man is fully developed and brought into perfect concord with God's law of love, then shall the Devil have answered the design of his being, and moral conflict will be supplemented by the soul's ceaseless jubilee of victory.

If both revelation and experience teach us that wicked environments work for the good of those who are the spiritual heirs of God, it is neither wise nor Christian to pray that we be freed from moral conflict; but rather should we comfort ourselves with

the thought that these fearful encounters with Satan may bring us twofold good: first, pressing us to the throne of heavenly grace; and, second, giving us increased vigor to fit us for still greater conflicts. What the soul needs is, not that these difficulties be taken out of the way, but rather that it receive grace whereby it may overcome them, and thus come out of the smoke and battle with the divine blessing, and go forth with enlarged capacities to enjoy the rest that remaineth for the people of God.

We may desire the cessation of moral hostilities; but, for a benevolent reason, God orders it otherwise. Paul thrice prayed that the "thorn in the flesh," which kind providence had sent as a "messenger of Satan to buffet" him, should be removed. But God, who had ordained it for a benevolent purpose, allowed this messenger of Satan (whatever it was) to continue his mission of afflictive mercy, only encouraging Paul to hold fast in the conflict by giving him the precious promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee." It was the "buffetings of Satan" which largely helped him to a love for God in Christ, so ardent and all-conquering that his soul was fixed like the mountain which cannot be moved. He says, "The Holy Spirit witnesseth unto me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." Then comes a truth of blessed experience, which should be written and published abroad in letters of gold, namely, "BUT NONE OF THESE THINGS MOVE ME."

The arguments in favor of the proposition that what we call "Satan" or "devil" is only a principle incorporated in the nature of the soul and the providences of God, with a benevolent design to man's highest destiny, may be thus summed up :

First, struggling with evil is the only known, and we may suppose the only knowable, means of unfolding the germinal faculty of man's moral nature.

Secondly, while man is endowed with an instinctive disposition which leads him to devotional reverence to some being outside of and beyond himself, yet this germinal possibility of "faith, hope, and love" would not be led to reach its highest degree of achievement in the acquisition of these graces but for the "buffetings of Satan."

Thirdly, but for successful conflicts with the enemy on the open field of battle man would not be worthy of the divine honors of commendation,—nor would he be entitled to the privilege of waving the palm of victory, and hence of wearing the crown of life. Besides, it will be a star in the crown of rejoicing to know that we came to victory through the battle and smoke of great tribulation.

It now remains for us to inquire, under Section IV., what are the teachings of the Bible concerning this question of the principle of evil as developed in the conduct of the human race.

SECTION (V).

Does this view of the "Devil" correspond with the teachings of Scripture?

The true interpretation of the passages bearing upon the subject of demonology cannot be given without the aid of historic criticism. A rule of exegesis, universally conceded by Biblical scholars, is that the meaning of the words of the inspired writer must be largely determined by the exigencies of his surroundings. If a great truth of revelation is to be established in a community, the revelator is supposed to take into account the popular prejudices and doctrines, and especially is he expected to use the language which is commonly used and readily understood by the people to whom he brings this new and advanced truth. If he were to refuse to accept the community as he finds it, or fail to adapt himself to the exigencies of his surroundings, we can readily see that, in the absence of a miracle, he would utterly fail to impress himself and his new doctrine upon a people whose very habits of thought, speech, and life would repel him. So, before we can determine the thoughts of the inspired writer, we must first know the circumstances and conditions which interposed between him and those to whom his revelation was to be made.

That God, in his plan of saving a race, has thus

accommodated himself to the conditions of mankind, is a truth universally conceded by all intelligent students of divine providence. To do otherwise would be, first, to act with less than human wisdom, and, secondly, to involve the necessity of a miracle at every step in the process of establishing truth in order that the public mind may be rid of all forms of error that lie in the way of truth. The admission of this rule of exegesis involves the necessity of historic criticism touching the subject of demonology. We therefore submit, in the light of history, the following propositions:

First. The doctrine of a personal devil formed no part of the Mosaic theology.

That the conception of Satan as "prince of devils" was wholly an afterthought in the system of Jewish theocracy may be seen by the intelligent and unbiased student who will faithfully compare the doctrine of the Pentateuch with that of the later books of the Old Testament. The writings of Moses reveal nothing and suggest nothing but simple and unmixed monotheism. In the mind of the great lawgiver, God was one and indivisible. Nor had he any semi-supreme being to antagonize him in his universal dominion. The only passages quoted going to prove that the writer of the Pentateuch believed in the existence of a personal monster, next in wisdom and power to the Almighty, are the following. First, Genesis iii: 1. But the only thing here stated is that "the serpent was more subtil

than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." In the absence of a preconceived belief in the existence of a personal devil this passage would not even suggest that God had made a horrid monster, nearly equal to himself. Much less would it prove that Moses meant to teach a doctrine which was so foreign and subversive to his theology.

Reference has been made to Leviticus xvii: 7 as suggesting a belief in devils. But the original word *seirim*, which in this verse is translated "devils," is not the Hebrew word *Satan*, which stands for our word devil. *Seirim* [sa-e-reem] is the plural form, from *Seir*. It means originally "hairy ones," and then "he-goats." It is so translated in this place in the Revised Version. It is the same word which is translated "he-goats" in Lev. xvi: 5, and, in the singular form, "he-goat," in Lev. ix: 3, and elsewhere where he-goats are spoken of in connection with the sacrifices instituted by Moses. Why it was ever translated "devils" is a marvel. The force of the passage here is this: It was known to Moses that the Egyptians worshiped the he-goat, and that the Hebrews had partaken of their idolatry. In this verse he forbids them to commit this sin in the future, saying, "They shall no more sacrifice their sacrifices unto '*seirim*,'" that is, to the Egyptian he-goats. The same Biblical criticism may be applied to the passage in Deuteronomy xxxii: 17.

We emphasize our statement that "*The doctrine*

of a personal devil formed no part of the Mosaic theology." There is not a single passage in all the writings of that God-appointed lawgiver which, by any admissible rule of interpretation, can be made to even suggest such a doctrine; nor is there a word in the Pentateuch which can properly be translated to mean what our word "devil" is popularly understood to mean. Strange that a faith which is now regarded as fundamental should have been entirely unknown to him who was commissioned of God to lay the foundation of all true and subsequent religions.

Secondly. Nor can it be shown that this doctrine of demonology was clearly recognized even by any of the sacred writers previous to the first Jewish captivity, which occurred about the year 741 before Christ. Nor can it be fairly inferred from any of the sacred records made during the pre-exilian period. The passages which have been quoted in proof of this doctrine are Job i: 6, 7, 8, 9, 12. It is claimed that the doctrine of Satan as a personal monster is clearly taught in the passages above referred to, and that they were written before the first captivity.

To this it may be replied: first, there is no means of knowing the author of the Book of Job, much less the date of its writing. While we have no evidence either internal or external going to prove that it belongs to the pre-exilian period, its frequent allusions to the Pentateuch go to show that it was

subsequent to the time of Moses. So important a conclusion cannot rest upon a foundation so precarious.

Secondly, the word "Satan" is a Hebrew word, and is not translated, but simply transferred into other languages in its original form; as all agree, it means "an adversary." In the absence of a pre-conceived faith in the existence of a devil, it would be more in keeping with the conceded principles of exegesis, and altogether more reasonable, to suppose that the author, whoever he was, meant to personify EVIL as an "adversary" which is known to be omnipresent.

Thirdly, the Book of Job is a dramatic poem on the deep problem, "How can the afflictions of the righteous be consistent with God's justice?" While Job stoutly maintained that his physical suffering in no wise reflected upon his integrity and righteousness in the sight of God, his opposers were equally earnest in endeavoring to prove that his great afflictions were but the legitimate result of his unprecedented guilt. He who believes that this epic poem was inspired in its entirety must believe that, while God inspired Job to pursue one line of argument, he at the same time inspired his three friends to flatly contradict him. But such a conclusion is an absurdity too absurd to be accepted in the light of "Reason and Revelation."

If inspiration be claimed for this marvelous book, in the sense that all the speakers spoke, either in

language or sentiment, just as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, certainly it can only be said in reason that inspiration begins and ends where the Lord is represented as reproving Job for having "darkened counsel by words without knowledge," and then, turning upon Eliphaz, says, "My wrath is kindled against thee and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right."

If any one can believe that God inspired Job to utter "words without knowledge," and also believe that he at the same time inspired his "three friends" to do even worse, we must believe that such an elastic mind is preëminently fit to take in all the hobgoblin stories of Jewish superstition, and all else that may come in the line of the popular thought.

The next passage claimed in support of this doctrine is 1 Chronicles xxi: 1, where we read, "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel." But by reference to 2 Samuel xxiv: 1, we read an account of the same event, where it says, "And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah." Thus what Satan is said to have done in Chronicles is attributed to the anger of the Lord in Samuel.

If a passage easily understood and bearing upon the same subject may help to explain the one of doubtful meaning, we are led to believe that the term "anger of the Lord" in Samuel is personified

as Satan in Chronicles. Moreover, all are agreed that the books of Samuel were written previous to the exile, while the Chronicles are considered by most critics, orthodox and heterodox, to have been written by Ezra, and therefore after the exile. Ezra, as it would seem, living at the time when demonology had become fixed in the Jewish mind, took a liberty in verbalism which was unknown to the older author of Samuel.

The above coincidence of two narratives of the same event helps to illustrate the fact that the doctrine of a personal Satan was post-exilian.

Psalm cix : 6 has been quoted as showing that the Jewish mind had conceived the doctrine of a personal devil long before the time of their captivity. That such an interpretation is wholly unwarranted will be clearly seen by reading the passage: "Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan [adversary] stand at his right hand." In the five preceding verses the Psalmist describes the character of his enemies, and in the sixth verse he personifies them as one, and prays, "Set thou a wicked man over him, and let an adversary stand at his right hand." And so the Revised Version renders it.

As the books of the Old Testament belonging to the pre-exilian period at most only suggest, and nowhere clearly recognize, the doctrine of a personal devil, the question will naturally arise, Whence came, then, the doctrine of demonology so popular and universal among the Jews at the coming of Christ?

(a) In answer to this question we unhesitatingly affirm that it came of *contagion*, and not of *inspiration*. It became incorporated as an after-thought in the Jewish mind through the influence of surrounding religions, notably that of Zoroaster. During the pre-exilian period of Jewish history we find but little trace of a belief in demons, and absolutely *nothing* of the doctrine of a chief of devils. The horrid conception came in after the exile. It is a matter of history that the doctrine of a personal devil never assumed definite form until after the Jews had returned from their exile. Nor can the origin of such a belief, so alien and unknown to the Mosaic theology, be accounted for, as it seems to us, on any other supposition than that of "contagion." During that period, the Jews, as we know, came in contact with the Parsee or Persian religion, of which Zoroaster was the founder. Thus they became contaminated with a foreign theology and idolatry.

Whatever may be said of Zoroaster's "pure monotheism," his "one God and indivisible" was, nevertheless, a compound of good and evil. Starting out with the thought of one God, and being met with "that everlasting problem of all thinking minds, namely, the origin of evil, and its incompatibility with God's goodness, holiness, and justice," he attempted to solve the difficulty by assuming two primeval causes, which, though different, were united, and produced the world of material things as well as that of spirit.

Thus we observe that Zoroaster's conception of the Godhead was that of an Almighty Father, the source of all good, and an omnipotent devil, to whom he attributed all evil, though included perhaps in one supreme being. The disintegrating influence of human thought soon evolved an absolute "dualism," representing two totally distinct omnipotent beings.

As we are simply stating the facts of history without going into detail, we need only observe that the Persian religion, under the influence of which the Jews were brought during their exile, maintained the doctrine of a personal devil. That the theory of a Satan of horrid proportions was introduced into the Jewish theology through the influence of religious "contagion," and not of "inspiration," may be illustrated by the following quotation: "In the period elapsing between the close of the Apocrypha and the appearance of Jesus the Jewish idea of angels, as well as of demons and the Devil, received an extensive development. This angelology and demonology, wholly foreign to the older Hebrew religion, was derived in all its essential characteristics from the system of Zoroaster, with which the Jews had become familiar by their long and close intercourse with the Persian empire during the exile, and subsequently. It was, however, impossible to transfer the dualism of Zoroaster into a creed so purely monotheistic as that of the Jews: this would have destroyed the foundation on which their entire history rested.

“Two beings, equally eternal, equally powerful, was an idea which no Hebrew—mindful of the glorious deliverance of his forefathers out of the land of Egypt, of the law given among the thunders of Sinai, of the manna in the wilderness, of the triumphs in Canaan, and the golden psalms of David—could for one moment entertain. But on the other hand, now that the Jews had become weak and of little account, hemmed in and crushed by mighty and advancing empires, no conception could seem more true or prove more consolatory than that which permitted them to attribute their misfortunes to the agency of a demoniacal race, headed by a potentate only inferior to Jehovah himself. They could now believe that God had not forsaken his ‘chosen people.’ Thus the dualism of Zoroaster suggested the kingdom and royalty of Satan, but the doctrine shaped itself in harmony with the national monotheism. The Devil and his demons were represented as having been originally angels, and had fallen from their ‘high estate,’ been punished by God, and had therefore assumed a position of hostility, without, however, being able to materially frustrate the divine purpose.

“These opinions found an almost universal reception among the people, as well as among those Jewish theologians who, along with the Mosaic law, held oral tradition to be an authentic source of religious doctrine. Indeed, the only Jewish sect which rejected them was that of the Sadducees, who consid-

ered them to be new, outlandish, anti-Mosaic myths and theories.

“This conflict of opinion among the Jews prevented their ideas of the Devil and demons from obtaining, in spite of their broad diffusion, a dogmatic and systematic stability. The populace and the Pharisees believed fervidly in the existence of such evil spirits; but their conceptions had not only all the heat, but all the confusedness, of superstition.” (*Chambers's Encyclopædia*, Art. “Devil.”)

No one at all acquainted with Oriental history will call in question the fact that the satanic doctrine was fundamental in the Parsee religion long before it was incorporated into the Jewish theology. Hence it must follow that, if the orthodox theory of a personal devil came of “inspiration” and not of “contagion,” Zoroaster, and not Moses or any of the sacred writers, was the inspired revelator.

As the doctrine of demonology is thus seen to have been incorporated into Jewish history through the contagious influence of foreign religions, another question may arise:

(*b*) To what extent had this doctrine become popularized among the Jews at the coming of Christ? While the sacred books of the Old Testament belonging to the post-exilian period only allude, and that rarely, to a theory so subversive of their theology, the doctrine of demonology at the coming of the Saviour was universally popular, not only among the Jews, but with all the surrounding

nations. This was the condition of the world's thought when the "New Testament lifts up the veil of oblivion that had dropped on the face of the Jewish nation more than two centuries before." The prince of devils and a swarm of demons had invaded Palestine. As to the popularity of this doctrine among the Gentiles, there can be no question. Both Greek and Roman history abundantly show that it was fundamental, if not paramount, in their religion. While, however, the Gentile philosophy represented two classes of demons, one good and the other bad, the Jewish conception at the time of Christ regarded all demons as being malignant opposers of God and man.

While the Greeks and Jews differed in the above particulars, they were agreed in the belief that demons were none other than the spirits of the departed dead which came back to possess the souls of the living. The Greek thought represented that these departed souls were instrumentalities of communication between the creature and the Creator.

Plato says, as quoted by Kitto, "Every demon is a middle being between God and mortals." And again: "Demons are reporters and carriers from men to the gods, and again from the gods to men, of the supplications and prayers of the one, and of the injunctions and rewards of devotion from the other." While it was the office of the good demon to bear petitions to the Almighty, and helpful messages back to the souls they represented, wicked demons

employed their time in seeking to bring evil upon the souls they possessed. "It is a very ancient opinion," says Plutarch, "that there are certain wicked and malignant demons, who envy good men, and endeavor to hinder them in the pursuit of virtue, lest they should be partakers of greater happiness than they enjoyed."

Pythagoras and other Greek philosophers believed that these wicked demons brought "disease to men and cattle."

While, as we have seen, demonology originated with Parseeism, or the religion of Zoroaster, yet, like a contagion, it went forth to obtain dominion over the known world. And though it may justly be claimed that the Jews at one time in their history believed, in common with the Greeks and Romans, that there were good and bad demons, yet when Christ made his appearance in the world the Jewish mind had entirely eliminated the thought of good demons, and had accepted the doctrine that none but the spirits of the wicked came back to possess and ruin the souls of men. This doctrine had universally obtained among all the sects of the Jews except the Sadducees. As this sect accepted no part of the Bible as authority but the Pentateuch, which, as we have seen, does not even suggest the existence of a devil, it therefore rejected the doctrine of demonology as nothing but an outlandish superstition.

All the diseases, of either body or mind, which

were beyond the physician's art, were attributed to the demons—that is, to the spirits of the wicked dead, which had come back thus to afflict the living. All such diseased persons were pronounced demoniacs, “the name given by the Jews to persons afflicted with epilepsy, hypochondria, or insanity, diseases of frequent occurrence in the East. The name originated in the belief that persons so afflicted had been taken possession of by evil spirits or demons. It was a prevalent opinion among the Persians, Greeks, Romans, and the ancients generally, that the extraordinary conditions and actions of men which could not be referred to the known and apparent operations and powers of the mind, must be ascribed to the influence of one or more higher spirits. This belief is found in Homer, Herodotus, Euripides, and later writers, and also rooted itself very deeply in the Christian mind during the middle ages. As the good, when beyond the limits of the ordinary powers or faculties of great men, was attributed to the inspiration of the muses, or to the direct co-operation, or even incarnation in their persons, of some beneficent deity, so also that deep internal unhappiness of ‘a mind diseased,’ which no strength of will and no physician's art in olden times could remove, was as unhesitatingly attributed to evil spirits or demons. . . .

“Thus, Christ appears in the synoptic gospels as healing many who were possessed of unclean spirits, casting out devils, etc. But apart from the fact

that a belief in demoniacal possession was more vital and universal among the later Jews, on account of their being more deeply penetrated by the consciousness of sin, and by a conviction of the mysterious connection between evil and Satan, it was also expected of the Messiah, the anointed of God, that he would possess power over demons. This fundamental national belief would unconsciously prepare the contemporaries of Christ for regarding his divine exercise of the physician's art from a religious rather than a scientific point of view. When they beheld the miraculous effects of his power on the bodies and spirits of the so-called demoniacs, it was natural that they should speak of it in language intelligible to their age and in harmony with its general notions. To have used other words, from the standpoint of a higher scientific knowledge, would have been as confusing to the Jews and early Christians as it would have been to assure them that it was the earth and not the sun which stood still during the battle at Gibeon. Besides, when it is remembered that even before the synoptic gospels were written the miraculous incidents of Christ's life must have fixed themselves in the minds of the populace under the conditions of the popular belief, it is difficult to see that there was any other course open to the evangelical historians, even if they did not share the common belief of their countrymen, than to adopt the current representations. They had no interest in the mere scientific accuracy or

inaccuracy of such representations. Their object was different and higher: it was to show the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Saviour—qualities which are equally manifest, whichever theory may be adopted. This view of the question, which is held to be in conformity with sound science and sound criticism, presents itself almost irresistibly to the candid and impartial student of the Bible, when he bears in mind that there is nothing in the recorded examples of demoniacal possession different from the ordinary symptoms of epilepsy, hypochondria, and insanity, which are not now beyond the physician's skill." (*Chambers's Encyclopædia*, Art. "Demoniacs.")

What has been said of the character and general popularity of the doctrine of demonology among the Jews at the coming of Christ, and the suggestions in the last part of the above quotation, prepares us for the final proposition:

Thirdly, *Christ and his apostles used the terms "Satan," "devil," and "demons" in keeping with the popular thought and language, without assuming the common errors of their times.*

Christ's mission was not to correct the literature of the age, nor to give a text-book on medical science, nor yet to enter into controversy with the Jews touching all or any of the theological absurdities into which they had drifted. His was the loftier aim of convincing the world that he was the "Messiah, the anointed of God," commissioned

of heaven to save mankind from sin, lead them to a life of righteousness, and to establish upon earth a religion of universal purity and unity, the grand mission of which, when completed, would be to eliminate all false theories in human theology, correct the mistakes of language, and not only bind all hearts together, but all back to God, that in the coming future his will might be done on earth as in heaven.

Had he played the part of a man, by introducing his cudgel to fight the mistaken notions of his countrymen, and to establish a literature in keeping with absolute truth, instead of popular thought, we can readily see that he would have frittered away his opportunity and shown a human ignorance instead of the divine wisdom of Him who spoke as man never spoke.

As we have seen in the preface to these propositions, the revelator is supposed to take into account the popular prejudices and doctrines, and especially is he expected to use the language which is commonly used and therefore readily understood by the people to whom he brings this new and advanced truth. Had he acted otherwise, we can readily imagine the result. For example, take the case of the woman of Canaan (Matt. xv : 22) coming to Christ, saying, "O Lord, thou son of David! my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." Had Jesus entered into controversy with the woman to convince her that her daughter had the epilepsy,

and that the popular doctrine of demonology was unscientific and nothing but a false superstition, we can readily see that nothing short of a miracle would have convinced her that her daughter was not "grievously vexed with a devil." And the probable result would have been that unbelief would have displaced her faith, and her daughter would never have been healed. This woman's theology, on this subject, was of little importance to the Saviour, compared with that sublimer thought of doing a benevolent act, and of convincing the world at the same time of his Messiahship by doing that which was beyond the physician's skill.

The contagion of foreign religions, the scriptures falsely interpreted by the priests, scribes, and Pharisees, had filled the Jewish mind with an intolerable burden of false theology. Then, as now, there were two ways to rid the public mind of false theories; namely, first, to controvert and combat error, by showing that it is unscientific and contrary to sense and reason, and second, by presenting truth, and allowing "error" to take care of itself. While the man of negatives, with but little of positive truth, usually adopts the first method, the man of exalted convictions leaves squabbling to those who can do nothing better, and proceeds to the diviner mission of establishing the fundamental principles of truth, the ordained purpose of which is to root out all mistakes, and bring about a unity of thought and harmony of purpose. Ignorance may be guilty of

cudgeling the darkness with a view to driving it from the room, but the diviner thought will introduce a light and allow the darkness to take care of itself.

No one can carefully study the methods of the divine teacher without observing that he purposed to save the world from falsehood and ruin, not by combating error or correcting the mistakes of popular notions, but by establishing fundamental truth, which, like leaven, will not cease its transforming power until the darkness of superstition shall have vanished before its illuminating influences. Believing that the "fittest must survive," Jesus accepted the world as it was and went about his work, assured that truth is mighty and must prevail. Even a great man who has discovered a new truth, which he greatly desires to impress upon the public mind, does not stop to combat false theories on matters irrelevant, and to invent a new phraseology; but, absorbed with his new discovery, he proceeds to set it forth in the words which his pupils best understand.

When Copernicus went beyond all his predecessors in grasping the science of the stars, he did not stop to explain the fallacy of popular superstitions nor to create a new language. These things were not to be thought of while under the inspiration of that sublime purpose of explaining to the world a theory which was to be handed down to all coming ages as illustrative of the wisdom and power of the

Infinite. Is it possible to believe that the greatest teacher of all would act less wisely? Shall He who was commissioned of God to bear from heaven to earth a message which was destined to revolutionize the world of thought, and overturn all forms of religion, until the "heathen shall be given to him for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession"—shall he, who saw the end from the beginning of the sublimest undertaking the world ever witnessed, stop to controvert false theories, and to dispute as to the meaning of words? Such a supposition would only illustrate how little we comprehend of the sublimity of Christ's undertaking to bring the world back to truth and righteousness, that thus the music of the moral universe might be as harmonious as that of the spheres.

Jesus and his apostles, with a view to establishing the divinity of their exalted mission, only used the terms "Satan," "devil," and "demons" to accommodate themselves to the popular thought and language, without indorsing any of these absurdities into which the Jews had drifted by coming in contact with foreign religions. That they used these terms only in an accommodated sense may be clearly seen, as it seems to us, from the following considerations:

(a) The human ailments, both physical and mental, as recorded in the New Testament, and attributed to demoniacal possession, are, so far as we are able to observe, quite analogous to those of the

present day. There were blind, deaf, and dumb then as now. Some had their eyes put out, while others were born blind, then as now. Humanity suffered then as now with what we call epilepsy, lunacy, insanity, etc. The physician of modern times, diagnosing those cases referred to by Christ and his apostles from the standpoint of medical science, would unhesitatingly pronounce them similar, in every particular, to the diseases which now afflict humanity. The raving maniacs of to-day are but duplicates of those recorded in Matt. viii: 28. The "two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce," spoke and acted just as wild and fierce maniacs do now. There is no apparent difference between them and those similarly afflicted now, except that there was then no asylum in which those miserable souls could be tenderly cared for and have medical treatment, which might prove an antidote to their mental derangement. As the popular opinion regarded them as being possessed of a supernatural power, and hence beyond the physician's art, they made no effort to relieve them, but only sought to repress them from doing harm.

The fact that they are represented (Luke viii: 29) as possessing great strength, so that they broke the chains with which they were bound; recognized Jesus as the Son of God (because they had heard of his fame); replied that their name was Legion, and requested that they might enter into the swine,—all

these strange phenomena, as we know, belong to the raving maniac of our day. The fact that Jesus acted upon the demoniacs' suggestion and sent the devils into the swine, proves nothing but that the Saviour accommodated himself to the popular belief, that he might thus, by a twofold miracle, the more readily impress upon the world's thought the absolute divinity of his power. It was but a transfer of the disease of the maniacs into the swine.

The maniacs of to-day, in their wild frenzy, are known to put forth almost superhuman strength, tear clothes from their bodies, and the very hair from their heads, and on some subjects exhibit remarkable shrewdness, imagining themselves to be elephants, dogs, kings, queens, lords, and even almighties; and if the doctrine of demons was popular, there would be those, doubtless, who would give their name as "Legion."

In performing the twofold miracle in the case cited above, in order to impress his divinity upon the minds of the people, Jesus had no course open to him but to use their language, without stopping to combat their false theories. In this particular he did as the astronomer does now when he accommodates himself to the popular language by saying that "the sun rises and sets," though he knows that it is the motion of the earth and not of the sun which gives rise to these phenomena. So Jesus adopts the language best understood by his countrymen when he commands the "devils to come

out," though he knew that it was a natural disease, and not devils, which caused the madness.

The learned physician in talking to the common people will speak of "lunacy" and "St. Anthony's fire," when he knows that they are natural diseases, the cause of which can be ascertained and often removed by medicine, and that neither the moon in the one case nor St. Anthony in the other has anything to do with the affliction. So Jesus, in addressing the common people, used the only language which they understood, though at the same time he knew the truth which science has clearly revealed, that their belief in devils was only an absurdity which had grown out of their ignorance.

A clear case of modern epilepsy is recorded in Matt. xvii : 18 : " And Jesus rebuked the devil ; and he departed out of him : and the child was cured from that very hour." Had the question been asked, " What is the matter with the child ?" there had been a number of replies. The father had given one answer, the people another ; while modern science would indicate that both answers were the result of superstition.

The father believed (Matt. xvii : 15) that his son was lunatic (moon-struck), while the popular belief was that he was " possessed of a devil." But there is not a medical scientist of modern times who, taking the manifest symptoms as given in the narrative, would not unhesitatingly pronounce it a clear case of epilepsy. Jesus, under the inspiration

of his exalted commission, did not stop to tell the father that his son was not "moon-struck," nor to argue with the populace that he was not "possessed of the devil;" but he accommodated himself to the prevalent belief, and to the use of such terms as would be most likely to convince the people that he was possessed of superhuman power. The fact which may be emphasized, however, is, that there is not a case recorded in the New Testament attributed to demoniac possession, which would not be pronounced by the scholarly physician of modern times as similar in every particular to the diseases of to-day.

If the afflictions cited in the sacred books were caused by demons, then logical consistency will lead us to conclude that similar afflictions of modern times must be attributed to the same cause. Is it reasonable to believe that devils produced then what we know disease produces now? It is altogether more in keeping with sound sense to suppose that ignorance then attributed to the devil what intelligence now charges to the account of disease. The only assignable reason why they believed in demoniac possession is found in the fact that those physical and mental ailments were beyond the physician's skill. What they in their blindness referred to a supernatural and hence unknown origin, modern science traces directly to a physical cause, which can be reached and often removed by medical aid.

The man who can believe that "demons" pro-

duced, long time ago, afflictions in the physical organism which are now known to be the result of natural causes, might as well believe that the ancient system of astrology was true then, but now, under the light of the science of astronomy, is grossly false and absurd.

We assume that no intelligent man believes in the doctrine of demoniac possession as the Jews held it—namely, that the spirits of wicked persons deceased now come back to possess and torment the souls of the living! Where is the man who regards the providences of God as being wise, just, and beneficent, and who knows anything of human ailments, that would avow his belief in such a doctrine? A man publishing such a faith in this age of sense and reason would hardly be considered fit to go at large among people of sane minds. And yet wherein is it a less folly for one to profess to believe that the Jews, in their ignorance, were right in attributing to “demons” what is now known to be the result of natural causes?

Nor is it enough to say that our faith that demoniac possession was a reality then, though not so now, rests upon the teachings of Christ and his apostles. As we have sought to show, these sacred authors, with a view to promoting their heaven-ordained mission, only used language with which the Jews were familiar, and thus accommodated themselves to the popular thought and expression. To claim that a doctrine taught by the Jews was true

then, though we know it to be false now, is to exchange an apparent difficulty for one that is real. Such a faith should be relegated to heathen mythology, where it was born, or to Jewish superstition, where it came to its maturity, and no longer reproach Christianity, stultify reason, and contradict the known facts of medical science.

As we have seen, the Jewish theory of demonology was, that while there were legions of demons, these were led on in their mischief by one "prince of devils." This leads to the inquiry:

(a) Why discard the doctrine of "demons" and retain that of their leader?

While many scholarly men believe that demoniac possession in the days of Christ was a reality, they are not willing to believe that demons or departed spirits come back now to possess and afflict the souls of the living. If we believe that demoniacs were beings of the past, why not assign to their leader, Satan, a place also in the catalogue of Jewish hobgoblins? If science, under the influence of Christian civilization, has eliminated the best half of the doctrine, why not allow that mental philosophy, enlightened by Christian experience, shall dispose of the worst half? For does not the doctrine of demons seem less dishonoring to God and less hurtful to man than that which maintains the existence of a huge and horrid monster, whose dominion in the physical and moral universe is semi-almighty? If the one be regarded as an absurdity in science, the

other must be looked upon as a monstrosity on the moral universe, which reason can never reconcile with the thought of an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Father.

Though the foregoing suggestions might be regarded as sufficient to explain all allusions to demonology by the sacred writers, it still seems proper, before dismissing the subject, to allude to two other passages in the Gospels and one in the book of Revelation.

The temptation of Jesus (Matt. iv : 1-11 ; Mark i : 12, 13 ; and Luke iv : 1-13) is regarded by some as strongly suggestive, if not proof positive, of the existence of a personal devil. Before adopting a doctrine so fundamental, and yet so out of keeping with the teaching of Christ, it will be well carefully to observe the following suggestions, which will be found helpful in determining the true meaning of this reported event :

(1) It must be observed that this is no part of the Lord's teaching, but only a reported event in the history of his life. If Satan be really a personal monster, next in power and wisdom to God, the belief in that event must be regarded as fundamental in the Christian religion. And yet, strange to say, Christ in all his discourses does not even allude to a fact so important to be understood.

His Sermon on the Mount (Matt., chapters v, vi, vii), the longest of his reported addresses, makes not the slightest reference to it. And yet it is com-

monly believed that this sermon contains enough of truth, if believed, to save the world, though all else were sunk to the depths of the sea. This sermon was given at the beginning of his ministry: the next longest recorded address was at the close (John, chapters xiv, xv, xvi). As at this time awful death (which the popular theory maintains was under the control of Satan) was staring him in the face, we would naturally suppose that the doctrine of a personal devil, if so fundamentally important, would be set forth with great clearness. And yet the Divine Teacher, with all the disgrace and suffering that were heaped upon him, made not the slightest allusion in all that discourse to this Satan of Zoroaster, which has become one of the cornerstones of orthodoxy. His sermons were full of God but no devil.

The unbiased student of the Bible is here met with two facts, namely:

First, when Jesus was performing miracles in attestation of the divinity of his mission, it was necessary for him, as it was for the writers of the gospels, to use the common language in reference to the popular doctrine of demonology; but,

Second, while delivering these popular addresses, in which he set forth the fundamental doctrines of saving truth, he makes no allusion to the doctrine of a personal Satan, nor even of demons. These two facts put together seem to be strongly suggestive of his superhuman wisdom.

(2) The account of the temptation should be accepted as the report of a great spiritual truth and not the narrative of a literal event. To interpret this story as being a literal transaction must inevitably lead to false conclusions; for,

(a) If we interpret the narrative as real and not spiritual, then we must believe that Jesus stopped to hold conversation with a being of horrid form. If it was the veritable orthodox devil who was in audience with Christ, that fact must have been known to the Saviour. Can we imagine that He who was of absolute purity of character would stop to hold a literal conversation with a totally depraved monster? Even as an example to humanity, it would hardly be considered the right thing to be done. The action would be criticised if even a good man were deliberately to go into audience with one whom he knew to be overwhelmingly powerful in wicked devices and entirely beyond the hope of recovery.

(b) If this recital be accepted as literal, we must believe that Jesus not only paused to hold a conversation with Satan, but allowed himself to be led about by him. The conversation began in the country, miles away from Jerusalem; but after it "the devil taketh him up into the holy city." From this it would appear that Jesus followed the devil too long and too far. But seeming to yield to the influence of the tempter, he follows him seven hundred and fifty feet upward to the "pinnacle of

the temple." Nor is this enough; but down from the pinnacle, out of the temple, back again into the country, the Saviour allows himself to be led by the devil "up into an exceeding high mountain," where the devil elaborates upon the possibility of his becoming immensely wealthy and powerful. It is philosophical as well as Biblical to admit that

" Evil into the mind of God or man
May come and go, so unapproved, and leave
No spot or blame behind."

But to allow the evil thought not only to come, but to remain until it has been reduced to practice, then, by universal consent, it becomes sin. Thus, if we accept this narrative as literal, we are led by an irresistible logic to a false conclusion, namely, that Christ committed actual sin by allowing himself to act upon the suggestions of the devil.

(c) If this be accepted as literal, Christ has given us the example of reasoning with the devil and of being led by him for a season, in order that, after "sowing our wild-oats," we may, forsooth, have the pleasure of saying to him, "Get behind me, Satan."

(3) By accepting this report as spiritual and not literal, we not only relieve the text of the foregoing difficulties, but can readily understand how Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." If he were tempted as we are, then, to know the real character of his temptation, we need only look into our own experience. With us temp-

tation is the thought of evil. If at this point the human will plays its proper part, the evil thought is banished, and there is no sin. But if it be retained until it crops out into action, then we become guilty in the sight of God and at the bar of our own conscience. We know too, by experience, that while temptation calls the mind into healthy action, and is therefore a good thing, sin wrongs the soul, and is hence a wicked thing. Jesus was without sin, for the reason that the moment the thought entered his holy mind it was instantly repelled. In this spiritual sense we can readily see how the temptation to get upon the "pinnacle of the temple" could come and go as quick as thought, and "leave no spot or blame behind."

There is a divine logic in Christ's temptations during his forty days' stay in the wilderness, which covers all the temptations to which man is exposed.

First, he was tempted to use his power of working miracles to a selfish end, for which it was not given. We, in like manner, are often tempted to use the powers of body and mind with which we have been blessed, to the accomplishment of ends for which they were not divinely intended.

Secondly, the evil thought of going upon the pinnacle of the temple and casting himself down with a view of having the angels to take charge of him, was a temptation to the sin of presumption. How often we too are tempted to presume upon the mer-

cies of God, by expecting God to do what we of right should do for ourselves.

Thirdly, the evil thought of coming into possession of the wealth of this world by doing wrong was a temptation to the sin of covetousness. In human life the love of money is the root of all evil.

Here we have the three evil thoughts which tempted Jesus: namely, a perversion of power, presumption, and covetousness. There is not an evil thought which enters the human mind that may not be catalogued in one or the other of these temptations. Hence, "He was tempted in all points like as we are."

And how natural these temptations! Immediately after having been declared to be the Son of God, he sought seclusion in the wilderness. There, under the influence of hunger, the tempting thought came to "command that the stones be made bread." And how natural that he should for the moment reason thus: "If I am what I have been declared to be, the Son of God, why not convince the world of my heirship, by doing the striking thing of throwing myself from the pinnacle of the temple? And, finally, if the earth and the fullness thereof belong to God, and I am his Son, why not at once violently take possession of what of right belongs to me?" Such, as we know, are the temptations to which human nature is exposed, and in this manner Christ, "being touched with the feelings of our infirmities," is thereby "able to succor them that are tempted."

It remains only to be said, that the apostle, in giving the history of Christ's temptation, evidently with a view to making it more impressive, especially on the Jewish mind, used the term "devil" as personifying the principle of evil, or evil thoughts. This, as we know, is a liberty often taken by the sacred writers. Solomon, for example, speaks of wisdom as a person; Paul personifies love; and John talks of sin as if it were a personal master.

With regard to our Lord's reply to the Seventy (Luke x: 18), "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven:" it will not be urged that Jesus intended to be understood as meaning a literal fall of Satan from heaven, unless it may be supposed to allude to his primeval expulsion; but this sense is scarcely relevant to the occasion. If, then, the literal sense be necessarily departed from, a choice must be made out of the various figurative interpretations of which the words admit. And taking the word Satan here in its generic sense, as meaning whatever is inimical or opposed to the Gospel, Jesus may be understood to say, "I foresaw the glorious results of your mission in the triumphs which would attend it over the most formidable obstacles."

"Heaven is often used in the sense of political horizon (Isa. xiv: 12, 13; Matt. xxiv: 29). To be cast from heaven to hell is a phrase for total downfall (Luke x: 15; Rev. xii: 7-9). Cicero says to Mark

Antony, 'You have hurled your colleagues down from heaven.' Satan is here used tropically. Our Lord does not, therefore, assert the real operation of demons." (Kitto under "Demoniacs.")

The above suggestions apply equally to the passage in Rev. xii : 7-9. To press this passage into a literal interpretation would be entirely out of keeping with the universally conceded character of the book. It abounds in figures which must be interpreted as illustrative of spiritual truth.

At the time of this prophecy, Asia and all the known world besides were in the enjoyment of a universal peace. In this state of comparative heaven the revelator foresaw the desolating wars which we know soon changed this heaven of peace into a hell of war. In Asia, especially, the chief aim was to exterminate the Church of Christ.

Looking into the future, John saw righteousness and wickedness, or paganism and Christianity, pitted against each other in a fearful conflict. But though the war might wage long and fierce, as it did, yet in the distance he could hear "a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren [the pagan power] is cast down, which accused them before God day and night."

This passage is universally conceded to be a prophecy of a coming event and not a historic reference to the past. Hence it cannot have the remotest

reference to the orthodox Satan of primeval history. Such literal interpretation would break up the harmony and entirely destroy the meaning and beauty of this apocalyptic vision.

PERORATION.

In this chapter on Demonology we have sought to cover the entire field of thought on this subject, as occupied by men whose intelligence entitles them to respectful consideration. In presenting our views we have not been ignorant of the power of preconceived opinions, and the almost insurmountable difficulty of having the majority of men look at a subject from a new standpoint. Nor have we been unmindful of the unpopularity of the position which we have sought to maintain. From some who may read these chapters we shall expect nothing but careless indifference; from others, burlesque and the cry of "Heresy;" and from still others, who desire truth more than popularity, we confidently anticipate a careful reading and an honorable criticism. We ask nothing more; of right we should have nothing less.

It has been our aim to give to all the benefit of an honest statement of their position and a just criticism of their arguments. We have seen that Satan is more than a "ghost of human imagination:" he is a fearful reality with which humanity has to contend. And though in this hand-to-hand struggle for the mastery man has often come out of the

smoke and battle with victory and the acquisition of inestimable wealth, yet too often he has been vanquished and gone down to disgrace and ruin. Nor can he ever stand at the bar of Justice and claim that the All-Father had permitted a Giant Monster to maraud over the moral universe and tempt him to his ruin; but he will stand self-condemned, his own conscience witnessing the truth of inspiration, saying, "Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." Whatever may be our theory, conscience will not allow us to charge our own misdeeds to the account of any devil other than ourselves.

As a personal monster of horrid form, we have endeavored to trace his origin and explain how he grew to such fearful dimensions; how that the dualism of Zoroaster, having been planted in the soil of Jewish imagination, had grown under the influence of ignorance into devils *ad infinitum*. It was thus that the principle of Evil in the moral universe had been accounted for on the easy but ignorant supposition of a chief of devils, followed by a host whose name is "Legion."

And though this conception of demonology, which was intensified during the dark ages of the Church, came out into the light of the modern world to be handed down through the influence of habits of thought, yet the glory of its former self has been consigned to the darkness of its birth and the ignorance of its cradle.

The physical and mental phenomena once attributed to his Satanic majesty have, under the light of medical science, been catalogued as the legitimate results of natural disease.

The tempest which "churns the ocean," and the tornado which "sweeps over the earth," which ignorance once attributed to the fact that "Satan had slipped his chains," are known to be governed by the fixed laws of science.

Words in the older translations of the Bible, which were once interpreted as clearly teaching the existence of an omnipotent devil, have, under the influence of a higher criticism and the rules of exegesis more in keeping with reason, been made to harmonize with the soul's richest experience and the thought of an omnipotent Father.

Historic criticism has traced the heathen origin of this Lucifer, and shown how he was "decked out in the costume of many different climes and ages," so that he is now well-nigh stripped of his plumage, and is suspended over his open grave, into which he is being lowered, little by little, into his final resting-place. And we confidently predict that the present advanced and the future advancing ages of Christian civilization will cover him up that he rise no more forever. *Amen.*

PART VI.

CHRISTOLOGY.

PREFATORY.

Was Jesus an Impostor; a Fanatic; or what he professed to be?

NEARLY two thousand years ago, in the little, obscure, and despised country of Galilee, Jesus, with no family prestige, with neither education nor fame, stood up amid these forbidding environments, and startled his kinsmen and neighbors with the announcement that he was the promised Messiah.

He claimed to be a minister from the courts of heaven, bearing a message to earth. His unequivocal announcement was, "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me" (John viii : 42). Love and pity for the fallen of our race led him to leave his home in heaven and accept a mission to our world. His plain statement is, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matt. ix : 13).

As universal man had rebelled against the laws of his being and was under an acknowledged state of condemnation, Jesus, as a messenger of God, came, claiming the power of pardon. He claimed to have "power on earth to forgive sins" (Luke v : 24).

The "I," the "me," that he called himself, he claimed to be of pre-existence. His declaration is, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii : 58). In the most impressive manner, and while consciously standing in the very presence of an awful death, he announced that his previous home of glory had been with the great Father. In distinct memory of his previous home, and with conscious hope of future blessedness, in the very face of death, he prayed, "O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John xvii : 5).

This pre-existent Christ which he claimed to be, he recognized as the Spirit or Soul of his fleshly tabernacle. Hence his expression, "A body hast thou prepared me."

His great heart of love to God and humanity throbbed with the single desire of building up the kingdom of God. "Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God" (Mark i : 14). This kingdom of righteousness he regarded as man's supreme opportunity, highest privilege, and first obligation. Hence his injunction, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (Matt. vi : 33). When the sublime work of laying the foundation of a religion which was destined, in the coming ages, to unify all people and bind all hearts back to God was accomplished, he beheld with unclouded vision the death, which he, knowingly and willingly, was to die, and clearly announced the marvelous fact of

his resurrection. "From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt. xvi : 21).

Since the world began, such marvelous announcements have never been made by any other man of sane mind. The question of all questions is, therefore, Can such high and unheard-of claims to divinity of origin and mission be established in the light of historic facts? While for more than eighteen hundred years this question has been answered in the affirmative by the purest minds and best scholarship of the ages, yet, of late, this citadel of our faith and the world's hope has been assailed by men claiming to be men of science, with a view to robbing our race of a religion that has done more to elevate the nations of earth than all else put together. In the presence of a high-handed infidelity, which seeks to demolish our temple of hope for this world and that which is to come, it behooves us to examine carefully the foundation of our faith.

In the light of the foregoing claims which Jesus made for himself, we are driven to the conclusion that he represented one of three possible characters: Either, first, he was an impostor such as the world never saw; or, second, he was an ignorant fanatic without a precedent; or, third, he was simply what he professed to be. As coherency of thought drives us to one of these three conclusions,

the light of sound reason will discover to us which of the three is the more easy and natural faith.

(1) To believe that Jesus was an impostor is credulity overmuch. The assumption of such faith carries with it the absurdity of believing that a gross deceiver has succeeded, in the face of a world of opposition, in establishing a religion, the central virtue of which is "love to God and love to man." Moreover, he who assumes such proposition is driven to the preposterous conclusion, that an "Impostor," with his hypocritical pretensions, has done more to rebuke heathenism and elevate the race than all else put together. In short, such faith carries with it the gross absurdity of believing that the moral universe is constructed on a lie, and hence that falsehood is the best service we can render humanity.

But while the proposition that Jesus was an impostor was once infidelity's main line of argument, it is now almost entirely abandoned. Such was the general character of his intellectual and moral greatness, and such has been the elevating influence of his teaching and life, that the theory of imposition is an absurdity too absurd to be entertained by infidels whose intelligence and honesty are entitled to respectful consideration. On the subject of Christ's honesty of purpose, "The Super-human Origin of the Bible" concludes as follows: "But I need say the less on this point, as it is now almost universally conceded that Jesus Christ was

wholly incapable of any such conduct; and, indeed, not a few writers against Christianity taunt its advocates with perpetually trying to prove—what they now say nobody denies—that it is not a forgery, and that Christ is not an impostor; though, in fact, this was long the favorite theory of skepticism, and is even now partly resorted to by Renan and Strauss, who, in the difficult task of accounting for everything by myth, feel that it may be as well not wholly to reject it. They forget that, if it be not rejected wholly, it may as well be accepted altogether; for, as the subject of the great controversy says, ‘He who is unfaithful in the least is unfaithful also in much;’ and if Christ cheated the world at all, it is impossible to say how far.”

But when enlightened and honest skepticism, if such an anomaly exists, concedes that Jesus was honorable in purpose and of superior, or even of common, intelligence, it well-nigh consents to the proposition that he was what he professed to be. This may be further seen by examining the question :

(2) Was Christ an Ignorant Fanatic?

If the most unequivocal words on the part of Jesus himself, and the universal testimony of his disciples who attended upon his ministry, are to be accepted as evidence, then certainly no historic fact has been more fully established than that Christ professed to do marvelous things in attestation of the divinity of his mission.

Having dismissed the theory that Jesus was an impostor, as being too absurd to be entertained even by serious and intelligent skepticism, we are left with nothing further to do but to show that Christ must have understood the method or power by which he did those superhuman acts.

Having abandoned the position of intentional imposition on the part of Jesus, the skepticism which is entitled to any decent respect has assumed that the miraculous character of Christianity was an after-thought in the mind of its founder. When Jesus first began his ministry, as claimed by Renan, he had not the remotest thought of the supernatural, but gradually drifted, under the force of circumstances, into the belief that he was possessed of a miraculous power. "Jesus had therefore to choose between these two alternatives," says Renan, "either to renounce his mission or become a wonder-worker."

Is it possible to suppose that Jesus was so far carried away with the importance of "his mission" as to be a "wonder-worker" in belief, and not in fact? Can we think of a man of the exalted moral character ascribed to him by the author last quoted, as professing to raise the dead, when in point of fact it was but a veritable sham? Or can we imagine a being of such conceded intelligence, pretending to do a thing of that kind and yet not understanding the method by which it was done? Can we conceive of a successful juggler not under-

standing the methods of his juggling? Viewing the intelligence of Christ from an infidel standpoint, we aver that it is not possible in the nature of things for us to reasonably conclude that Jesus becomes a "wonder-worker" without understanding, *first*, whether the wonderful thing was a myth or a verity. If it was a fiction imposed upon the credulous as a fact, then Jesus was an impostor; but this, as we have seen, is a position that none will assume. Nor is it possible, in the *second* place, to believe that Jesus failed to understand the power by which the marvelous deed was accomplished. Take the case of Lazarus, whom Jesus is reported to have raised from the dead. This reputed phenomenon was either a fact or a falsehood. If a verity, Jesus knew it; if a hypocritical imposition, he was equally apprised of that. But it is granted that he was not an impostor, therefore the reported event was a fact, else Jesus displayed a degree of mental stupidity so entirely out of keeping with his conceded intelligence, that to believe it is to believe the greater miracle.

(3) As fair reasoning shows,—what receives now an almost universal consent,—that Jesus was not an impostor, nor yet ignorant of what he professed to do, nor of the power by which he became a "wonder-worker," we are led to conclude that "he was simply what he professed to be." In this connection we need only inquire into his pretensions.

Having announced his heavenly mission, Divinity of origin, and Spirit nature, he challenged the world's faith then, as he does now, on no other grounds than that of the attestation of the Infinite. He says, "The words that I speak I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works" (John xiv : 10); and again, "The works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me" (John v : 36).

That Jesus claimed to be the Christ of prophecy is clearly shown in his unequivocal reply to a pointed question. John the Baptist, a greater than whom had not been "born of woman," who, as the forerunner of Christ, had preached repentance and righteousness according to the Jewish law and from the light of nature, had witnessed enough to convince him that Jesus was the Christ. But having been thrust into prison he became harassed with doubts, to dispel which "he sent by his disciples, and said unto him [Jesus], Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?" (Matt. xi : 3). This is a pointed question, made by an honest man, and one for whom Jesus had the highest regard. We cannot suppose that he would vacillate, much less give a deceptive answer. His reply was, "Go your way and tell John the things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good tidings preached to them" (Matt. xi : 2-5).

To concede, as the most intelligent skeptics do, that Jesus was possessed of superior moral and intellectual greatness, and then, in the face of this concession, to claim that these marvelous works pointed to by this "wonder-worker," as proof that he was the Messiah, were not veritable transactions, but only mythical fabrications, is an incoherency devoid of all sound reason.

To further illustrate beyond reasonable controversy that Jesus was the Christ of prophecy, whose divinity of mission was to speak as never man spoke, to do that which no man can do except God be with him, and to knowingly and willingly die for the salvation of our race, will be the aim of the following chapters.

CHAPTER XX.

CHRIST'S TEACHING.

(I) What?—(II) Why?—(III) How?—His plainness of speech; moral heroism; independence; sympathy.

IF we would clearly discover Christ's divinity of character and mission, as indicated in his teaching, we must seek an answer to the following questions:

SECTION (I).

What did Jesus teach?

Not "everything in general and nothing in particular." His was not an aimless and pointless dis-

sertation, but rather a fixed and definite purpose. And this fixedness of purpose was far beyond and above that of teaching history, biography, art, science, and literature. If Christ was a divinity in wisdom, and if a knowledge of these things tends largely to the civilization of our race, and since the themes of history, biography, art, science, and literature have claimed the earnest attention of the wisest and best of men of all ages, why, it may be asked, did not Jesus pause and at least give a key to them? The answer presents him in his superhuman character.

Had he taught those things, however perfectly, which men can discover and successfully teach, then in the selection of his themes he would have given no exhibition of his marvelous wisdom. But leaving those subjects which come within the scope of human understanding, and ascending to a region of thought beyond and above finite reach, and taking hold of those sublimer themes of *God*, *duty*, and *destiny*, with which the world's wisdom had grappled for four thousand years only to make darkness more visible and confusion worse confounded, and so explaining and amplifying them that the accumulated scholarship of near two thousand years has not been able to add one solitary new thought—he gives the world a grand exhibition of his superhuman wisdom. If the infinite thought can only be observed where the finite has shown itself utterly inadequate to the task, if “man's extremity is God's opportunity,”

then may the supernatural in Christ be seen in the choice of his themes and the clearness and absolute perfection of their presentation.

Moreover, as neither natural nor metaphysical science was taught by Christ, either in whole or even in part, it would seem that the divine teacher anticipated the compass of man's thought, and left him to teach all that he was capable of teaching. Thus, knowing that the science of astronomy, which has done so much by way of revealing the infinite wisdom and power of God, might be taught by such men as Newton and La Place, who, without inspiration, can measure the distance to the stars, count their numbers and give them titles, as the husbandman can number his flocks and call their names, he left the work to them.

Measuring finite capacity, he knew that the science of geology, the discovery and teaching of which has so clearly revealed God's wisdom and benevolent painstaking in fitting up the world for man's occupancy, might be discovered and taught by such men as Hitchcock, Hugh Miller, and Charles Lyell, who, claiming no inspiration save that which God gives to every honest seeker after truth, have brought to light the "Footprints of the Creator," and shown his infinite storehouse of benevolent design to the children of his care.

Chemistry, a science which demonstrates the unity of the universe and the consequent unity of God, was well left by the great Teacher to such men

as Priestley, Liebig, and Faraday, who can tell us not only the number and quality of the elements of which our earth is composed, but even those of which the sun is made.

The same might be said of all the natural sciences, and the metaphysical as well. Mathematics, which is purely ideal and hence purely metaphysical, and which lies at the very foundation of all exact knowledge, was wisely left to the hands of such a man as Isaac Newton, who could calculate the distances of heavenly bodies, and give their orbits, size, and the period of their revolutions.

So with the fine arts,—poetry, music, painting, sculpture, and the like,—the Great Teacher, with the same wisdom, left the world to be taught them and to be gratified with their products, by the great men the renown of whose genius now fills the annals of the world.

In short, Christ, taking in the full measure of man's capacity, left him to teach all that he was capable of teaching, and planned that divinity should begin where the limitations of humanity compel man to leave off.

In the light of history we aver that the world, with all its ability to acquire wisdom, had proven itself utterly incapable of knowing *God and the duty and destiny* of man. These are the themes, and the *only* themes, that claimed the attention of Christ during his earthly ministry. Study his three years of public teaching and you will observe that in it all

there is not a truth that he ever uttered that may not be properly classed under one of the three heads of *Deity, Duty, Destiny*. In the selection of these themes of discourse, Jesus chose such only as were indispensable to the highest welfare of man and the highest form of civilization. That a people's ignorance of these three subjects is the measure of their degradation, is a fact patent upon every page of history. If you would know, with almost mathematical exactness, the degree of civilization to which a race of people has attained, you have only to ascertain the views which are entertained touching the character and requirements of God, and the relationship and consequent duties of man. This fact of history being conceded, and certainly none are so skeptical as to deny it, with the further fact that the world's wisdom had failed to comprehend these three themes, which is equally obvious, and we have a strong argument, *a priori*, in favor of divine interposition. That Divinity did interpose may be further discovered in truthfully answering the second question :

SECTION (II).

Why did Jesus teach ?

The absolute necessity of some superhuman utterance upon these three themes of *God, duty, and destiny*, may be clearly seen in the fact that the world's wisdom was drifting farther and farther

from the exalted and exalting conception of one infinitely supreme Being of absolute holiness of character, who is the Father of all people, and who requires filial obedience to that one law which comprehends all law, viz., that of "love to God and love to mankind." The man who does not know that strict obedience to this one law of "love to God and love to man" will lead into the path of all duty, make life's labor a joy, and bring the soul into blissful harmony with itself, and with God's universe besides, is an utter stranger to man's possible and richest experience.

A mere glance at the moral and religious condition of the world at the time Christ began his ministry will convince any candid reader that the world, with all its wisdom, was utterly ignorant of the sublimity, joy, and elevating influence of a law the first requirement of which was that universal man should learn to love the Supreme Excellence. Nor need we study long the words of the Divine Teacher without discovering that the great burden of his theme was the "fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." Christ's "sermon on the mount" was an epitome of all that he taught; and it is worthy of observation that in this sermon alone there is truth enough, touching men's relationship to God as their Father and mankind as their brethren, and the obligations that are imposed because of these sacred relationships, to civilize our race and save our world, though all else of moral and relig-

ious truth were sunk to the depths of the sea. In that sermon, as well as in the life and spirit of its divine Author, God's fatherly providence is clearly set forth as extending to all upon whom "he maketh his sun to rise" and to whom he "sendeth rain." This doctrine of the universal fatherhood of God flashed upon the world as light from out of the darkness, and was as foreign to Jewish bigotry as it was to Gentile selfishness. For at least four thousand years humanity had gone about with its feeble taper surrounded by palpable darkness. Each nation, tribe, or clique regarded itself as under special providential care, while all others were at best but fatherless children. This divine representation of God as universal Father was as new to the world as it is now known to be indispensable to the unification of all peoples and the highest good of mankind.

In answer to the question "Why did Jesus teach?" we summarize thus:

First. The world was ignorant of the true moral attributes of God. Human wisdom, at best, had only attained to a partial knowledge of a one-sided Deity.

Outside of the Jewish nation, if a medal had been struck representing the world's best conception of God, on the one side there would have been engraved the words "Omnipotence, Omniscience, Omnipresence;" on the other side, "Wrath, Revenge, Caprice." Even the Jews had no conception of the absolute fatherhood of God. In their minds, they

were his only children. In the divine plan of saving the race, it would seem that the Jewish nation and the Old Testament had filled their mission when, in the providence of God, they had fully established the foundation truth of "One God," while the revelation of the fatherly character of that Infinite One was deferred to Christ and the New Testament. In the Divine Teacher's unmistakable words, purity of life, and loveliness of spirit, we behold the fatherly character of God, and we are ready to exclaim, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever."

Secondly. The world was equally ignorant of the true religion. Regarding the "Omnipotent and Omniscient" as wrathful, revengeful, and capricious, they sought to appease his wrath, subdue his revenge, and turn his caprice to selfish advantage, by self-torture, or by making the most costly sacrifices, even that of a child, upon the altar of their devotion. The blessed mission of Jesus was to roll from the shoulders of the world this intolerable burden of worship, and give to our humanity a religion in which the only acceptable sacrifice is a *grateful and contrite heart*. Christ's religion is not merely an outward life, much less is it a theory of the head; but it is nothing less, as it need be nothing more, than the spirit of the heavenly Father dwelling in the soul, and formulating itself in the life. The religion of Christ, unlike any other religion of the world, seeks

to purify the heart, "out of which are the issues of life," by the incoming spirit of love, that from this purified fountain there might flow knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, and charity.

Thirdly. Nor did the world's knowledge comprehend a system of moral science such as was adapted to the nature of the soul, and such as would be most helpful to mankind. Failing to recognize God as a being of love,—emphatically Love as he is emphatically God,—and hence as possessed of a fatherly regard for all his intelligent creatures, they of necessity had no conception of filial obligations. And having no knowledge of the Father's benevolent regard for his children, it was not possible, in the nature of things, for them to comprehend the relationship of mankind, and the obligations thus imposed.

Even if it be claimed that human philosophy before the time of Christ had suggested the "golden rule," it should be observed that it was only suggested as a law of expediency, and in a negative form, enjoining merely to refrain from harm, and not as a spontaneity of positive good flowing from a heart of love to God and man. While human philosophy, at best, only legislated for the overt act, Christ went to the root of all evil as well as of all good, to correct the motive by inspiring the soul with such faith in God and man as would induce the incoming spirit of love, whose benevolent outgoings

would unbiddingly observe the divine injunction, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them."

With the view of protecting man in his natural rights, the world's best wisdom has used only such instrumentalities as were at its command, and hence of necessity worked at the wrong end of human actions. It was humanly impossible to enter the inner courts of the soul and legislate for the motives of human action, and much less to import into the heart the spirit of "love, which worketh no ill to his neighbour." Christ's divinity of teaching is seen in the fact that, ignoring the human effort to cleanse the streams of human life, he sought only to purify the fountain. Having thus divinely entered the inner courts of the soul to legislate for its outgoing life, the benevolent results are as wide-spread as is our Christian civilization. The "Christian Commissions," "Christian Aid Societies," "Homes for Fatherless Children," the organization of "Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals" and "Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children," "Free Christian Kindergartens," the elevation of women to equality with men, in short, all the public and private beneficences of civilization, are but the outgrowth of this divine implantation.

Reason, looking at history as it is, cannot fail to clearly mark the distinction between the ethics and religion taught by Christ and those of all other systems, as being an absolute distinction of *kind*,

and not one merely of *degree*. Man's kinship to God, as taught by Jesus, is strongly suggestive of the soul's heirship to immortality. But as the Saviour's teaching on this sublime theme is set forth in our book entitled "Heavenly Recognition," nothing need be said in this connection as to the fact that he "brought life and immortality to light in the gospel."

Christ's superhuman wisdom as a teacher will be further illustrated in answering the third question.

SECTION (III).

How did Jesus teach?

Christ's methods of instruction were as peculiarly his own, and as marvelous in themselves, as were his themes of discourse and the absolute perfectness of their presentation. As he made choice of only such subjects as history shows to have been beyond human grasp, and so explained them as that the light of the ages has reflected no new luster, so did he make choice of such modes of enlightenment as man could not attain to, much less improve upon. His was a plainness of speech without a precedent and a boldness of utterance unequalled. Without the slightest ostentation, he was entirely independent of education, books, teachers, and favorable circumstances. He was not a mirror reflecting the accumulated light of preceding ages, nor did he, like "coming events," merely "cast a shadow before" him, but his teaching flashed upon the world

as a full-orbed sun, whose moral and religious light was destined to dispel the darkness that had settled down upon our benighted race. Let us illustrate this thought.

(a) *Christ's Plainness of Speech.*

Though speaking in one of the oriental tongues, which usually abound in florid figures and hyperboles, such was the analogy between his beautiful and numerous parables and the spiritual truths which they were designed to inculcate, that we, with all our cold, western matter-of-fact style of speech, find no difficulties in understanding the moral and religious truths, which, with the view of transporting them to all people and handing them down to the remotest ages, were clothed in allegory such as human speech has never equaled. For example, Jesus desiring to illustrate the arrogant spirit in which men stray away from God,—the inevitable disaster that such a course will bring upon the impenitent, the disposition with which men must return to the Father's house, and the unspeakably joyous reception that they may expect on their happy return—institutes the parable of the prodigal son, the analogy of which is complete throughout.

To convince the bigoted Jew that his mission to earth was to save penitent sinners, of whatever nationality, and that the event of saving one sinner would fill all heaven with joy, he presents the impressive picture of the "lost sheep."

Desiring to illustrate to all peoples and to all times the rich and boundless provisions which the Father has made to satisfy the necessities and aspirations of every human soul, the messengers whom he has sent abroad, charged with the duty of inviting each and all, the careless and sinful indifference with which many men treat God's fatherly invitations of grace, and the fearful destruction that inevitably awaits the finally impenitent, Christ institutes that perfectly analogous parable of the "marriage of the king's son."

Standing in the midst of his timid disciples, who were on the eve of making an inglorious retreat, and looking into the very face of a most horrible death, Jesus, with his prophetic vision, looks through the darkness and down through the ages, and beholds the time when his righteousness should fill the earth, and his kingdom would stretch from ocean to ocean. To illustrate this coming glory of his Church, much of which we have lived to see, Jesus, knowing the end from the beginning, institutes the parable of the mustard-seed, and that of the leaven which ceased not its transforming power until "the whole was leavened." The above will suffice to illustrate his plainness of speech.

Who can read any of those beautiful parables with a teachable spirit, and then placard his stupidity by professing to be ignorant as to the spiritual truths which they are designed to present?

It may be observed, however, that the divine wis-

dom of Jesus in this method of speech may be seen in that his choice of a parable selected that which is as perfectly analogous to the thing set forth as is possible between natural facts and spiritual truth.

(b) *Christ's Moral Heroism.*

With gentleness and love, he delivered his message in a manner characteristic of either a madman or a Divinity. Who can read the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, in which is recorded the dreadful woes which Christ pronounced against that multitude of hypocritical Jews, and take in the historic facts with which he was surrounded, and not witness in him a spirit of moral heroism, such as is marvelously incomparable with that of other great teachers? Cassius M. Clay belongs to a class of moral heroes of which the world has produced but few. With a courage undaunted he would mount the rostrum, and, with the Bible on the one hand and a pistol on the other, would hurl his denunciations at the vile institution of slavery, regardless of the threats of the slave-oligarchy. But this fearless spirit was kept alive by the fact that he knew that, besides thousands of friends in the South, the mighty public pulse of the North was beating in unison with his great heart of human sympathy. But when Christ was hurling his anathemas at the hypocritical "scribes and Phari-

sees" he had no available friends among the Jews, nor the slightest sympathy from the Gentile world.

It is doubtful, however, if mortal man has ever been able to read those fearful denunciations with the tone and spirit in which the Divine Teacher uttered them. While they were doubtless spoken with undaunted firmness, that his great heart of love was overflowing with sympathy is made apparent in his closing words of lamentation over the fate of Jerusalem.

But to be convinced that he was either a madman or a Divinity, we need only to take the account of his visit to Jerusalem a stranger at the first passover after entering on his public mission, when, on entering the great Temple, he found the wealthy and influential of the city engaged in commercial speculation on the sacred ground.

The simple recital, as given in the Revised Version, is this: "And he found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: and he made a scourge of cords, and cast all out of the temple, both the sheep and the oxen; and he poured out the changers' money, and overthrew their tables; and to them that sold the doves he said, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house a house of merchandise" (John ii: 14-16).

In the common version the fifteenth verse reads, "He drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen." The skepticism which seeks

to reflect upon the moral character of Jesus has seized upon the older version and interpreted it to mean that he, violently and unlawfully, with his scourge of small cords, drove all the tradesmen out of the temple; and some declare that he should have been arrested as violating the peace, found guilty of assault, and punished accordingly.

Now, in regard to this we have to say: First. This is characteristic of much of the skeptical criticism—not to meet the Scriptures on fair ground and in their obvious sense, but to misconstrue or seize on somebody else's misconception, and then aim their shafts at the misconception.

Secondly. Even if it could be shown that the scourge was used in driving out the men, it would not reflect upon the moral character of Jesus unless it is claimed that he was acting on his own authority, merely as a man, and not on divine authority. To claim the former is to "beg the question" at issue; but if he was acting from superhuman authority and wisdom, as he claimed to be, inasmuch as the men were polluting the temple of his Father, no one can dispute his right to adopt his own method of ridding it of the pollution.

But the scourge was used only in driving out "both the sheep and the oxen." And there is no indication that, even in this, it was used with any severity, but only as would be usual in accomplishing the end of getting them out of the temple.

But, in any case, it was an extraordinary assump-

tion of authority. Was it an unwarranted assumption? The skeptic says it was. He must say this if he would reflect at all upon the character of Jesus. But hereby, in his blind zeal, he confronts himself with two questions, the answer to either of which will prove the truth of the proposition he seeks to deny.

First. By what power did Jesus do these things? Certainly, no one can in reason believe that a stranger, from the despised country of Galilee, coming to the renowned city of Jerusalem, could enter the magnificent temple, and, single-handed and alone, with no weapons but the scourge of small cords made by himself, be successful in pitting himself against the "board of trade," backed by the authority of the temple and the city besides. The facts carry with them the belief that Jesus was superhuman.

Second. Why was he not arrested and punished? It is not to be supposed that Jesus, as merely a man, in defiance of law, could have done these things without paying the penalty of his offense. The only explanation is, that all parties were convinced of the justice and righteousness of his acts, and overawed and made powerless against him by the evident divinity manifest in his bearing, words, and authority.

Similarly, on a subsequent occasion, when the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to take him. The officers went; but after listening for a while to his wonderful words as he taught the people, and to his

declarations of what he came to do for man, they returned without him. To the question, "Why have ye not brought him?" they only answered, "Never man spake like this man."

But the special point to be noted in this occurrence is the Moral Heroism exhibited. Jesus, as we have said, was from the unpopular country of Galilee, and from the despised city of Nazareth. He had but recently entered on his mission, having but a few months before been baptized. As yet he had made almost no disciples. He was without friends, and the farthest from having any prestige in his favor. On the other hand, the men whom he encountered were men of business, doubtless men of wealth—changers of money (brokers), and dealers in animals used in temple worship. They had money and influence to sustain them; they were supported by the political authority, and at least winked at by the priesthood of the temple. But even at this disadvantage, Jesus was more than a match for them all. The sheep and oxen went out at his word and the motion of his scourge. He told the money-changers and dove-sellers to "take these things hence;" and they did it, and said nothing of redress. They recognized the divinity of his authority when he said, "Make not *My Father's* house a house of merchandise."

(c) Christ's Independence.

This is another characteristic which illustrates the divine wisdom of Christ in his teaching. The criticism of the modern skepticism,—at least so far as its intelligence and moral character entitle it to respect,—in denying the superhuman character of Jesus, grants that he was really a great and extraordinary man. In the face of the living fact that he has turned the thinking world upside down in morals and philosophy, it would be suicidal to common-sense to deny his superior greatness as a teacher. But to concede this is a long stride in the direction of conceding that his wisdom was of a miraculous character.

This thought will be illustrated by instituting a comparison between Jesus and other great masters in the field of thought. Looking back over the generations of the dead, we observe that most great teachers owe their greatness to the libraries to which they had access. But for books, they had not been known in the literary world. We do not find, however, that Jesus ever read any book but the Scriptures. Certainly he was not learned, even according to the standard of his time. We are told that when Jesus went up into the temple and taught, “the Jews marveled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” To this Jesus replied, “My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me”

(John vii : 15, 16), thus declaring his entire independence of all "book-knowledge."

Nor did he obtain his wisdom from *oral* instruction. In olden times, when books were scarce, public teachers were highly prized for their instruction given in conversation or lectures. At the birth of Alexander the Great, Philip, his father, gave vent to his emotion in saying, "I bless the gods, not that I have a son born, but that I have an Aristotle to educate him." Alcibiades, Crito, Xenophon, Euclid, and Plato came to be great teachers because they were trained under the skillful hand of Socrates, of whom Plato says: "When I heard Pericles, or any other orator, I was entertained and delighted, and I felt that he had spoken well; but no mortal speech has ever excited in my mind such emotions as are kindled by this magician. Whenever I hear him, I am, as it were, charmed and fettered. My heart leaps like an inspired Corybant. My inmost soul is stung by his words as by the bite of a serpent,—it is indignant at its rude and ignoble character. I often weep tears of regret, and think how vain and inglorious is the life I lead. Nor am I the only one that weeps like a child and despairs of himself;—many others are affected in the same way." Having himself been taught in the philosophical schools of Greece, which largely embodied the accumulated wisdom of the world, Socrates became "mighty in word," and his followers had the benefit of it.

But Jesus was without human teachers. Unlike Paul, he was not "brought up at the feet of Gamaliel." That the world might have nothing to boast, he was but a young man, who, in the providence of God, had been raised in the humble home of a carpenter in a small country town of Galilee. Coming to Jerusalem, the center of refinement and culture, though he was without fame, books, or teachers, he nevertheless was destined to revolutionize the world of thought, morals, and religion.

Nor did his greatness as a teacher in any wise depend on the contingencies of his life. If it may be said of man that he is a "creature of circumstances," the fact may be emphasized that Jesus was emphatically the "architect of his own fortune," since he was in no wise dependent on any advantage that the world had to offer.

Some author has said, in substance, that all great men are great because of one of two things, viz., either, first, because they are a beautiful combination of the knowledge of their times, or, second, because they are a bright anticipation of some one great truth. If we reflect upon the characters who have figured largely in the world's history, we shall invariably observe that they belong to one or the other of these two classes. Washington's greatness is not to be found in the fact that he excelled in any one thing. He anticipated no new thought in science, projected no new theory of political economy, nor did he even excel as a military chieftain. While

he was respectable in all these departments of science, statesmanship, and the art of war, his true greatness is to be found in the fact that he was the very incarnation of the "spirit of seventy-six"; he was the embodiment of popular sentiment. Of him it may be said as of thousands of other great men, that he was great because he was respectable in everything, remarkable in nothing.

Others are, and have been, great because they have cultivated a native genius for some special work or discovery. The fame of Copernicus is not to be traced to the fact that he was a "beautiful combination of the knowledge of his times," but rather that he was a "bright anticipation of a new thought." While the oriental system of astrology had laid the foundation of the science of the stars, it was left for Copernicus to anticipate the conclusion of the whole matter. It was his to overturn the Ptolemaic theory, and forever establish the true system of astronomy. Franklin, who snatched from the clouds the electric current, and Morse, who made it an instrumentality of incalculable good, are famous among great men for the reason that they took up on a single line of thought, and went out in advance of their age. Thus thousands have become great in history by discovering to the world a genius for anticipating some great truth, or fact of science. But while we can think of no great man who has not been great because of one of these two reasons, the truth which we desire to empha-

size is that *Jesus was great because of neither of them.*

First, it cannot be said that he was great because he was the incarnation of popular thought. So far from being the embodiment of the prevailing sentiments of the Jews, he antagonized them at almost every point. Much less did his teaching harmonize with the popular sentiment of the Gentile world. Surely it cannot be said that Jesus was great because he was a "beautiful combination of the knowledge of his times."

Nor can it, secondly, be claimed that he was famous because he was a "bright anticipation of some one great truth." As this may be regarded as a question of more or less, it is well to observe that men who have become famous by anticipating their times in the discovery of truth, have not been able to go more than about fifty years in advance of their times. Though Galileo, who first advanced the theory of the earth's revolution around the sun, was condemned for heresy and compelled to sign a bill of recantation, yet in less than fifty years he was canonized for his discovery. Socrates, who had the moral heroism to march in the vanguard of philosophic truth, for which he was compelled to drink the hemlock, had monuments to his memory all over Greece in less than a half-century. Moreover, you will observe that men of inventive conception have been permitted, in the providence of God, to go a little in advance, only to be superseded by

their successors. Franklin could chain the lightning, but "afterward had no more that he could do." After having made the electric fluid serve a single purpose, to Professor Morse it was providentially said, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." In the entire history of this class of famous men we observe that one discovers a new truth a little in advance, only to be overtaken in a little while by the plodding world, and then to be superseded by one with a native genius for new discovery. The thread of mysterious truth has been and is now being unraveled little by little, and from generation to generation.

But not so with Him who spoke as man never spoke. As he was not famous because of his respectability in the various fields of popular thought, neither was he great in the fact that he anticipated truth by fifty years, to be supplemented by the new discoveries of those who should come after him. More than eighteen centuries ago the sun of righteousness shed forth his beams of light upon a benighted world; and during all these epochs, among the famous teachers, sages, profound philosophers, and great reformers of the world, no one has arisen to reflect any new truth upon Christ's anticipated themes of "*God, and man's duty and destiny.*" These mighty and far-reaching subjects, still undiscovered by the world's wisdom of four thousand years, were so perfectly revealed by the Divine Teacher, that now, at the end of these ages of accumulated intel-

ligence, the wisest and best men of the civilized world behold him, who is in view of all and above all, beckoning them on and still on in unfolding the great truth, still wrapped up in the boundless meaning of those superhuman words, which are "like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

(d) *Christ's Sympathy.*

His tender compassion for humanity was not comparable even with man's best sympathy for man, but rather to that of a father. John Bunyan, who was "committed to Bedford jail, where he spent twelve years of his life, supporting the wants of his wife and children by making tagged laces, and ministering to all posterity by writing 'Pilgrim's Progress,'" was visited, while in this prison, by his family. And when one after another of the strong ones had taken an affectionate leave of their devoted father, last of all came that poor, pale, blind, and sick little one, who with childish attachment said, reaching out its tiny hand, "Farewell, father." To whom, we ask, did the heart of this great man turn most? Not to those strong ones who were capable of taking care of themselves, but rather, with the certainty of a father's love, it went out in deepest sympathy for that "poor, pale, blind, and sick little one." Nor could he permit that helpless child to leave his gloomy prison until he had laid his hand upon its head and devoutly invoked God's fatherly protection. Though the love of a hus-

band and father went out toward the family, for whom in the dismal jail he toiled incessantly, yet mingled with that fatherly affection there was pity, sympathy, and deepest solicitude for that impotent one.

“They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick,” said He whose sympathy for the race was incomparable with that of any teacher the world ever saw. “I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,” was an expression of pity and deepest solicitude such as the world’s cold charity had never been able to give.

CHAPTER XXI.

CHRIST'S SUPERNATURAL POWER.

Christ's Miracles the basis of Christian faith.—(I) Definition.—(II) Antecedent Probability: God's benevolence; Man's free will; Human sin; Divine interposition; heaven-sent Messenger; proofs of his mission.—Objections to miracles; God's immutability; insufficiency of human testimony.—External and internal evidences.

ORTHODOX and heterodox, Christian and infidel, alike regard the claim of Christ to supernatural—that is, miraculous—power as the foundation of the Christian faith. It behooves us, therefore, to examine this with diligence. We should understand distinctly what is meant by the term “miracle;”

carefully examine into the antecedent probabilities of a miracle ; be able squarely to meet any objections that may have been offered to the credibility of a miracle ; and especially examine most minutely the evidences, both external and internal, bearing upon the question whether or not Christ ever wrought a miracle.

SECTION (I).

Definition.

A miracle is the doing of something out of the ordinary course of events. It is simply the introduction of a new method, and not the violation of existing laws. For example: While the legislators of the State may suspend the operation of a statute by the passage of a new law, it cannot be said that in this they have violated any previous enactment. They have the right, by virtue of the authority vested in them, to make law and suspend law, when in their judgment it will be in the interest of the State. So, likewise, a miracle is not the violation of the laws of the universe, but only the introduction of a new method which suspends, for the time being, the operation of previous laws, or of a new combination which produces new results. It is certainly the right of the Supreme Governor so to exercise his power in his natural or spiritual kingdom, whenever in his wisdom he sees that it will best subserve the interest of mankind or promote his own glory.

SECTION (II).

Antecedent Probability of Miracles.

From the foregoing definition of "miracles" it must be obvious that God is at perfect liberty to suspend the operation of any existing law by the introduction of another, if in his infinite wisdom he sees that it will better promote the end for which laws exist, and be more conducive to the well-being of mankind. The Almighty is not barred by inability, nor hindered by opposing forces, from doing things as his wisdom and goodness may dictate. If, therefore, it can be shown, or even made to appear probable, that at any time the object of the divine government would be better accomplished and his benevolent design toward man better served in the suspension of ordinary laws, by the introduction of a new method, it is both reasonable and probable that he would do it—that is, that he would work a miracle. This leads to the following observations:

It is assumed that (1) *God has a benevolent regard for man.* This is his nature as a God of Love. It is a fact obvious to any person who has any appreciation of the manifestations of good-will. If we are allowed to judge from God's providential painstaking in man's behalf, we are led to conclude that his solicitude for man's well-being is vastly greater than that towards any other being on the earth. The inexhaustible treasures which have been hid

away in the various rich mines of our world, and which man has just come to develop and enjoy, speak trumpet-tongued of the benevolence of Him who has made these loving provisions for the coming of his earthly children. Besides, his continued providences are but a running exhibition of his love and paternal regard for man. That our world has been constructed and is controlled with a benevolent design toward our race, is a fact which none but the stoically hard heart will fail to recognize.

(2) *God's benevolence led to the freedom of man.* The world having been fitted up for man, he was given possession in fee-simple to occupy it in the councils of his own *free-will*. God's paternal wisdom and love introduced his children into the home which he fitted up for them, not as slaves of fatality, but to be morally free as to the course they would pursue. Even the love of an earthly father would secure to his son the utmost freedom of will, and only propose to influence him through the persuasions of reason. Only by voluntary obedience would it be possible for the son to challenge the love and commendation of his father. We cannot suppose that God would be less benevolent towards his children—making them slaves of fate, and thus rendering it impossible for them to offer to him a voluntary tribute of love and obedience, and to receive in turn his fatherly benediction.

We are aware that there is a system of theology which seeks to show that man is under the fatality

of "*foreordination* and *decree*." But even though the metaphysical arguments going to sustain this doctrine were unanswerable, yet the facts of *experience* convince every one that he is a free man, with the feelings of self-condemnation whenever he violates his sense of right—a bitter experience, which could not follow were he not consciously free. No psycho-theological speculation can in any wise stand against man's experimental knowledge. Every man knows for himself that he is morally free; and only for this conscious freedom does he condemn himself for doing that which his better judgment decides to be wrong. Whatever else, therefore, we may doubt, or however much we may differ, we must all agree, from the evidence of our observation and experience, that God has ever had a loving regard for man in that he has made him free "to choose his life and what he'll be."

(3) *In the exercise of this freedom of will man had gone into hopeless error and sin.*

To be assured of the truth of this proposition we need only to consult the record of mankind. The history of all nations and all religions shows only too plainly that the world had drifted away from the thought of God, which is fundamental to all science and is the foundation of all true religion. And having lost not only the moral image of God, but even the knowledge of the unity of his personal existence, it was morally impossible for man to understand the sacred relation he sustained to his Creator, and the

obligations he was under to give him a grateful heart and a faithful life. And though, from the religious instincts of his nature, he might infer that he was designed for eternity, yet, having lost the knowledge of his heavenly paternity, his destiny was but a dark mystery. Left with the native disposition to worship, man was left blindly to feel after God. This brought to his imagination "lords many and gods many." To these he offered his devotions, not of love and fidelity, but of the most costly sacrifices, sometimes even the son of his love. Failing to comprehend the fatherhood of God, he was equally ignorant of the brotherhood of man. This ignorance led to the establishment of a system of morals which maintained that might made right, and that the individual had no rights which others were bound to respect, only so far as would subserve the ends of selfishness. Hence the early history of mankind was little less than a history of war and bloodshed. The few who had struggled up to a higher plane of morals were only sufficient to illustrate the soul's possibilities, and the depths of degradation into which the world had fallen. While the unnumbered temples were crowded with the wicked deities of a blind superstition to whom men paid their devotions, the millions of earth were sinking into a degradation which baffles all description. This was the wretched condition of mankind when the plan of saving the race began to be executed.

If, as we have assumed and shown, God regards

man's well-being with the solicitude of a father, would it be possible for him to contemplate the wretched condition into which the world had fallen, without coming to the rescue of his helpless children? For the antecedent probability of such divine interposition is greatly increased by the fact that, in the absence of such aid, man was absolutely helpless and hopeless. All history shows that he was sinking deeper and deeper into the pit of hopeless despair. Instead of coming back to the thought of God, the world, with its increase of wisdom, was drifting farther and farther into polytheism and idolatry. While the burden of their religion was becoming more and more intolerable to the priceless legacy of human relationships and consequent human duty, the world was becoming more and more alien. If feeble tapers of light were occasionally known to shoot up from the dark horizon, it was only sufficient to illustrate the soul's struggles to come into its native light, to drop back again to the blackness of palpable night. Three thousand years of increasing polytheism and consequent degradation were sufficient to settle the fact, once and forever, not only that the "world by wisdom knew not God," but, more and worse, that the world by wisdom would never find out God.

(4) From the foregoing we are naturally led to suppose that *God would interpose in man's behalf.*

Can we believe that an Almighty Father, whose paternal regard had done so much for his children,

would abandon them because of the mishaps of their "free-will," while it was still possible that at least a remnant might be saved? If then it be antecedently probable, from these *à-priori* suggestions, that God would interpose in man's behalf, it is certainly not unreasonable to suppose that,

(5) *Such help might come through personal agency.* Indeed, if heaven is to interpose, it would seem most reasonable that a heaven-sent messenger should bear the "good tidings." Suppose that man, because of sin, had become so morally blind that he was incapable of learning the character and will of God from the things that were made,—and from the Providential blessings which were daily bestowed,—and suppose, further, that it would not only promote the glory of their Creator, but be of infinite importance to mankind that they come into possession of a knowledge of God, of human duty and destiny—can we imagine a plan of communication so directly effective as that of dispatching a messenger charged with the duty of bearing a message from heaven to earth, and speaking "face to face" with man? And when the plan of elevating and saving our race is made known through the instrumentality of one divinely appointed messenger, would it not be taken up by another, and another, until the ears of all who dwell on the face of the earth had heard "the glad tidings of great joy"?

In the light of reason, this method of communicating saving truth seems to be not only the best

way, but, if man be a free agent, the only possible way, unless we suppose that God should come to each individual and by a direct miracle convince him of the truth. But God's providential economy, as everywhere displayed, would seem to preclude the possibility of such a course. We conclude, therefore, that God will come to the rescue of a lost race, and come in the person of a heaven-sent messenger.

(6) This leads us to inquire, *How shall such messenger prove the divinity of his mission?*

To this question we unhesitatingly reply, Only by the testimony of him by whom he was commissioned and sent. That is, he must prove the divinity of his mission by doing those things which belong only to God. It is not in the province of reason to conceive of any other testimony as being sufficient to establish, beyond doubt or cavil, a claim to divinity of authority, speech, and character. If one were to come before the public claiming to have a message directly from God, and to be divinely appointed to be the "way, the truth, and the life," however true his claim might be, the mere fact of his saying so would not convince any one of thoughtful mind. Any impostor could say the same. History presents us with many who have claimed to have a message from God, who were only deceivers, fanatically deceived. But if, along with such claim, he came doing such things as belong only to God, then he would not only have a right to a respectful hearing, but he

would carry conviction as to the truth of his claim. True, the subjective testimony of experience might subsequently be brought in unimpeachably corroborating the truth and divinity of such message.

But, in the nature of things, such testimony would not be given unless preceded by objective proof. A man might claim that he had been commissioned of God to bring a message to man, and declare as proof that his message is a perfect counterpart of the soul's nature, and hence would meet its every necessity. All this might be so; and the soul's experience might subsequently prove it to be so. Thus this subjective test might fix the truth of the claim as firm as adamant. But who would be induced to submit the claim to any such experimental test without previously having had objective testimony to its truth? Such a course would be to reverse the natural order of thinking. Before the mind can arrive at any truth, the senses must be appealed to. Sensation first, afterward reflection and experience. If, therefore, an individual pretends to have a message directly from God, he must verify such pretension by doing such things as belong only to God.

Nor is it enough to do marvelous things which may be referred to natural causes. A man might predict an eclipse of the sun at a given time, and the fulfillment of the prediction might lead the ignorant to regard him as having supernatural wisdom; but the more intelligent would know that the prophecy was founded on natural causes. But if he were to

cause darkness at noonday, and do it repeatedly without failure, his claim to supernatural power would be established.

The foregoing observations may be summed up thus: If, as has been shown, God is controlling the world with a benevolent design toward mankind;

If, in the councils of his wisdom and love, he has bestowed upon man the legacy of "free-will;"

If man, in the exercise of this "free-will," has gone into hopeless error and sin;

If the hopeless and helpless condition into which man has plunged himself called loudly for divine interposition;

If it is reasonable to suppose that such divine interposition could be most naturally and effectually made through the instrumentality of a heaven-sent messenger;

And if the only method by which such messenger could establish his claim to divinity of mission was to call God to witness, by doing such things as belong only to the Divine Power,—

In the light of these suppositions, we submit the question if miracles be not "antecedently probable;" nay, more, if they were not demanded, at the hand of a merciful Father?

OBJECTIONS.

But just at this point our argument is met with an objection which some have regarded as insuperable, namely, *that miracles are antecedently incredible.*

Hume, the celebrated English historian and philosopher, has offered two reasons for regarding miracles as being incredible: namely, first, that God's *immutability* renders it impossible for him to work a miracle; and, secondly, even if this were possible, that human testimony is not sufficient to prove such a marvelous transaction. Though the sophistries of these propositions which once crazed the heads of all Europe have been a thousand times fully exposed, yet we deem it important, in this connection, to offer the following suggestions in reply to them.

As Dr. Palfrey has clearly shown, God's immutability has reference to a sublime *purpose*, and not to the methods by which that purpose is to be accomplished. It is not sound reason to suppose that, in establishing the general laws by which the universe was to be controlled, God has so hampered himself with the fatality of a fixed plan, or so bound himself to adopt no method outside of ordinary observation, that he could not change it though the exigency might so demand. Nor can it be said that the exigency would not arise. It has been claimed that as God's laws were established in the councils of his own wisdom, they are not subject to change or modification. But it must be clearly seen that this proposition entirely ignores the fact of man's "free-will." Not the mistaken councils of God, but rather the miscarriages of man, have caused the exigency to arise which seems to demand a change or modification of the divine method in order that the immu-

table purpose of "good-will to men" be accomplished. This leads us to inquire :

Why is our world controlled by a fixed and uniform method? It is not necessary to suppose that because the Infinite does things in a given uniform way, therefore there is no other method by which he could do those things. Even man is not shut up to any such fatality of operating. The same things, as we know, may be done in a variety of ways. Can we imagine that the Almighty can have less variety of method? The very supposition that God is infinite in his wisdom and power involves the conclusion that there are ways and means out of number by which he can control his material and spiritual kingdoms. In the presence of such infinite skill of contrivance and omnipotent strength to execute, reason has nothing to offer why the universe is operated by a uniform method, excepting that such uniformity is necessary for man's good.

Though reason must grant that the Almighty has the capacity to do things by this, that, or the other method, to-day in one way and to-morrow in another, yet such irregularity would render it utterly impossible for man to think, plan, or do. But for uniformity of methods in controlling the universe there could be no such thing as science, and hence no such thing as the proper development of man's thinking power. If the rays of the sun were light and hot to-day and dark and cold to-morrow, man would have no inducement to till the soil and thus meet

the demands of his nature. But for uniformity there could be no such thing as forecasting human plans and carrying forward the necessary enterprises of society. Man as he is, with his physical and mental organism, and the world as it is, controlled by fixed and changeless law, beautifully illustrate the wisdom and goodness of God in thus wisely adapting the one to the other. But imagine man as he is to have been sent to occupy a world which was controlled by no established order! We can readily see that humanity would have had no home, and the Being who sent him to such a world would have made an illustrious failure.

In another part of this work we have sought to show from the general make-up of our world, and the nature of man, that the one was obviously made for the other. The construction of our earth, together with all its available resources, is without any meaning, except as they are developed and utilized by man. If the fact not only that the earth is perfectly adapted to man, but that man is the only being who seems capable of utilizing its provisions, is to be accepted as evidence, then we are forced to the conclusion that all this divine painstaking was with no other view than that of making a home for man. Suppose, for example, that an earthly father were to possess himself of a tract of land, and proceed to fell the forest, construct fences, plant an orchard, build house and barn, and do such other things as would make it a complete homestead :

suppose, further, that, after all this was completed, the father were to send his son to be the sole proprietor and occupant of the farm : could we come to any other conclusion than that all that previous care was with special reference to the coming of that son? So when we contemplate this world with its wonderful provisions, so completely adapted to the nature and necessities of man, and remember that, after countless years of preparation, man was sent to possess, utilize, and have dominion over all, as the only being who could develop and enjoy its resources, we are forced to the conclusion that our world has been constructed and is controlled with a view to the occupancy of man. To suppose otherwise is a conclusion devoid of all sound reason.

The fact that this world was made for man, which we think has been satisfactorily shown, goes to emphasize the additional proposition, *that God has established a fixed order of governing and directing our world for no other reason than that thus he would best subserve the interests of his children.* And this granted, it remains only to be shown that a change of mode has been helpful to mankind, and we are brought to the conclusion that a miracle is not only antecedently credible, but absolutely demanded at the hand of a loving Father.

Having disposed of the first objection to miracles, founded on the immutability of God, we pass to consider the second objection, namely, *that if it were possible for God to work a miracle, yet human testi-*

mony is too weak for the task of proving it. We give this argument the benefit of an honest statement, by supposing, first, that as the human mind has been accustomed to observe that the affairs of Providence are controlled by a uniform method, it is naturally averse to believing a miracle; by supposing, secondly, that if the mind is forced to choose between two marvelous events, its natural aversion to a miracle will lead it to accept the one that is the least miraculous; by supposing, thirdly, that inasmuch as a miracle is contrary to observation, and we have often observed that human testimony, however honestly given, is sometimes false, we must conclude that, when such testimony is brought forward to establish a miracle, the mind is led to believe that the witness was mistaken, rather than believe that the miracle was a veritable transaction. Conceding that these suppositions, as logical steps, are well taken, we must nevertheless deny the conclusion. Grant that the human mind is naturally averse to believing a miracle, and that if forced to make a choice between two it will choose the one least marvelous; and grant, further, that a miracle is "contrary to observation," and that we have often known honest human testimony to be false; still it does not follow that the mind is inclined to "believe that the witness was mistaken, rather than believe that the miracle was a veritable transaction." Before we can reach such a conclusion we must assume two things, neither of which is admissible. The first is, that a miracle

is contrary not only to "observation," but to *universal* observation. (Hume has not used the word "universal," but he assumes it without using it; else his argument would be good for nothing. He doubtless saw that the use of such a term would be evidently to "beg the question.") We must suppose, secondly, that, when human testimony is brought forward to prove a miracle, the mind naturally concludes that the witness is mistaken, rather than that such a marvel is a verity. But such a supposition is a flat contradiction of history. The most that can be said in the light of historic truth, is that *some* minds (comparatively few) have been naturally led to believe that the witnesses were mistaken, rather than concede that the miracle did actually occur. And charity would offer an apology for these "some minds" on the ground that they have not, perhaps, carefully examined all the available objective testimony which goes to establish the truth of miracles, much less sought and obtained the subjective proof of such marvelous events. To decide, therefore, that a miracle is antecedently incredible "because of the weakness of human testimony," is a conclusion which involves two assumptions, the first of which "begs the question in dispute," and the other contradicts the facts of history. Believing that the objections to miracles are out of the way, we are prepared to resume the argument that miracles are not only "antecedently probable," but even "demanded at the hand of a loving Father."

SECTION (III).

Object of Christ's Miracles.

While the great purpose in the mind and mission of the Saviour was to do good to sinning and suffering humanity, the immediate object of his miracles was to attest the divinity of his character and teachings, that thereby men might be induced to accept the good he brought them. "Many other signs [things] truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John xx: 30, 31). Nor did Christ claim a hearing on any other ground than that of his supernatural power. While he knew that the value of his religion lay in its power to meet and answer the necessities of the human soul, and that it would thereby ultimately find the highest evidence of its divinity in the soul's rich experience, he knew equally well that such subjective test would not be made until he had appealed to the senses with objective facts which would challenge a hearing and convince the hearers of the divinity of his mission. When the first submarine cable was laid, all doubt as to the power of the electric current to transmit a message across the ocean was dispelled by the actual transmission of a message between the Queen of England

and the President of the United States. So Christ, conscious of his divine origin and mission, did not wait for the work of time to prove it, but in the midst of civilization, surrounded by few friends and a multitude of enemies, he showed the visible and tangible proofs of his miraculous wisdom and power. If the magic of his words and the power of his personal presence failed to overcome prejudice and bring conviction, he would say, "Though ye believe not me, believe the works;" and, "Believe me for the very works' sake" (John x : 38 and xiv : 11).

If any doubted, as perhaps did John the Baptist, he referred as proof to what he was doing—"The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up." On more than thirty different occasions he gave proofs of his divine power by doing works of which it was confessed "No man can do the miracles that thou doest except God be with him." The divine method of establishing Christianity was to appeal first to the senses, by doing those things which are known to belong only to God, and thus convince the world that Deity was speaking and acting, and then, through the influence of the faith thus engendered, influence the soul to make the subjective test of experience, which will convince all who make it that He who formed the human soul has designed the Christian religion to meet exactly its native wants. Thus did Christ pursue, as we have seen, the only possible way in which he could con-

vince men that he was divinely commissioned of God to bear a message from heaven to earth and accomplish the great mission on which he was sent.

Nor are we at liberty to reverse this divine order. The time *was* when Jesus claimed the faith of the incredulous on no other ground than that of his miraculous power. But the time *is* when the wisest and best men of the world unhesitatingly recognize him as a messenger of heavenly authority, without reference to those miraculous things which had their day and necessity. The sublimity of the truths he uttered, the spotless life he lived, and the spirit of heavenly love which he manifested, so perfectly answer to the needs of the soul's nature that it settles the question of divinity of origin firmly as adamant. Those who have learned the absolute truth of Christianity by the subjective evidence of a blessed experience have no occasion to go back to the rudiments of our religion. As well might the advanced scholar go back to his *a, b, c*, as that a soul transformed into the divine likeness should go back and ask that his faith be strengthened by the testimony of a miracle. While the *faith* that came of observation was the bud of Christianity, the absolute *knowledge* of experience is the luscious fruit. It is not the observation of marvelous external things, but the life of the soul's inner experience, that enables one to know the deep meaning of those words: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

Thus the truth of Christianity passed from the letter to the spirit,—from observation to experience,—from the head to the heart. So that if the miracles of Christ were no more thought of, the “foundation standeth sure” in the hearts and lives of the wisest and best of earth. The time and necessity of miracles having passed, and having served the purpose for which they were divinely appointed, any effort at reviving them is not only to disregard God’s uniform method of governing the universe, to introduce an endless tale of legends and destroy the spirit of self-reliance, but to reflect upon the design for which such miraculous power was given. Besides, if miracles were to have continued in the church, we can readily see that their frequency would not only destroy the character of a miracle, but it would lead to the sin of presumption by encouraging men to expect God to do that which of right they should do themselves. The proposition, “This is my beloved Son,” being established by the interposition of Deity, the foundation of the world’s future faith, hope, and love was laid once and for ever. Hence any effort at the supernatural may be doubted, as it seems to us, on the ground that “*the time and necessity for miracles have passed.*”

Moreover, it is proper to observe, the time *was* when the Old Testament, with its history, biography, law, poetry, prophecy, and revelation, was a necessity in preparing the world for that which is infinitely better. But the time *is* when Christianity is

the very heart of civilization, the mighty throbbings of which are dependent, not upon miracles, nor yet upon the Old Testament, but upon the living Christ, who "was dead, but is alive for evermore." Having served the divinely appointed purpose of a "school-master," any effort at making the Old Testament of equal authority with the New is not only to reverse God's progressive order of things, but it is to detract from the glory of Him who is the end of all law, the fulfillment of all prophecy, and the conclusion of all revelation. The Old Testament, like miracles, has had its day, and has largely filled the mission for which it was divinely appointed. It must be obvious to every student of the Bible that, while revelation has been progressive, it has found its completion in the person of Him of whom it was said "Never man spake like this man."

SECTION (IV).

Peculiarity of Christ's Miracles.

The more firmly to convince us of Christ's super-human power, it is important that we observe carefully the circumstances which distinguish his miracles from those which other religionists have professed to perform.

(1) *Christianity was FOUNDED through the instrumentality of miracles.*

In this it was distinguished from any other religion known to history, except Judaism. "Con-

cerning the religion of ancient Rome, of Turkey, of Siam, of China, a single miracle cannot be named that was ever offered as a test of any of those religions *before* their establishment" (Adams on Miracles, quoted by Dr. Paley). The history of the four great religions, of Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, Mohammed, gives not a single instance in which their founders laid claim to the faith of the incredulous on the ground of their miraculous power. They knew that in such presence a pretense of that kind would be carefully looked into and thus defeat their end. The author last quoted says: "The French prophets, in the beginning of the present century, ventured to allege miraculous evidence, and immediately ruined their cause by their temerity." This is a very important fact in favor of Christianity, which Hume and other infidel critics have failed to observe.

No one can read the history of the world's great religionists without seeing that they were shrewd enough to know the necessity of such evidence as the genuine working of miracles would give; but they were also shrewd enough to see that even if they were disposed to try the experiment, their trick would be discovered, and thus "the last error would be worse than the first." While with other religions miracles were an after-thought, intended to work upon the minds of a credulous multitude of disciples, Christ stood single-handed and alone, in the presence of an unbelieving world, and proposed to

inaugurate his religion on the foundation of his miraculous power. They trusted to the credulity of disciples for a faith in their pretended miracle-working; Christ wrought miracles to beget faith in the minds of the incredulous and make them his disciples.

(2) *Christ's miracles were of a benevolent character.*

Of the thirty-three which have been reported, all manifest a benevolent purpose, save one—the blasting of the fig-tree (Matt. xxi : 18, 19). But even the skeptic must justify this miracle, because by so doing he would impress the important moral lesson of “fruit-bearing,” as well as exhibit his marvelous power. All others of Christ’s miracles of which we have any account were directly helpful to mankind. He went about healing diseases which were beyond the physician’s skill. Not so with the pretended miracles which are catalogued in the legends of other religions. These were, in the main, frivolous and nonsensical. Their very character contradicts the divinity of their origin. In this age of enlightenment they would reflect no honor even upon a man, much less upon a wise and holy God.

(3) *Christ's miracles were recorded by those who witnessed them.*

Not only did the disciples record these marvelous events which they had witnessed and by which they had been converted, but by giving their testimony they were forced to live a life of untold suffering,

and at last seal the truth of what they had witnessed with their own blood. How unlike the pretended miracles which have come down to us with the vagaries of other religions! Most of them were recorded long after the marvelous events are said to have taken place, and after all the parties concerned were dead. Hume, in his efforts to show the incredibility of miracles, has, unfortunately for his cause, instituted a comparison between the miracles of Christianity and those of other religions. We may well suppose that England's great historian and skeptic has carefully scanned the world's history and brought out the cases of miracles which are the nearest a parallel to those of Christ. But if the reader will examine the three cases presented by this learned author and draw the parallel, he will not only be impressed with his complete failure, but he will discover a disparagement greatly to the advantage of the Christian miracles. These best illustrations which the ages could present were only marvelous events which were *said* to have taken place. They are not traced to any reliable source. So far from being recorded by those who were eye-witnesses to them, and who were made to suffer for their testimony, it is not even reported that any one ever saw these miracles. "These, let it be remembered, are the strongest examples which the history of ages supplies. In none of them was the miracle *unequivocal*; by none of them were established prejudices and persuasions overthrown; of none of

them did the credit make its way in opposition to authority and power; by none of them were many induced to commit themselves, and that in contradiction to prior opinions, to a life of mortification, danger, and suffering; none were called upon to attest them at the expense of their fortunes and safety." (Paley's "Evidences of Christianity," p. 207.)

(4) *Christ's miracles were not confined in time or place.*

These things were "not done in a corner," nor within a "circle" of congenial spirits, under the obscurity of a darkened room; but in the sparsely settled country and in the crowded city, and always under the light of day. How unlike the marvelous stories which have come to us through heathen mythology! No one can study Clarke's "Ten Great Religions of the World" without being impressed with the fact that in all they sought seclusion. Paul, whose conversion was the result of a miracle, and who was the prince of all the Apostles, was remarkable in that he well-nigh converted every court before which he was tried. And his marvelous power before governors and kings was in the stress that he laid on the publicity of Christ's miracles, as evincing his divine authority and power to save from sin. Not a case is recorded in which there was the slightest attempt at duplicity.

(5) *Christ's miracles were capable of being tested.*

Tested, not by friends, but by enemies as well. The case of the man born blind (John ix : 1-34) was sub-

mitted to his bitterest enemies. And they, after they had examined and re-examined, to learn first from the parents that their son was born blind, and then, from examination, that sight had been given to him, were convinced that a notable miracle had been wrought; and the only fault they could allege was in the fact that it had been wrought on the "Sabbath-day." All the parties to the marvelous transaction were thoroughly examined, not by friends, but by the most inveterate enemies. This case can be disposed of in but one of two ways: we must either deny the record, or consent to the fact that Jesus is the Christ of God.

The raising of Lazarus too (John, ch. xi) was an event which could be thoroughly tested. Like the man who had been born blind, Lazarus was there to be examined. After his resurrection he abode with his sisters as before, and moved among the Jews of Jerusalem. Had it been false, then was the time and there was the place when the falsehood would have been exposed by the scribes and Pharisees who were lying in wait for all such opportunities. But so far from being able to discover any trick, "many of the Jews who came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him." How unlike the reputed miracles of other religions! In the few cases which were humane, the parties who had been restored vanished like a myth, and the persons who, it was claimed, had witnessed the marvelous events had died. When the record

was made, therefore, there were no means of testing its truthfulness.

(6) *Christ's oft-repeated efforts at performing a miracle never failed.*

This is a peculiarity which belongs only to Christ. The third reported case of wonder-working, as cited by Hume, tells of repeated efforts which resulted in miscarriage. Of the thousands who applied for help only nine were said to be miraculously cured. And such was the nature of their diseases, that we can readily see how the influences of superstition might be greatly helpful. With Christ there was no detention, no failure, but every step was as the step of Deity, and every result as perfect as the movement of the stars.

We have thus briefly pointed out some of the peculiarities which distinguished the miracles of our Lord from those of any other religionists the legends of which have come down to us through the world's history. And while we leave the Biblical student to substitute others, it must be obvious to all that the peculiarities already enumerated place Christ without an approximate parallel, justly claiming the implicit faith of the world by a supernatural power which has endured the criticism of the accumulated wisdom of the ages.

SECTION (V).

Evidences of Christ's Miracles.

As the foregoing suggestions have prepared us for the positive proof of the supernatural power of Jesus, we may proceed directly with the evidence in its natural order.

(1) *Christ's own Testimony.*

That Jesus claimed miraculous power none can dispute without denying the most important part of his history. Accepting this record as true, then, that he professed to open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, loose the tongue of the dumb, and raise the dead,—events which belong only to God,—are facts too patent to be denied. The process of argument which will eliminate the miracles from Christ's biography will, if carried to its legitimate conclusion, destroy the entire history. When Jesus stood by the grave of him who had been dead four days, and in the presence of friends and enemies said, "Come forth," and the seeming dead appeared alive, he knew whether that was a fact or a deception. If a "fact," it settles once and forever the truth of his miraculous power and the divinity of his mission. And if redoubled assurance be needed, it is found in the fact of the absolute purity of the religion which this marvelous transaction went to establish. But if we suppose this event

to be a deception, and that Jesus knew it to be such, as he must have known if it was so, then we are driven to the absurd conclusion that Christ went about practicing a *lie* in order to establish a religion of truth and purity. Nor can it be said that Jesus was honestly mistaken, supposing it to be a veritable transaction, when it was nothing but a trick. This would involve a belief in a miracle greater than that of raising the dead. The theory that Christ was an impostor, though once the stronghold of infidelity, is now entirely abandoned by those whose intelligence and moral character entitle them to respect. And yet to believe that Jesus was honest is to conclude that he raised the dead when he pretended to. This concession reaches the conclusion that Christ possessed supernatural power, in that he did the thing which only God could do.

As to the truth of the divine origin of Christianity, we might rest the case in the testimony already given. For example, suppose an honest and competent witness was called into court, and was to testify that a certain event did occur, with which he was so related as to render it impossible for him to be mistaken: we submit if there be a court of justice in the land that could do anything else than to decide the case according to that testimony.

(2) *Testimony of the Apostles.*

We have already seen that Christ startled the world with the announcement that he was a minister

from the court of heaven, bearing a message from God to man; and that, in attestation of this high claim, he professed to do those things which belong only to God. Under all the circumstances, we have maintained that the personal testimony of Jesus to this claim is sufficient to establish its truth. But, to put the question beyond any reasonable cavil, we are providentially furnished with outside testimony.

To understand the competency and full weight of such testimony, we should learn the character and number of the witnesses, and know the nature and frequency of those marvelous events to which they testify; and thus be able to judge as to the probability, or even possibility, of their being deceivers or deceived. We should inquire, furthermore, as to the relation of these witnesses to the miraculous events which they report, and thus determine as to whether or not they are fully competent to testify. Still further, we should determine as to the degree of conviction which fastened itself upon their minds touching the absolute truth of those miraculous things of which they were eye-witnesses.

If these several steps are carefully taken, in examining the testimony of the Apostles touching the fact of Christ's miraculous power, it will appear, we trust, that human judgment will be convinced, beyond any reasonable doubt, that the power behind it all was "God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." We can readily see that while one man, or even a number of men, whose veracity is under

suspicion, might report a given event to have occurred at a given time and place, yet the report may be accepted as doubtful. And if the event testified to be of a marvelous character, we might reject it entirely on the ground that it is more reasonable to suppose that the testimony is false than that the reported transaction was real. But if another man, or set of men, whose veracity has never been impeached, were to come forward and testify to the same marvelous event, conviction of its truth would take the place of doubt and disbelief.

The witnesses under review were twelve in number, who, though not learned, were nevertheless men of great good sense, against whose veracity not a breath of suspicion had been breathed. Moreover, the morality which they established, and the lives which they lived, reaffirmed the sincerity of their testimony. Though the events which they report were of a miraculous character, which the mind is naturally averse to believe, yet such were their nature and frequency that it was not probable, or even possible, for them to have been deceived. It is not one honest man testifying to one miracle, but twelve truthful men giving their testimony of thousands of miracles, as we may suppose, of which more than thirty have been recorded. Nor were these miracles done in a day and at a given place, but they ran through three years, and were wrought in country and city, in the presence of a few friends and a multitude of foes.

And such was the character of the most of these miracles that it was not possible in the nature of things for men of sound sense to be mistaken. Neither the olden-time artifice of juggling nor the modern-time tricks of legerdemain will account for the opening of the eyes of a man born blind, much less the bringing to life of one who had been dead four days. Nor is it possible to believe that twelve intelligent men were honestly deceived as to whether five thousand men, besides women and children, were fed from five loaves and two fishes by superhuman instrumentalities. The man who can believe that men of such number and character could be hoodwinked for three successive years with such events as are recorded, believes in a greater miracle than is referred to Jesus. For, certainly, to succeed in making those twelve intelligent men believe that those seeming marvelous events were *facts*, when they were mere deceptions, would be the greatest miracle of all.

Moreover, we cannot believe from the history that these twelve witnesses were in such relation to these miracles which were being wrought day after day for three years as to render their testimony incompetent. They were not "seeing through a glass darkly," but they stood "face to face" with them. Nor were these things "done in a corner," nor in the darkness, but in their open presence and under the light of day. Luke gives an account of Jesus with his disciples going to the city of Nain. On

arriving at the gate of the city they met a funeral procession, following a dead man, the only son of a widow. "And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother" (Luke vii: 11-18). Now if, by largest stretch of imagination, we can suppose that these disciples were mistaken in believing that they witnessed this miraculous event which is said to have taken place not only in their presence but in that of "much people," if we would be consistent, we must go on until we take in all the marvelous transactions which occurred during all those years, and conclude that what these twelve men of intelligence honestly believed to be veritable transactions were, after all, nothing but the inventions of falsehood, by which they had been successfully hoodwinked.

It must be observed, moreover, that these wonderful things which occurred during the life of Jesus, not only made an impression upon the minds of these disciples, but sealed a conviction that neither time, persuasion, nor suffering unto death could remove. As the strength of one's conviction is in the ratio of the evidence received, we may readily suppose that twelve intelligent and honest men might give their testimony in favor of the occurrence of a marvelous phenomenon for which they would not

be willing to suffer. The personal sacrifice they are willing to make determines, first, the importance which they attach to the event of which they testify, and, secondly, the degree of conviction which has fastened itself upon their minds as to the truth of the story. If, for example, the miraculous transaction of which they witness involved all that they held dear in this world and that which is to come, and if the evidence which they had of the truth of that transaction had removed the last shadow of a doubt from their minds, then, and then only, would they be willing to surrender all that the world calls good and great, and willingly offer their lives in attestation of the truth of their testimony. This is exactly the state of the case.

These disciples were with Jesus during the years of his earthly ministry, and, at places and times without number, heard what he had to say of his religion, its origin, and its infinite importance to them for the "life which now is and that which is to come;" they were eye-witnesses, again and again, to those miracles which were wrought in attestation of the heavenly origin of this religion: and the character and frequency of the miracles must have removed from their minds the last shadow of a doubt as to their absolute reality. To suppose otherwise is to believe that twelve intelligent and honest men disclaimed their previous convictions of truth and avowed their faith in a new and unheard-of religion; willingly put all their earthly possessions

into jeopardy and stared at the face of grim poverty, sacrificed their good name upon the altar of their devotion, and chose to be despised and hated of all men; left their homes, their friends, and all earthly endearments to go willingly forth into a wicked world, to have all the suffering heaped upon them that satanic ingenuity could invent and cruelty could inflict; "endured hardness as good soldiers" for thirty, forty, and even sixty years, and then, each and all, with one exception, sealed their testimony with their own blood: and that they willingly made all these unheard-of sacrifices during all these years, while doubts were in their minds as to the truth of their testimony! Such a belief is devoid of sound judgment.

When we carefully take into account the character and number of these disciples,—their personal relation to Jesus for three years of his ministry, during which time they heard what he said and were eye-witnesses to what he did,—and, especially, when we remember that the divinity of those words and deeds so riveted themselves into the minds of these disciples that the conviction could not be wiped out by all the combined forces of earth and hell,—when all these things are taken into the account, sound reason can hardly conclude that these twelve men went forth publishing a lie in claiming that the **F**ounder of their religion was himself a miracle in his life, his death, and his resurrection.

If we consent to the history as it has come down

to us, certainly we must be agreed upon the following propositions, viz. :

First, that such was the nature of these marvelous transactions, and such their frequency, running through three years, that these disciples, who were eye-witnesses during all this time, could not have been deluded into believing that they were realities when in fact they were nothing but deceptions. Certainly, they must have known whereof they affirmed.

Secondly, that they honestly believed, without a shadow of a doubt, that Jesus possessed miraculous power. To suppose otherwise is to believe that they played the part of hypocrites to a degree of self-sacrifice which presents them as a greater miracle than any they ever published.

(3) *Testimony of those who heard the Apostles.*

If we are prepared to believe that these first propagators of Christ's religion believed that their Master possessed superhuman power, and that he was miraculously raised from the dead, we can hardly imagine as the remotest possibility that they would rely for success on the presentation of minor considerations.

We must remember that there was no city in the world which was more intelligently devoted to its religion than Jerusalem. We must remember, furthermore, that these illiterate Galileans had undertaken the most difficult task of overturning this long-established religion and building up one that

was new and unheard-of. When we consider the native pride of the people of Jerusalem, their deep-rooted prejudice against the Galileans, and the tenacity with which they clung to their religion,—if, under these circumstances, we suppose that these humble fishermen resorted to nothing but moral suasion and yet created an unbounded excitement, we must believe that their persuasive powers were of a miraculous character. Look which way we may, reason is confronted with a miracle.

But we are not left to mere supposition. The facts of the history clearly set forth that the disciples relied wholly upon the *miracles* in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Imagine Peter, the illiterate stranger and humble fisherman, “standing up with the eleven” in that great city, and in the presence of that vast multitude which a little while ago were crying, “Crucify him, crucify him!” and who had succeeded in putting to death the despised Nazarene, supposing that thus they had forever crushed the new heresy. Imagine the different lines of thought that were open to this new and unheard-of orator. He might have proceeded to show the superiority of the religion of Christ over that of Judaism—that it was destined, under God, to revolutionize the world, unify all religions, and make the kingdoms of earth to become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ. All this might have been truthfully said, and much of it we have lived to see accomplished. But Peter’s mind was

surcharged with truth which would more readily convince their judgment and which would be vastly more pungent in convicting and converting their wicked hearts. He therefore seized the opportunity of rehearsing the awful facts which had been publicly beheld during the past few weeks. He called that wicked assembly to witness while he rehearsed the truth which was known to them, that "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death" (Acts ii: 22-24). Thus we see that he referred his congregation to nothing but their own wickedness and to the miraculous power of Jesus the Christ. Imagine the consternation which seized that vast assembly thus brought under the influence of those pungent truths, in regard to facts of which they themselves were witnesses, when "they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" We learn from the record that in a single day three thousand were made not only to believe in the miraculous power of Christ, but to confess their sins and sue for pardon.

Thus we have added to the testimony of the twelve disciples that of three thousand who were

willing to stake all their earthly possessions upon the truth of Christ's miraculous power, and the fact that God had raised him from the dead. Nor did the work stop here; but beginning in this great city, where these miraculous events had occurred, this new religion, under the influence of preaching like that of Peter, went forth as upon the wings of the morning, destined to dispel all moral darkness and illuminate the world with the light of its heavenly truth. And of all the millions who, in the different ages and countries of the world, have confessed faith in the religion of Jesus, the very few who would eliminate the miraculous from it are only sufficient to illustrate the universality of the conviction that Christ had power to do those things which belong only to God.

We dismiss this topic for the present with the following statement and conclusion: In the light of history we must conclude that the Christian temple which has been going up for near two thousand years, and which still mounts higher, rests upon the foundation of Christ's miraculous power. This truth no one will have the temerity to deny. If the modern effort to eliminate from Christianity all the miraculous elements should be successful, then should we have presented to us the enigma of all enigmas, in that a system of ethics which seeks only to establish *truth* and elevate the world, and which has been so successful in accomplishing its aim, has nevertheless been founded upon a *falsehood*. This

is to conclude that God has constructed a religion of universal unity and of unexampled purity and power mainly through the instrumentality of a lie

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CHARACTER OF JESUS.

How are we to judge his character?—He knew he would be put to death.—He was willing to die.—He believed what he said.—His personal merit compared with that of other men.—Faults of his professed followers not a testimony against his character.

IN determining the question of human *character* we should first clearly understand the meaning of the term. Furthermore, if we would do justice to the life of an individual, we must take into account the circumstances of his birth, education, and personal environments. And still further, we should consider the admissibility or competency of the testimony by which we determine the question of personal character.

SECTION (I).

How are we to judge his character?

True character is not what a man *thinks*, or *says*, or *does*, but what he *is*. A man may be correct in his theory of right-doing and orthodox in his theology, and yet wofully false and heterodox as to his inner

self. This is obvious when we consider that correct thinking is the result of man's intellectuality and has but little to do with his moral and spiritual character. He may be an angel in intellect, and at the same time be a devil at heart. On the other hand, for the want of native intellectuality and external enlightenment a man may come to false conclusions on questions of theology and morals and yet possess true nobility of character. We do not say that the clear apprehension of truth will not help to establish excellency of life, but only that true character is what a man *is* and not what he *thinks*. The best thinkers are sometimes the greatest devils.

If accurate thinking is not character, neither are words, however properly spoken. If a man be an educated devil, as is possible, he may make a very wise choice of words, with the view to accomplishing a wicked purpose. Language is only an instrumentality in the accomplishment of ends. While methods may in themselves be good, they may also be, and often are, used for the accomplishment of that which is wofully wicked. While words are usually a true index to the inner life of the soul, they are not that inner life, and hence in the composition of true character they form no necessary part. Satan may put on the garb of an angel, but he remains a devil, however truthfully and even lovingly he talks.

Nor is the outer life true character. Though human governments and society recognize words

and deeds as making up character, we are not to infer that they regard these outward manifestations as anything more than an index to the inner life of the soul. They are aware that true character is beyond their depths. Man can take cognizance only of these outer manifestations. Hence human laws have reference to the overt act. But we have learned by observation and experience that both words and deeds may greatly belie the soul's inner self. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

Hence we conclude that He who made the soul looks not to those things which come within the purview of human understanding, but His eye pierces the inner chamber, sees the motives and aspirations of the soul, and enters into sympathy only with purity of aim and aspirations after truth and righteousness. The divine insight determines character by what a man is and not by what he thinks, says, and does, and legislates not only for the overt act, but for the "heart, out of which are the issues of life." From this it must be apparent that, while the soul's enlightenment through the instrumentality of truth is of great moment, it is not absolutely indispensable to true character. The great Father, who goes back of human action, must look complacently and approvingly upon every man, whether in heathendom or Christendom, who earnestly desires truth and righteousness. The increase of moral obligation is in the ratio of the increase of spiritual

insight into religious truth. It may be objected that, if the coming of greater knowledge brings greater responsibility, then the sending of the light of truth to those who sit in the shadow of darkness is of doubtful utility. But we are to remember that God has designed a head of intelligence as well as a heart of honesty and an earnest desire after truth and righteousness. The Father would first have the heart set on *right doing*, and then enlighten the understanding, that the right doing may be of the noblest kind.

The question which has to do with the subject under review, is, "Can a man successfully deceive, through his whole life, and with fair words and deeds cover up his character?" In reply it may be said that his ability to continually deceive depends, first, upon his native and acquired ability to play the part of a hypocrite, and, secondly, upon the nature and extent of the test to which he is subjected. Some men, as we know, are remarkably gifted in making others believe, by word and deed, what is not true; while other men seem to wear their character on the outside, and are hence "known and read of all men." Paul clearly recognized this fact when he charged Timothy to "lay hands suddenly on no man," and then, as a reason, urges the fact that "some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment: and some men they follow after." Some men's sins are perfectly transparent in their words and lives, while others cover up their true character under plausible words and a seemingly correct life.

But however hypocritical they may be, and however successfully they may deceive others, yet there is a test to which they may be subjected that will strip off the mask and discover the soul's true inner life. If a man, by word and deed, be false to his inner self, however successfully he may hoodwink others, he himself is fully cognizant of his own hypocrisy. And as these words and deeds which belie the heart are assumed for the purpose of *temporal* success, if the hope of this be removed, it will lay bare the real man. The soul, in its normal condition, treasures life above all worldly possessions. Hence, for the purpose of protecting life, man will yield the hope of every earthly treasure.

It may be objected, however, that even a hypocrite might so desire to perpetuate his good name, that he would yield the last hope of life rather than, by honest word and deed, reveal what he is. The many cases of men's meeting death boldly, with a lie in their mouth, can hardly be cited as illustrative of the above objection. This very boldness in the face of death may be, and often is, in the hope of saving life. But even if we grant that here and there in the world's history men have been found who thought more of having the world continue to believe what they knew to be false with reference to their own character than they did of life, yet the subject under consideration goes beyond and above even this supposition. The objection bears with force against those only who have been *compelled*, against their

will, to yield their lives. But in the case of Christ, though he was brought to the cross for what he had said and done, yet he knowingly and willingly gave up his life for the truth which he had proclaimed and the life which he had lived. The history of the world presents not a solitary case where a man has knowingly and willingly died for what he *believed* to be *false*. Nothing, absolutely nothing, but honest convictions and the hope of future reward can, in the nature of things, lead to such personal sacrifice. And the history of the ages, outside of Christianity, presents to us but very few who have even had the courage to willingly anticipate death for the sake of establishing what they conceived to be reality. When Socrates was proffered the precious boon of life on condition that he should stealthily escape from his prison, he spurned the offer with the indignant reply, "I helped to make the laws of Athens, and by the laws of Athens I am willing to die." But this was one of the world's greatest philosophers, who had the deepest convictions of truth and an abiding hope of future reward, who had the moral heroism to take the cup into his own hand and willingly drink the deadly hemlock. Nor does the man live who can intelligently and honestly call in question the sincerity of Him who thus willingly died for what he conceived to be truth and right.

It may be objected again that, while the man's willingness to die may be proof of his sincerity, it

by no means follows that what he said was true; that the world has produced not a few honest fanatics. This objection, however, applies only to those who willingly die for a theory or opinion—something which does not appeal to the senses, much less is a matter of conscious knowledge. It is one thing honestly to believe a proposition to which we have been brought through reasoning or prejudice, but a very different thing to believe a conclusion to which we have been led by observation and experience. While it is possible for such reasoning to lead to a false decision, conscious knowledge settles the question beyond cavil. And this is precisely the kind of truth for which Christ knowingly and willingly died: not truth to which he had been led by the process of deductive reasoning, but rather that of conscious knowledge. When Jesus stood by the grave and said, "I knew that thou hearest me always," both the fact that his Father always heard him, and that Lazarus came forth, were matters of his own positive knowledge. If this was nothing but "the olden-time artifice of juggling," Jesus knew it; but if the result of supernatural power, it was not a matter of speculation, but of consciousness.

Such is the nature of the words and deeds for which Christ died, that they are taken out of the field of metaphysical speculation and fanaticism into that of positive knowledge. If he knew that what he said and did were true, then there is no room for

cavil. And that he was thoroughly sincere is clearly evinced in the fact that he voluntarily suffered upon the cross for the words he had uttered and the life he had lived.

We proceed to show that the character of Jesus was not only above suspicion, but was absolutely divine.

(1) *Christ knew that he would be put to death for what he had said and done.* While yet in Galilee, and more than sixty miles from the place of apprehension and suffering, Jesus took his twelve disciples aside and said, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem: and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again." This prediction, which was repeated more than once in the presence of all the disciples, and corresponded exactly with the fulfillment, clearly shows that Jesus was not only conscious of the fact that he would be put to death for what he had said and done, but knew all the details connected with the awful tragedy.

(2) *He not only knew that he would die, but he was also willing to die.* It must be remembered that at the time he made the prediction above quoted he was on his way to Jerusalem to be put to death. As yet he had not been arrested, nor had the authorities even sent a requisition demanding his presence. He was entirely free to remain in his own country, with-

out fear of molestation. But he regarded his suffering as a necessary part of the great work he had come to accomplish, as is evinced in the fact that he voluntarily walked into the jaws of death. In the very presence of the awful event, he only shrank from it so far as to exclaim, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke xxii: 42). He believed, as he said after his resurrection, that "thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day." Under this conviction he was willing to die.

(3) *He honestly believed that what he said and did was true.* As we have seen, no man will voluntarily die for what he believes to be false. Before it is possible in the nature of things for him to make a sacrifice of himself, he must at least honestly believe that he is offering his life in the defense of the truth. A fanatic he may be, but he must, nevertheless, have the deepest and most sincere convictions; else he will never come willingly to the stake. We must therefore believe that when Jesus left Galilee to go up to Jerusalem, fully conscious that he was walking into the jaws of death, he had not a doubt of the absolute truth of what he had publicly proclaimed.

(4) *It was not possible for Christ to have been mistaken.* His proclamations were not those of philosophical reasoning, much less that of metaphysical speculation. The fundamental truths which made his life marvelous and sublime were with him mat-

ters of absolute personal knowledge. Even if we suppose it to be possible that the eyes and ears of those twelve disciples were honestly deceived for all those years, yet it is beyond a possibility for us to believe that Jesus was mistaken as to the method or power by which he spoke and acted. If the above propositions be true, we are inevitably led to the conclusion that Christ was all that he claimed to be, and that he spoke by divine authority in proclaiming the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the duty and destiny of our race. His gracious words and saving works were the outflow of a life which was not only above suspicion, but was absolutely holy and divine.

SECTION (II).

How are we to judge his personal merit?

Two things determine the moral quality of an individual; viz., first, what he is in his native mental organism, and, secondly, the character of his moral environments. Whatever may be said with reference to "total depravity" on the one hand, or "absolute purity" on the other, the facts of observation and experience clearly show that men are born into the world with both predispositions to evil and natural tendencies to good. While some have a preponderance of native good quality, others are more largely prepossessed with bad instincts. Nor are these natural tendencies uniform. Some men are

born with a predisposition to steal, and nothing but eternal vigilance will save them from being thieves. While this is the "besetting sin," and hence the weak point which must be guarded, such individuals are often relieved from keeping guard at other points on the line of defense because of native moral strength. Other men, on the other hand, come into the world with a natural inclination to honesty, and it would be next to impossible to convert them into thieves. And yet these same individuals have other native weaknesses which will demand prayerful watching, else the arch-enemy, who is ever on the alert, will break in and despoil what is beautiful.

This diversity of inborn weakness and strength is but another illustration of the paternal regard of a wise Providence who has thus made it possible for men to be mutual helpers to each other. It is no virtue for some men to be temperate, for the reason that they have no tendency to drunkenness. But if they will carefully regard their own natural weaknesses, they will learn how to succor those who are otherwise tempted. "Bear ye one another's burdens." "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." While this inborn weakness and strength make it possible for us to be mutual helpers, yet the divine injunction is, "Let every man bear his own burden." It is in this native weakness that he stands or falls. While it is granted that "Man is the architect of his own fortune," it is equally true that "Man is the creature of circum-

stances." This leads to the observation that, while what a man is in his mental organism has much to do with his developed character, the contingencies with which he is surrounded will determine largely what he shall be. The highest types of manhood are usually found in those who have been well born and equally well bred. Exceptions to this rule there may be, but they are only sufficient to prove the truth of the proposition. A man, however, may be never so well born, yet if he be bred under the influence of heathen mythology, a heathen he will be. In this Christian country we are Protestants or Catholics, more from the circumstances of birth and education than from any inborn predisposition to be one or the other. This fact clearly recognized will be destructive to narrowness and helpful to Christian charity.

" 'Tis education forms the common mind ;
Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined."

While the mind instinctively decides upon the questions of right and wrong, and attributes moral character to words and deeds, yet its correct decisions upon these questions depend upon the nature of its enlightenment. If the world is wiser and better now than in former ages, its superiority is not found in the fact that men are better by nature than in former times, but because the circumstances of birth and education have been more favorable. Truly great men now, as heretofore, have had great

opportunities. Native faculty and predisposition may do much, but they cannot do enough to make a truly great man. A Newton or a Shakespeare could not have sprung up out of a community of Hottentots. The great men of Greece and Rome were but the zenith of the glory to which the previous ages had brought them. "One man lays the foundation, and another buildeth thereupon," is a proposition as true in ethical science and moral development as it is in intellectual attainments. A man's theory of ethical science and his true development of moral character are judged and appreciated from the standpoint of his opportunities. He does no more than embody the sentiments of his times, or at most go a little in advance of the people of his age and country.

If we judge Christ, in his moral teaching and character, by the standard of human greatness, he is at once taken out of the catalogue of the world's great men and placed pre-eminently above all, not as the outgrowth of the exigencies of his times, but as a divinity who makes his own circumstances and lays the foundation of the sublimest manhood for all the ages to come. Though he lived at a time when moral darkness had filled the world, and the blackness of darkness had enshrouded the minds of men, yet he flashed out upon a benighted race as a full-orbed sun. Even semi-enlightened infidelity and half-honest atheism have conceded that so far as Christ's teaching and personal character have been

impressed upon the lives of men, they have established the best system of morals the world ever saw.

Moreover, he was fully prepared to practice what he preached. If he taught by word the relation that men sustain to God, and the consequent duty to love and obey him, he also gave the example of willing obedience. "Not my will, but thine, be done." If he revealed by public instruction the relation that man sustains to universal man, and the consequent duty of doing to all men as we would that they should do to us, he exemplified his teaching by a life devoted to the well-being of all men, whether Jew or Gentile. He had not come to follow the steps of the bigoted Jew nor of the superstitious Gentile, but to make known by word and deed the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. He not only went about doing good, but his very thoughts were divine; his words and even his personal appearance must have been supernal. We have seen how the officers sent to take him returned without laying hands on him, giving as their only reason, "Never man spake like this man." And when Judas had received his "band of men and officers" and went forth in the darkness, "with lanterns, torches, and weapons," charged with the duty of bringing Christ before the Jewish Sanhedrim, at the words of the Master, "I am he," the men and officers "went backward and fell to the ground." At his word, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men," men left their business pursuits and followed him.

As we look back to the time when Jesus came, and see the world overwhelmed in idolatry, superstition, and moral darkness, we see Jesus appearing above all, and in view of all, saying, "I am the light of the world." And though, since that time, the world has had two thousand years of advancing day, the light must grow apace if it hopes to reach the zenith glory of his light in ten thousand years to come.

And how insignificant and contemptible the moral character of his defamers, when compared with the glory of his own! "Of Voltaire, a recent biographer and admirer confessed that his life was one continuous grin from the cradle to the grave, and he ridiculed Shakespeare with all the freedom that he did the Scriptures. Gibbon seems to have had in his composition no reverence, no regard for the race, no pity for the poor, but to have been sordid, heartless, selfish, full of vain-glory and a desire for adulation. The school of Hume and Hobbes and Bolingbroke taught the most infamous system of utilitarianism, claiming that female virtue was no excellence, adultery no crime, and monogamy not the law of nature: in fact, they seem to have advocated the principles which have blossomed into the doctrines of free-love and communism. Rousseau, in his 'Confessions,' declares himself guilty without measure and without remorse. None of these men went to any barbarous isle to reclaim the savage; nor to any city slums to lift up the wretched, ignorant, and fallen; nor left behind them any work which continued to bless the

world after they were gone. Rather, the whole effect of their lives and teachings was to make life more difficult and cheerless, to sap it of hope and courage and inspiration. Over against the character and records of such men as those place the names of those who have been denounced as leading men into superstition—Moses, John, Paul, Luther, Wesley—and say, for yourselves, to which class you would more readily commit your hearts and homes, the instruction of your children, the safety and honor of society and the state. But against the former and far above the latter place the name of One who in his single individuality would outweigh all the infidels of all time; One of whom Jean Paul Richter says that ‘He was the holiest among the mighty and the mightiest among the holy, who lifted with his pierced hand empires off their hinges, and turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governs the ages;’ One of whom Spinoza said that he was ‘the symbol of divine wisdom;’ One of whom Carlyle says, ‘Higher has the human thought not reached. A symbol of quite perennial, infinite character, whose significance will never demand to be anew inquired into, and anew made manifest;’ One of whom Herder says that he is ‘the realized ideal of humanity;’ One of whom the great Napoleon said, ‘Sublimity is said to be an attribute of divinity: what name, then, shall we give him in whose character was united every element of the sublime?’ And to all these testimonies there are

not wanting the eulogies of rationalists and infidels themselves—men like Parker, Renan, Diderot—who cannot repress their admiration for Jesus of Nazareth. May it not be said of him that his name, example, influence, and deeds are enough, in themselves, to prove that the greatest is always the holiest?" (C. S. Stockton, in "Christian Thought," p. 296.)

With all the accumulated light of the ages, infidels have not been able to point out one solitary blot upon the spotless life of Jesus; but finding his character invulnerable at every approach, they have shown a willingness to "catch at straws." The words "much displeased" (Mark x : 14) they have sought so to torture as to make it appear that instead of giving a magnanimous rebuke to this bigotry of his disciples, Jesus was impetuous and angry! The weakness of the criticism only illustrates the purity of the life against which nothing more could be said.

The case of the cleansing of the temple, and the misconstructions and misconceptions of carping critics in their effort to find some flaw in the character of Jesus, has been spoken of before. The spotless life of Jesus, as it has come down to us through the mists and darkness of the ages, shines out with a brilliancy which is simply incomparable with that of the wisest and best men who have ever graced our humanity.

With a continued popularity which has had no parallel; with a boldness of utterance which defied popular sentiment, and marked a new era in the

world of thought ; with a knowledge which leaped far beyond and above that of books, teachers, and the world's wisdom, and established laws for all succeeding generations ; with a power which stayed the laws of the universe, and caused the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame to walk, and the dead to arise, and could call legions of angels to assist in carrying out the purpose of its will—with all this, he bore himself with the most perfect equanimity, even under the influence of every conceivable species of insult ; and beautifully illustrated, by word, deed, and spirit, the religion which he came to establish. “ His love and compassion, his forbearance and forgiveness, his meekness and wisdom, his simplicity and holiness, his equanimity and self-possession, have never had, and never will have, a parallel ” in the history of our race. It is not in the nature of a human being quietly to submit to personal insult and disgrace, to have outrage heaped upon outrage, to be mocked, scourged, and at last to submit to cruel death. Man, in the best state, would muster every available resource to defend himself against such indignity and suffering. But we are to remember, with thanksgiving, that Jesus, conscious of his own power to turn the overflowing flood of infamy and distressing pain upon his enemies, quietly submits himself to all the outrages which depraved humanity could invent and a satanic nature could execute, and even while nailed to the cross, with blood trickling from his hands and feet, in the awful

agonies of death, with bowed head and sorrowing heart, he could turn his dying eyes out upon that rabble multitude, who with sneering ribaldry had exultantly cried out upon the innocent Lamb of God, "Crucify him, crucify him!" and could utter that ever-memorable prayer, the like of which the world had never heard and never will hear again, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

This was the final link in the chain of saving grace, the fulfillment of prophecy, and the climax of the Father's love to a fallen race. Who can read the story of "Jesus and his love," the obvious manifestations of the divinity of his character, and his willingness to save, and not be ready to exclaim, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of God!"? And who so lost to his personal interests for time and eternity as not to yield loving obedience to One who has done more to save mankind from sin and its consequent wretchedness than all the wise men, sages, and profound philosophers who have ever helped to elevate our race? He that can look upon this exhibition of divinity and love with unmoved heart may well exclaim:

"The rocks can rend; the earth can quake;
The seas can roar, the mountains shake:
Of feeling all things show some sign
But this unfeeling heart of mine.

"But something yet can do the deed,
And that dear something much I need:
Thy Spirit can from dross refine,
And melt and change this heart of mine."

Though the whole life of Jesus was supremely radiant with beauty in its devotedness to the interests of humanity, and full of manifestations of the Supernal in "going about doing good," the Father's sympathy for the ignorance and suffering of a lost race found its highest and most sublime expression in Jesus upon the cross. No language like that of willing sacrifice. Could we but behold this boundless love of God, as made manifest in the gift, life, suffering, and death of Jesus,—could we see it as angels see it, and as the wisest and best of our race see it, we would exclaim, in the language of the immortal Isaac Watts,

“When I survey the wondrous cross
 On which the Prince of Glory died,
 My richest gain I count but loss,
 And pour contempt on all my pride.
 * * * * *

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
 That were an offering far too small :
 Love so amazing, so divine,
 Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

SECTION (III).

Faults of his professed followers.

We are not to determine the character of Jesus and his influence upon the world by the corruptions of society, professedly Christian, much less by the wicked lives of some who have professed discipleship. Before deciding as to the question of responsi-

bility, we should carefully seek the causes which led to such corruption and wickedness. If it can be shown that the teachings, life, and spirit of Jesus are the leaven of bad society and the cause of a wicked life, then responsibility attaches to him; otherwise the moving cause must be found elsewhere. On this point we would say—

(I) That the corruptions and persecutions which have existed within the nominal church are not to be admitted as testimony against the religion of Jesus. The spirit which seeks to reflect unfavorably upon Christ and his religion refers to the "dark ages," when Christianity exhibited little less than an intolerable bigotry, persecution, and bloodshed. As evidence of the truth of this unfavorable reflection, reference is had to the rack, the fagot, the Inquisition, and to cruel war. All this horrible bigotry, barbarous and inhuman suffering, and satanic butchery have been perpetrated, as we must admit, under the sacred name of Christianity! This animadversion comes so near the line of a just criticism that it has awakened many a doubt. It behooves us, therefore, to examine with care the causes which have led to results so revolting to the better instincts of our nature. These horrible outrages have been charged to the account of Christianity so frequently and with such emphasis that the credulous and thoughtless have been made to believe the charge. But we aver that an impartial glance at facts and circumstances will show it to be a gross libel on

Christ and the religion he sought to establish. If we carefully study what Jesus said and did, we shall not fail to see that the central truth which he sought to establish was "love to God and love to man." And when the world's heart is animated by his spirit of love, then shall the sword be forever sheathed and the cry of oppression be heard no more. Even intelligent and honest infidelity will admit that the spirit of persecution for opinion's sake, and religious bigotry of any sort, are an excrescence as foreign to Christianity as is the wickedness of the human heart. The man who has studied the life of Jesus and the teachings of the New Testament, and has failed to observe that they proclaim the glad tidings of "peace on earth and good-will toward men," needs to "learn the way of the Lord more perfectly." While his spotless life and his heavenly teaching were the leaven of righteousness, such was the corruption and desperate wickedness of the human heart, that it cropped out first in selfish bigotry, then in proscription, and at last in cruel death.

But creeds are not Christianity. For three hundred and twenty-five years after Christ, the church had formulated no creed, being satisfied with the Bible as its only creed, and with the personal right of every man to read and interpret it as God might help him. And those who are claiming that a human creed is a necessity in church growth need to be told, what every ecclesiastical historian knows, that the church of Christ never prospered as it did when

it had no creed but the Bible. And when it is claimed that Christian union can only be maintained on the basis of a formulated statement of faith made on human authority, we would reply that these human statements, so far from tending to union, have been the direct cause of dissevering the church and paralyzing its power for good. Even "the Apostles' Creed" (which, by the way, the apostles never knew of, the form being even later than the Nicene Creed, and deviating much less from the language of the sacred record) was nevertheless an entering wedge of creeds. A creed once made required another creed to interpret it, and a power to enforce it; and so on until bigotry and persecution had reached their climax in the stake, the rack, the fagot, and the varied tortures of the Inquisition. Thus, while the history of blood was being written, the Bible, through the instrumentality of selfish presumption of the Roman ecclesiasticism in the name of Christ, but against his Spirit, was being banished from the face of the earth. In the light of this historic fact we aver that to unchristianize a man for no other reason than that of his honest opinion touching the teaching of Christ and his apostles is not only a disgrace to Christianity, but is an outrage upon humanity. The in-born rights of human reason, as well as the bloody page of ecclesiastical history, would relegate the business of creed-making and that of creed-enforcing to their original source.

Science has clearly revealed the marvelous fact that God in his infinite wisdom and resources has not seen fit to make any two things *exactly alike*; much less has he organized two human minds to look at truth from precisely the same standpoint and thus arrive at precisely the same conclusion. Unity and diversity mark the ways of God, and the Christian philosopher sees the necessity of both. But for unity we should not know a man from a gorilla, and but for diversity we should not distinguish one person from another. But for unity in the Christian faith and diversity in Christian opinion one man could not help another to the true interpretation of the Bible. While there need be but "one faith," there may be *opinions ad infinitum*. While the Bible presents us with an infinite variety of truth, the world of thought comes to its study with an infinite variety of mind. But alas for both mind and truth! at the point where we might fill the God-appointed mission of helping one another selfishness interdicts, and establishes metes and bounds to investigation by declaring "thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." Such interdiction is without authority either in reason or revelation. The Bible is peculiar in this, that while it comes down with its saving truth to meet the capacity of the weakest mind, it ascends to heights of thought which challenge the effort and admiration of the most giant intellect. And even he who knows most of the Bible truth only finds himself placed on vantage-

ground from which he can look up into the unknown heights. What presumption, therefore, for any man or set of men to seek to establish limits to the interpretation of a revelation which extends beyond the compass of our thought! Besides, the human creed is not only a hinderance in the search after Bible truth, but it is a standing menace and outrage to the individual reason.

The right of one man in the business of creed-making is the right of another. Why not? Each has been endowed with reason, both have the Bible, and neither claims inspiration. If, therefore, crimination for opinion's sake is justifiable, then recrimination is equally so. If the Calvinists have the right to proclaim the doctrine of "foreordination and decree" as the ground of Christian fellowship, then Arminians are justifiable in declaring "free grace" and "free will" as the condition of brotherhood. One set of men may claim that one of these doctrines is obviously taught in the Bible, and the other not; another may claim precisely the contrary. Who shall decide? Wherein is the authority of one set better than that of the other? Is it maintained that there is orthodoxy and heterodoxy in the world, and that we are commanded to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints"? We reply that the "faith delivered to the saints" was not that of human opinion, but rather that faith in Christ which works by love and purifies the heart. "If any man have not the spirit

of Christ, he is none of his," no matter for the correctness of his opinions. A loving heart will fully atone for the mistakes of the head. As previously indicated, the true ground of Christian fellowship is not to be found in what a man *thinks, says, or does*, but simply in what he *is*. "The kingdom of heaven is not meat nor drink;" and we may add, nor is it any mere opinion, for the reason that it is nothing less, and can be nothing more, than "righteousness," the result of which is "peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God." The Father has submitted revelation to reason, and has ordained that every man shall do his own thinking and thus contribute his mite to the discovery of truth. And as "to think is to differ," any set of men who interdicts the individual soul in its search after truth by a creed which would unchristianize it for his honest opinion offers an insult to God, does an irreparable wrong to the individual, and disgraces the religion of him who came to break the shackles of mental slavery, and to make men "free indeed."

The community, therefore, whether Catholic or Protestant, high-church or low-church, orthodox or heterodox, which would withhold Christian fellowship from a man for no other reason than that of his honest opinion touching Bible interpretation, is under the influence of evil as surely as were those who had Michael Servetus burned at the stake. It the same spirit, differing only in the degree of its

atrocities. And it is as foreign to the life, spirit, and teaching of the blessed Christ as is the blackness of midnight to the brightness of noonday. All the outrages, be they great or small, which have, during the history of the church, been perpetrated under the sacred name of Christianity should be charged, not to the account of our holy religion, but to the bad angel of man's nature. Hell is not more remote from heaven than is the spirit of religious persecution from the teaching of Him who said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you, and persecute you." Had this divine command, which is characteristic of all that Jesus said and did, been carefully observed, then a cudgel had not been placed in the hand of infidelity, the bloody pages of ecclesiastical history had not been written, the human creed had not been made to antagonize the open Bible and to hinder the progress of the apostolic church in its onward and upward mission of unifying all hearts with each other and with Christ. All the contentions, bickerings, and fighting of modern times over disputed points of systematic theology, and all the more bloody persecutions of olden times, must be accepted as nothing but gross perversions of a religion of universal unity.

That the true leaven of Christianity is leavening the lump of depraved humanity is clearly seen in the fact that the spirit of sectism has ceased build-

ing walls to divide the church of Christ. And even those that have been built are toppling to their final fall. Once so high as to bar "fraternal greetings" and hush the cheer of "good-will," but now so dilapidated that we walk over to each other's prayer-meetings and heartily unite in singing the same songs of Zion.

While the Bible is being published and scattered abroad as never before, human creeds are rapidly being superannuated and laid upon the shelf. Such is the spirit of the nineteenth century, under the inspiration of Christian civilization, that the Protestant church is doomed if it takes from the shelf the "confession of faith" and, after whipping off the dust, seeks to enforce its doctrines upon its individual membership. Only let the spirit of brotherly love and Christian unity go on, in the soon-coming future these human inventions will be buried beneath the dust beyond the hope of a resurrection. "Christian union" is not only greatly desired, but it is universally predicted by those who believe that Christ is to have "the heathen for an inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." Certainly none is so vain as to hope for absolute "Christian union" on the basis of any one of the many human creeds! The growing spirit of intelligence and inquiry makes it more and more impossible for men to see alike on questions of disputed theology. The only possible hope of agreement is to "agree to disagree"—to agree in spirit to disagree

in opinion. An open Bible, with the recognized right and duty of each to read and understand, will bring about a union of "love which works no ill to its neighbor."

Having sought to show that cruel persecution which has been perpetrated upon humanity under the sacred name of Christianity is not admissible as testimony against the character and teaching of Jesus, but is rather to be charged to the account of human depravity, we now pass to say—

(2) Nor is the wickedness of professed disciples admissible as testimony adverse to the spotlessness of the life and teaching of Jesus, or of the influence of his religion.

Here again it must be observed that at the bar of reason Christianity must be tried on its own merits and not on the merits of those who have donned its profession. Infidelity having referred exultingly to the fact that inhuman outrages have been perpetrated upon humanity in the name of Christ, it proceeds to say that some of the worst characters in the community are those who make the greatest pretensions to Christian virtue. This is indeed a sorrowful reflection upon human nature, but not upon Jesus or his religion. No intelligent man, however skeptical, can study the simplicity, frankness, honesty, and boundless love of Him who went about doing good without discovering an irreconcilable discrepancy between such a character and that of the vile wretches referred to, who are a disgrace

to manhood and a dishonor to God. Even in the eyes of intelligent and honest infidelity, if such an anomaly exists, the one seems to have come from the land where angels dwell, with the view of lifting earth to heaven, while the other has migrated from the region of hypocrites to deface all that is beautiful in nature and lovely in manhood. A life of falsehood and dishonesty, practiced under lofty pretensions of Christianity, if adjudged at the bar of worldly wisdom, will unhesitatingly be pronounced nothing but vile hypocrisy under the cloak of religion. Nor will any one fail to observe that Jesus in his ministry, in the most terrific terms, condemned the hypocrite as being the vilest of the vile.

If we be interrogated as to the reason why men practice villainy under the mask of Christianity, we reply, for the same reason that when a scoundrel wishes to make and pass counterfeit money he selects the bank of the best reputation upon which to practice his rascality. This, so far from being a disparagement upon the bank, only reflects credit upon its character. As there can be no counterfeit without a genuine, neither can there be a hypocrite without a character which is real and commendable. The "wolf in sheep's clothing" only evidences the good character of the sheep, and the satanic sagacity of the wolf in donning its garb. The murderous and carnivorous purpose of the wolf can be better served by his putting on the appearance of an innocent and harmless sheep. The common verdict of

mankind is that Christianity, when viewed in the light of its own teaching, is "holy, harmless, and undefiled." Hence villainy often takes the advantage of the popular sentiment, and covers its depravity under the cloak of Christianity with no other purpose than that of practicing imposition upon a credulous community. But the increasing number of wicked pretenders only goes to show that the firm confidence in the absolute purity of Christ and his religion is not undermined even by the occasional baseness of its hypocritical friends. "Is the man what he pretends to be?" is the question which is everywhere being asked; and if he is found to possess the life and spirit of the Master, even infidelity has no further criticism. The days of deception are not numbered. In the time of Christ the scribes and Pharisees were little less than a progeny of hypocrites who were pronounced "whited sepulchers." But now as then the covering should be taken off that the "dead men's bones" may appear. The point, however, which needs to be made in the interest of a true judgment is, that a false, dishonest, and hurtful life is not to be charged to the account of Christianity. This skepticism itself must admit. If a man in whom sin had done its perfect work in bringing him to poverty, disgrace, and unutterable wretchedness were to claim that all his shame and misery were the results of his fidelity to Christ and his religion, there is not an infidel in the land who has sense enough to know right from

wrong who would not unhesitatingly pronounce it a gross libel on Christianity. And yet if infidelity be dispossessed of its arguments drawn from the pages of ecclesiastical history and the wicked lives of some professed disciples, its stock in trade would be well-nigh exhausted and bankruptcy would be inevitable.

It is worthy of observation, that those who urge the objection under consideration usually offer it as an apology for an irreligious life. And with the view of magnifying the objection they select the worst Christian and the best worldling, and then institute the unfavorable comparison. They neglect to observe that the worst Christian, perhaps, is nothing but a hypocrite, or, at best, that he was born and bred under unfavorable circumstances; while that best worldling is what he is largely through the influence of the Christian religion. Even if it be conceded that the moral character of infidelity is better than that of heathendom, we must conclude that it should be credited to the account of Christian civilization.

This leads to the final observation, that Christ and his religion are in the world answering the prediction made of the little stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands, smiting the image of sin upon his feet, and breaking them in pieces, and becoming itself a great mountain, filling the whole world (see Dan. ii : 34, 35): that they are the moral and spiritual leaven which is destined, under God, to permeate all nations, unify all hearts, and

fill the world with the angelic shout of "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good-will to men." Then shall be ushered in that long-predicted and much-desired time when the tribes of earth "shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHRIST'S ATONEMENT.

Natural diversity and Christian harmony of opinion.—(I) Points of agreement: No doctrine of atonement in the primitive church; first attempts to formulate it led to absurdities; all attempts have left it difficult and doubtful; sin alienates from God; divine help necessary, and given in Christ's life and death.—(II) Points of disagreement: As to the method by which Christ's atonement works; as to its object, whether to deal with God, or with man.—Former contradicts God's known attributes of love and immutability.—Latter agrees with conceded facts of man's sinful alienation, and need of repentance stimulated by enlightenment through Christ's precept and example, and renewed love won by Christ's suffering.

LONG and fierce has been the controversy over the doctrine of Christ's atonement. And these discussions have only evolved new theories which call for new explanations. This is the natural result of intelligent free-thought. The more men are left to think in the liberty wherewith Christ makes them free, the greater will be the variety of opinion.

That this diversity of honest human thought is as God proposed, is clearly seen in the fact that he makes no two minds to look at truth from precisely the same standpoint, and hence no minds ever come to the same conclusion, however frequently they may have subscribed to the same articles of faith. It is marvelously strange, but nevertheless true, that when God creates one soul, he at once destroys the molds in which that soul was cast; from the mighty world to the tiny insect, he has not been under the necessity of making any two things exactly alike.

Hence, every human effort at bringing about "unity of thought" otherwise than through the instrumentality of loving reason is to antagonize the providence of God. "Let God be true, but every man a liar." While unity in the Christian faith and the bonds of Christian love is a possibility under the working of the largest personal liberty and the greatest development of scholarly theology, yet "unity of opinion," under the contingencies of free and intelligent investigation of God's truth, is an absolute impossibility. "To think is to differ."

Union may be had in only one of two ways: first, by the masses consenting to stultify their own thoughts and allowing one man or set of men to do the thinking; or, secondly, by cheerfully permitting each man to do his own thinking. While the former is the union of superstition, of which the world has had too many examples, the latter is the

union of Christianity: the sublime end for which Christ prayed. One is of men, the other of God. The only lamentable fact in connection with the discussion of systematic Christian theology is, that the bad angel of man's nature has too often exhibited his horns. If, therefore, we can contribute somewhat to the spirit of fraternal regard, we shall be justified in entering this field of controversy.

"In the multitude of counsel there is safety," if only the spirit of theological dogmatism can be relegated to the region of darkness. The long and fierce controversy which has been had over the doctrine of Christ's atonement convinces us of the importance in which it has been held by scholarly men. But it is a stubborn fact that these men, with all their learning and piety, have been led to think in different channels, and, hence, to arrive at very different conclusions. It is impossible, of course, for more than one of these different views to be *absolutely* correct; yet, if the heart be right, God will supplement the deficiency of the head. That man, whoever he may be, whether Catholic or Protestant, who in this enlightened age of free thought would ostracize a brother for his honest convictions upon this important but difficult subject, only placards a littleness which calls for Christian commiseration. With this view of the subject it will be no part of our purpose to magnify discrepancies of opinion, but rather we shall seek to emphasize the points of agreement.

SECTION (I).

Points of Agreement.

(1) All are agreed that the primitive church, for more than three hundred years after Christ, had no controversy over the doctrine of atonement. The canonical books of the New Testament were accepted as sufficiently explicit on the subject. While Christians were fully convinced as to the fact that rebellious man could be reconciled to God through the mediation of Jesus Christ, they seemed to have no thought of setting up human theories as tests of Christian fellowship. Such terms as "vicarious atonement," "substitutional righteousness," etc., were not even thought of, much less were they regarded as essential to Christian character. In those days of primitive simplicity, it was enough to confess *faith in Christ* as the way, the truth, and the life. With God it is enough now, and will be enough forever. "We look in vain throughout the early centuries of the Christian church for anything like a systematic development of the doctrine of atonement." This is a fact of history that none will dispute.

(2) All are agreed that the first efforts at theorizing on the subject of the atonement only resulted in a lingo of mythical absurdities. While for the first three hundred years of the church all seemed to

have been satisfied with the Bible statement of faith, the fourth century was rife with the spirit of theological speculation. Every great doctrine of the Bible was subjected to the ordeal of metaphysical theorizing. This was the age, as all must concede, that gave birth to the controversies which have been kept up ever since on subjects of dogmatic theology. While those first speculators seem to be agreed as to the fact that the atonement was a commercial transaction, yet they differed as to how and as to whom the purchase-price was paid. Some supposed that Christ satisfied the demands of the law by keeping it, in man's stead, both in letter and spirit, while others maintained that Jesus purchased man's redemption with the price of his own blood. But we are all agreed now that their theories were "mythical" for the reason that the orthodox faith then maintained that the price was paid to Satan. "During the first four centuries there appeared no certainty of opinion as to whether the ransom-price was paid to God or to the devil. The latter supposition is more prevalent" (hence the more orthodox), "and is shared in by Origen and St. Augustine. Gregory of Nyssa explains this opinion by saying that the devil consented to receive Jesus as a ransom, because he regarded him as more than an equivalent for all those under his power; but that, notwithstanding his subtlety, he was outwitted, for, owing to the humiliation in which Christ was veiled, he did not fully recognize him as the Son of God, and con-

sequently was himself deceived. But having consented to receive him as a ransom for mankind, he was righteously deprived of his dominion over man, whilst he could not retain Jesus when he discovered him to be the holy Son of God, being horrified and tormented by his holiness." (*Chambers's Encyclopædia*, under "Atonement.")

On the supposition that the atonement was purely a commercial transaction, we should not be surprised that men of sense should have been led to conclude that the price of man's redemption was paid to the devil! Why not? By common consent mankind had fallen into the hands of Satan. He being not only the legitimate consignee, but absolute owner, having jurisdiction over a totally depraved race, of whom else could the purchase be justly made? On the supposition that man, in his spiritual nature, was nothing but unmixed moral corruption, the only wonder is that those early speculators could have conceived it possible for an absolutely holy God to have so interested himself in the recovery of such depravity as to make the purchase of Satan at such an enormous price as that of the cruel death of his Son! The explanation, however, for such seeming inconsistency is found in the fact that the doctrine of total depravity formed no part of their theory, the church as yet having never heard of a theory so out of keeping with sound reason.

If God loved man as man and never loved him

less than he does now, as all are agreed, such a supposition must inevitably lead to the conclusion that there was something in man that made him worthy of such infinite compassion and love. Certainly it is not in keeping with reason to suppose that a being of infinite wisdom and absolute holiness could love a being who was destitute of every lovely quality. But be this as it may, while intelligent Christian men are at variance on the doctrine of total depravity, most critics are agreed as to the fact that those who began the business of speculating on the doctrine of atonement about the beginning of the fourth century were led into mythical absurdities.

(3) Nor can there be any question as to the fact that the doctrine of the atonement, as set forth by different scholastic churchmen, is both difficult and of doubtful meaning. With all the conceded acuteness and even subtilty of Athanasius, his labored efforts on the atonement were too vague to be even understood by any but himself. He could successfully disprove the theory that the ransom was paid to the devil, but could give no intelligible reason as to how or why the price of man's purchased redemption was paid to God. And all the efforts that were made to explain the theory of Athanasius, for near six hundred years, only helped to exhibit a metaphysical mystery. As human ingenuity had only succeeded in making darkness more visible and confusion more confounded, it is claimed that at the end of these near six hundred years light shone out

of the darkness, in the person of the Bishop of Canterbury. But in the light of history, it would seem that even Bishop Anselm, with all his profound wisdom, only succeeded in laying the foundation of endless disputation.

Furthermore, what is now regarded as fundamental, namely, that Christ endured the punishment due to man, Anselm nowhere teaches, though he is regarded as having laid the foundation of the present orthodox faith. If, therefore, there still lingers a disposition to unchristianize a man for opinion's sake, this great bishop must be placed in the catalogue of heretics. Moreover, we must remember that men were disputing, then as now, as to whether Christ's mediation affected God or man, or both. During the Reformation, equally wise and Christian men were in dispute. Luther, after great labor, brought out his doctrine of the atonement only to be set aside by that of Calvin, and both to be replaced by the theory of Socinius. Thus we are presented with a trinity of great men, each claiming to be orthodox, and each counting the other to be a heretic. And while Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Socinianism were each claiming to be sound in the faith, Catholicism was unhesitatingly pronouncing all three to be heterodox. Besides, these human statements of the doctrine of atonement were so exceedingly metaphysical, that if salvation depended upon believing them, then verily "there are few that be saved." In view of these historic facts it

must certainly seem that all sensible Christian men ought to "agree in spirit to disagree in opinion." "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

(4) All are agreed that sin alienates from God, and as long as men are shut up in sins they must be shut *out* from God. Man was made in the image of his Creator; but in the exercise of his free-will he violated the laws of his being, and thus the creature was spiritually separated from the Creator. Sin, therefore, is the only wall of separation between an absolutely holy God and rebellious man. Only let sin be removed, by whatever method, and all are agreed that reconciliation would be effected.

(5) Nor do we differ in the belief that the atonement was and is a *necessity*. Looking back over the history of mankind, we discover that man was not only lost in ignorance and consequent sin, but that with every effort he made he only succeeded in making darkness more palpable. Hence the necessity of mediation on the part of the loving Father. Nor are we at liberty to believe that any part of God's plan of mediation could be dispensed with. The suffering and death of Christ, therefore, being a part of God's plan of recovering a lost race, must be regarded as a necessity. As Christ's teaching, life, death, and resurrection each play a part in bringing man to repentance, forgiveness, and recovery, it would seem that if we regard any one part as being unessential, by the same reasoning we may dispense

with another and another, until the Christ of the New Testament is swept away. As the plan of man's redemption was determined upon in the councils of Infinite Wisdom, we must conclude that all that Jesus *said, did, suffered, and triumphed over* were but so many parts of that God-appointed plan. As Jesus taught for man's instruction, lived for man's example, died for man's transgressions, and rose for man's justification,—if we allow any of these things to drop out of the divine catalogue as non-essential, we must conclude that Infinite Wisdom has made a mistake which human ignorance has discovered. All are agreed, therefore, that Christ's mediation, including his death, was a *necessity*. Having noticed some of the points upon which Christians are agreed, it must be obvious to every intelligent and charitable mind that the points of agreement are vastly greater than can be those of dispute. We can, therefore, with Christian charity, allow our reason to have the sway while we discuss the points of disagreement.

SECTION (II).

Points of Disagreement.

As all Christians are agreed that perishing humanity must be brought to repentance and forgiveness through the mediation of Christ, the "points of disagreement," however wide and irreconcilable, are, nevertheless, not essentially important provided we exercise such faith in Christ's atonement as will lead

us to repentance and forgiveness. Certainly all must agree that the supreme thought in the mind of the great Father was, and is, that the "Prodigal" might be induced to return to his Father's house.

(1) Christians differ as to the method by which this great work is wrought in the human heart. As we view it, this depends largely upon a man's make-up. One dwells upon Christ's *teaching* as the world's greatest necessity. Man, in his estimation, had not only lost the moral image of God, but he had no knowledge of the sacred relation that the creature sustained to an absolutely holy Creator, and, hence, no knowledge of the obligations growing out of such relation to turn to God with full purpose of heart. Only let the judgment be enlightened, and a man of generous impulse is inclined to follow in the path of such enlightenment. Only let him be taught the "fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man," and such faith, accompanied by the spirit of inspiration, moves him Godward in the path of repentance and forgiveness.

Another is touched and moved to repentance by contrasting his own ignoble and unworthy life with that of the pure and holy *life* of the blessed Jesus. He dwells especially upon the divine pattern, which so sublimely illustrates the possibilities of the human soul. Such holy contemplation leads him to abhor sin because it wrongs the soul, and because, if continued in, it will lead to death. He therefore turns from it as from deadly poison.

Another stands in awe and is moved to holy thought as he reflects upon the matchless *power* of Him at whose words the laws of the universe were suspended and the glory of the Highest made to appear. "God manifest in the flesh" is the absorbing thought which moves him to repentance and forgiveness.

Because of the peculiar make-up of still another, he thinks not so much of the teaching, life, or miraculous power of Christ as he does of his awful *death*. And though he could read unmoved the manifestations of God's power in the punishment of sin, and hear without trembling the thunders of Mount Sinai, yet "Jesus on the cross" is an expression of the Father's love and desire to save the lost and bring back the rebellious, which is more than his traitorous heart can endure. While his eyes are turned toward the cross, he is moved to tears of repentance and receives forgiveness.

Another, the natural tendency of whose mind leads him to dwell more upon the future, thinks not so much of what Jesus said, did, or suffered, as he does upon the *risen*, ascended, and glorified Redeemer. The supreme thought in his mind is, that sin of necessity shuts the soul out from such absolute purity and superlative glory; and under the influence of such reflection he is led to a "repentance which needeth not to be repented of."

Another mind, of more logical construction, sweeps through the entire field of Christ's media-

tion, as Teacher, Pattern, Lawgiver, Saviour, Redeemer, "King of kings, and Lord of lords." To him every step in the divine logic is an indispensable link in the chain of saving grace. He would not magnify one to the disparagement of another. All originated with God, and hence all are necessary parts of a sublime whole.

It is thus that Christ, in his mediatorial office, comes to meet the necessities of our many-sided nature, and to make it possible for us to help each other in the discovery of God's saving truth. But too often, just at the point of helpfulness, the spirit of theological dogmatism interdicts, and assumes to be "lord over God's heritage." "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God."

(2) We disagree as to the *object* of Christ's atonement. The narrow space allotted to this chapter will not permit us to give even an outline of the various opinions which have been advocated by Calvinism on the one hand, and Arminianism on the other. Any effort to catalogue these varieties of thought would be like attempting to count the shadows. It is sufficient to say that Calvinism of the sixteenth is not Calvinism of the nineteenth century. While it is one thing on this side of the ocean, it is quite another thing on the other side. What is considered as sound orthodox at Andover would fall far short of being considered so at Princeton. The Calvinism of Woods and Edwards would be placed under the ban of "heresy" by the Calvinism of Campbell and his followers.

If we turn to Arminianism we find the same diversity of opinion. The theory advocated by Arminius was only a reconstruction of the doctrine taught by the acute Socinius. Furthermore, Arminianism and Socinianism were but the prototypes of a progeny of opinion which can hardly be named. The Arminian "Remonstrants" and Socinian "Counter-remonstrants" dealt against each other criminations and recriminations. But none of those ancient theories would answer to the doctrine of modern Socinianism, and Arminianism of olden times is not that of modern times. Arminius and Socinius would protest if they were placed in the same catalogue with Channing, Ware, Taylor, and Livermore.

The history of religious opinions shows that the doctrine of Christ's atonement has been viewed from almost every conceivable standpoint, and hence there has been an evolution of opinions almost *ad infinitum*. With all this diversity, however, there is a distinction which is so marked as to deserve our special attention.

First, was the death of Christ designed to "deal with God on behalf of man"? As the popular theory gives an affirmative answer to this question, the reader should, as far as possible, rid himself of preconceived opinions and give to it a careful examination and an unbiased criticism.

It is claimed, on the divine side, that God established a law for the government of man, with the

penalty of death attached to its violation, and that justice demanded the enforcement of that penalty, after man had transgressed. Certainly it would seem to be in perfect keeping with justice that man should die if, by acts of his own free-will, he has forfeited his claim to life. It is further claimed that mercy intervened, and that it was decided in the councils of Infinite Wisdom that justice would be satisfied with the device of having the innocent suffer in the "room and stead" of the guilty. Is divine justice to be satisfied by satanic injustice? Such a conclusion seems not only to be devoid of all reason, but to contradict every known attribute of God. If Christ, in his suffering and death, was dealing with God on behalf of man, by paying the debt which man had incurred, then it would seem that Infinite Wisdom had made a mistake in enacting a law the penalty of which he was not willing to enforce upon the guilty; or else, what is worse, that he had predetermined that the penalty should be inflicted upon the innocent that the guilty might justly go free—an inevitable alternative!

Certainly the wisdom of God precludes the possibility of his having made such a law, while his love renders it utterly impossible for him to have resorted to the awful expedient of causing the righteous to suffer in "the room and stead" of the wicked. Is it possible for a man to conceive that *Christ is God's gift to man prompted by his love* and at the same time believe that the object of *Christ's*

death was to reconcile God to man by appeasing his wrath? This is a flat contradiction of terms: two things which no mind ever did or ever can believe at the same time. The very fact that "Christ was God's gift to man" illustrates in the most forcible manner the fact that he was already "reconciled" to man. To suppose, therefore, that the object of Christ's death was to deal with God on behalf of man with the view of purchasing the Father's pardoning love is to suppose that Jesus suffered the awful death of the cross with the sublime view of purchasing for man that which he already possessed.

All Christians are agreed in the fact that God is essentially love as he is essentially God. This precious truth being conceded, we aver, as a necessary sequel, that the Father's nature is such that a change in his affections is an impossibility unless there be a change in the object of his love. Had he ever been unreconciled to man, then reconciliation would have been an impossibility in the very nature of his being unless man had changed. To conclude otherwise is to contradict the universally conceded doctrine of "God's immutability." Hence to us the Bible clearly and everywhere teaches that the All-Father never loved man *as man* any less than he loves him now. Never was there a time when he did not call man with a compassionate love to forsake his sins. Never was there a time when he was not full of mercy and willing to pardon the penitent. Nor was there anything in the nature of God, nor yet in his

laws, which hindered him in the free exercise of his pardoning mercy if opportunity offered on the human side. To conclude otherwise is to believe that God had enacted laws which hindered the outgoing of his loving heart, or, what is worse, that there was no love to outgo.

We emphasize the important fact that since the world began there was absolutely nothing to hinder the Father's pardoning love but the *impenitent heart of man*. Hence, we conclude that the divine plan of salvation was confronted with no difficulty, nor was there anything contemplated but to break down and bring to repentance the hard and obdurate heart of man. This done, and man would be saved in any age or country of the world. Otherwise, He who "has made of one blood all nations to dwell upon the face of the earth" has put the conditions of salvation beyond the reach of many. The fact to be kept distinctly before the mind is, that God did not love our race because Christ died, but rather Christ died because of God's unbought love for lost humanity. It was not to change the unchangeable character of the Father, nor yet to vindicate his wise and unalterable laws, that Christ died. We cannot believe that the Infinite One was reduced to any such dilemma or contingency. God, in his dealing with mankind as well as in his revelation, is set forth as a being who rewards righteousness and punishes wickedness. His love for the right is only equaled by his hate for the wrong.

With this view of the character of God which has obtained among all Christians, can we conceive that a being of such spotless and holy nature would cause the innocent to suffer for the crimes of the guilty, and that, too, as a contingency to extricate himself from a dilemma in which he had been involved by the enactment of his own laws? Such a supposition seems to involve the conclusion that Infinite Wisdom and boundless love have managed the affairs of divine government in such a way as to bring about an injustice such as would forever disgrace the vilest king that ever usurped an earthly throne.

If the death of Christ was designed to "deal with God on behalf of man," then coherency of thinking will lead us to conclude that the divine plan of salvation was for God to deal with himself that he might thus produce the spirit of pardoning love which had ever been and ever will be an essential of his nature. To assume that "God was in Christ reconciling" himself to the world is not only to reverse the order of revelation, but it illustrates the possibility of reasoning in a circle.

Secondly, was the object of Christ's mediation, including his death, to "*deal with man on the part of God*"? If we would answer this important question in the light of reason and revelation we should carefully inquire—

1.—If the relation of God and man were once that of father and child, who and what gave rise to

the alienation? We excite no controversy in saying that man, because of his violation of God's righteous law, was driven out from the spiritual presence of his Father. No one will deny the proposition that nothing, absolutely nothing, but man's willful sin ever stood or ever can stand between the human and the divine. All are agreed that the very nature of the Infinite One is such that while man is shut up in sin he must of necessity be shut out from God, and hence lost and ruined.

2.—If it be conceded that man went away from God by going into sin, how shall union be restored but by the prodigal's returning to his Father's house? To avoid the responsibility of making himself a party to sin, the Father is only at liberty to contemplate reconciliation as a possibility through the instrumentality of a method which will induce man to quit sin and return to God. Certainly, as man had changed the relation of "Father and child" by willingly going into rebellion, he can only restore such relation by willingly laying down his arms and suing for pardon. Conversion is a necessity only on the part of one that is going in the wrong direction. God has not changed in his fatherly love; only man has changed in his filial relation. Preparatory to reconciliation three things must be done; namely, man must be brought to repentance, seek pardon, and thus put himself in position to receive God's pardoning love. This done, by whatever method, the returning prodigal can and will, with a most

blessed experience, receive the incoming spirit of adoption. To bring man to the knowledge of sins pardoned is the Father's best work in his behalf.

3.—By what method can man be induced to quit sin and return to God? If we cannot believe that the Father forced man into sin, neither can we believe that he will compel him to return. If freely man had gone away from God, then freely he must return, if at all. If, in the light of the character of God as made known in revelation, we contemplate him as devising a plan for the recovery of his lost children, it would seem that he would forecast a method perfectly adapted to man's many-sided nature. Man's native intellectuality, sociality, morality, and religiosity would be addressed with most loving appeal. His intellect must be enlightened, his social relations must be explained to him, his relations and obligations to mankind must be emphasized, and, above all, his kinship to the Creator, and his consequent first duty to love and obey that Creator, must be unfolded and impressed by the most invincible argument of a Father's love. Everything that heavenly wisdom could devise and boundless love execute, consistently with man's free-will, must be done.

“ Know thou that every soul is free
To choose his life and what he'll be;
For this eternal truth has given,
That God will force no man to heaven.”

If man was not divinely forced, but humanly free

to go into rebellion, then he must be equally free in his repentance before pardon can be granted. Hence the Father, because of his nature and the free moral character of man, could not, from necessity, be just in justifying the sinner until, by some plan, man was brought to repentance. Even an earthly father could not be just to himself, much less to his son, if he were to pardon his prodigality before he was brought to deep contrition of heart. Such an act of pardoning would be an injustice to both father and son. Hence if God had proposed to pardon man while he was yet in a state of impenitence, he would not only have made himself a party to sin, but he would also have encouraged the sinner to continue his rebellion. Certainly both reason and revelation show that pardon can only be extended on the ground of repentance. Christ, therefore, in his mediatorial office, *was appointed to deal with man on the part of God* if by any means he could bring him to repentance and consequent forgiveness.

And, 4.—If repentance only can secure the Father's pardoning love, in what way does Christ's mediation lead to repentance and bring pardon and the spirit of adoption? In this connection we are to consider the details of Christ's mediation in their relation to the varied necessities of man's nature. Could it be shown that the religion of Jesus failed in any particular to meet the soul's many-sided necessities, it would, by so far, be an objection to its

divinity of origin. But if in tracing the analogy we discover that all that Christ did, said, and suffered was in perfect adaptation to the soul's nature and varied necessities, then we infer that He who made the soul must be the Author of such religion. By studying the complicated organism of the eye in its relation to light, we unhesitatingly conclude that the one was made for the other. So likewise if we study the various parts of Christ's mediation in their relation to the soul's diversified necessities, we must be led to the conclusion that the one was designed for the other. We shall thus observe that each step in God's method of saving lost humanity is a necessity, for the reason that it is an exact counterpart to the nature of the soul.

Man's first necessity is *intellectual enlightenment*. If Christ was appointed to deal with man on the part of God, where shall he begin but with man's ignorance? Looking back into the history of the world, we observe that with all its wisdom it was nevertheless utterly ignorant of three subjects, each of which was most important to be understood, namely, *God*, *Duty*, and *Destiny*. With our present enlightenment we can readily see that if mankind are to be brought back to God and to willing obedience to the laws of their being, they must first be instructed upon these sublime themes. This first necessity of man's nature is fully met in the teaching of Jesus. During his three years' ministry he taught nothing but the fatherly character of God and the

duty and destiny of man. Certainly there is and can be no truth in the wide universe of truth of such importance as the truth of man's filial relation to the All-Father and his consequent obligation to love and obey his Creator. Next to this foundation-truth is that of man's kinship to man, and his obligation to do unto all men as he would they should do to him. As an additional incitement, provoking man to nobility of character, he must be taught that he is not only an heir to the great Father and a brother to universal man, but that his destiny is *eternity*. If Christ is to deal successfully with man on the part of God, it must be obvious to every thoughtful mind that he should *begin* where he did, by enlightening the world upon these three sublime themes. "Man's necessity" being "God's opportunity," Christ left the field of human wisdom and took hold of these profound subjects, with which the wisest men had grappled for four thousand years only to show the utter weakness of man's best efforts. Not only were these the only themes that claimed the attention of the Divine Teacher, but he taught them so clearly and fully that the accumulated wisdom of the ages has not been able to discover to the world one solitary thought on the three heavenly themes of *God*, *Duty*, and *Destiny* that was not embodied in the words of Him who spoke as man never spoke.

Again, if man is to be brought back to willing obedience, he must have, secondly, the objective les-

son of *example*. Purposing to do all that can be done consistent with man's free-will, the Father appointed a Mediator, whose oral instruction was to be illustrated by his heavenly example. If Jesus stands before the world without a parallel in proclaiming the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, so likewise does his spotless life of burden-bearing and going about doing good tower infinitely above that of all the philanthropists of the ages past, and will forever stand out as a life of absolute perfection—an example which, though given near two thousand years ago, is yet ten thousand years in advance of our times.

And then, having enlightened the head both by precept and example, the Father would appeal to the human heart. For, after all, if the heart be not moved to love, there can be no acceptable service. While intellectual enlightenment is an absolute necessity, it is a necessity only because it is God's way to the human heart. The Father seeks not our intelligence, but our *heart of love*. Having obtained this, all else will follow. Nor can man love by volition. If the heart goes out in love, its going must be a spontaneity. As a man cannot love by the direct effort of his own will, so neither can he be forced by any one else. We love only because we behold that which is lovely. To love in any other way than spontaneously is an impossibility.

As love cannot be forced either by the individual

or by another, so neither can it be suppressed, if only the object of the soul's affections are kept before the mind. As God seeks only man's heart of love, this object can be attained only by impressing the mind with that which is supremely lovely. It was not enough, therefore, for Jesus to teach, by word and deed, the Father's willingness to save the lost, but in the nature of the soul it becomes a necessity that he should impress, in the most forcible manner, the Father's love for humanity. Man, being first taught the nature and will of God, and then beholding an exhibition of his fatherly love, would be moved to repentance. This done, and forgiveness is assured, the assurance of which is the incoming of the spirit of adoption, whereby we recognize God as Father.

Nor can we conceive of a method by which the Father could have shown greater love to rebellious man than by the voluntary suffering and death of his only-begotten Son on the cross. While the world is full of infidelity, none are so skeptical as to question the fact of a mother's love. It has often shown itself to be sweeter than life and stronger than death. Yet both reason and revelation join to teach the precious truth that God's love is greater than that of an earthly mother, else we must believe that the stream can rise higher than its fountain, that the creature is better than the Creator. "Scarcely for a righteous man would one die: yet for a good man some would even dare to die. But God com-

mended his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v : 8).

It is not wonderful that the New Testament places so much stress on the blood of Christ as a necessity in bringing man to repentance and forgiveness. What moves the world's great heart of sin heavenward and Godward like the simple story of the cross? And the world needs to be told that it was for *our* sake, and not God's sake, that Christ suffered the dreadful agonies of Calvary. The Father's side of the controversy had long since been settled, else his only-begotten Son had never been sent into our sin-cursed world. The difficulty of reconciliation was wholly on the human side. When Jesus was teaching for man's instruction, living for man's example, dying for man's sins, and rising for man's justification, in each of those divine offices he was dealing with man on behalf of God ; that is, " God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself " (2 Cor. v : 19).

Three reasons may be offered why Christ's death was a necessity on the human side: First, we cannot understand how God could be just in justifying the sinner until the prodigal was brought to repentance, without making himself a party to the sin ; secondly, man would not be brought to repentance until his emotional nature was aroused ; thirdly, having been taught the will of God and knowing our own rebellion, nothing in the wide universe would be so likely to stir up our emotional nature and bring us

to repentance as that unparalleled love which was exhibited in the willing suffering and shameful and cruel death of Him who was rich with the Father, and who for our sake (not God's sake) became poor that we might be rich. The very suffering that man had richly merited Christ willingly took upon himself that we might be brought to repentance and forgiveness. Thus it was that "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows." Thus it was that "He was bruised for our iniquities, and with his stripes we are healed." With the fatherly view of moving the world's obdurate heart to repentance and saving a lost race, God has willingly allowed to be "laid upon him the iniquity of us all." And as the Son was like unto the Father in his love, so he went willingly and lovingly on his sublime mission of *teaching, living, and dying* that mankind might be brought to penitence and receive pardon and everlasting salvation. It will be to God's honor, as it will be to our joy and eternal blessedness, if we distinctly observe that all that Christ ever *said, did, or suffered* was for the single and sublime purpose of bringing sinners to repentance, that God might be "just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii : 26).

CHAPTER XXIV.

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

- Antecedent probabilities of God's completing a glorious design.—The Resurrection the foundation of Christianity.—I. Facts admitted: Christ's death, burial, and removal from the tomb. II. Points in question: Was the body removed by human instrumentality? Christ's enemies would not, his friends could not, have done it; Was the body removed by Divine power?—Circumstantial evidence: His own predictions, and subsequent history of Christianity.—Positive evidence: The testimony of his disciples, who were honest, were familiar with his face and person, met him later in Galilee, saw him ascend into heaven, and sacrificed their lives to testify to these things.—Christ's own declaration.

SUPPOSE that there is a God of infinite wisdom and power, who controls the universe for his own glory, and for the good of his intelligent creatures; suppose that Jesus manifested superhuman wisdom in that he proclaimed the highest truth in regard to God, human duty, and human destiny, subjects which had baffled the world's wisdom for four thousand years; suppose that Christ manifested miraculous power, in that he suspended the operation of natural law by introducing new methods and combinations, by which he did those things which belong only to God; suppose that, although Jesus lived in the darkest age of the world's history, when moral darkness everywhere prevailed, and the public heart was corrupt with idolatry, superstition, and hypocrisy, yet his goodly life was the only perfect

example the world ever saw ; suppose that this pure and spotless One had predicted that he would not only be put to death, but that on the third day he would rise from the dead ; suppose that, having given a law which would meet the necessities of man's nature for all ages to come, and which only needed to be ratified by the fulfillment of his predictions, he was taken and by wicked hands was cruelly put to death ;—can we then further suppose that the grave would be able to hold this priceless treasure of the world, and thus nullify all that had been divinely said and done ?

Will it not be a natural and inevitable conclusion that the Omnipotent and Omniscient will gloriously and harmoniously finish the work which he had so grandly begun ? Can we conceive, as the remotest possibility, that a being of absolute moral perfection and of infinite energy would start an enterprise so full of promise and seemingly divine, only that it might come to the inglorious end of being buried in a hopeless grave by the hand of wickedness ?

The foregoing suppositions, if admissible, are strong reasons, *a priori*, for believing that Christ would be raised from the dead. But we are not left with mere antecedent probabilities, however convincing they may be. The truth to be established is too important to rest upon the reasons of presumption, but upon the solid foundation of positive testimony, as the sequel will show.

Moreover, the fact that God raised Christ from

the dead is not only fundamental in our religion, but it must be regarded as the foundation upon which rests the temple of our faith and hope. If this one fact of the resurrection of Jesus be successfully disproved, then must the grand structure of Christian civilization topple to its final fall. But all the accumulated wisdom and honest criticism of the ages, together with all the combined infidelity of the centuries, have only helped to illustrate the truth of that divine proposition, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The enemies of Christianity, regarding the resurrection as the Gibraltar of our faith, are hurling their missiles at this strong defense. And we must admit that, if it were possible for this foundation-fact to go down before the sweeping tide of infidelity, all else that is Christly would go down with it.

It behooves us, therefore, to examine with the utmost care the ground of this hope. Besides, as it involves the question of immortality, there is and can be no fact relating to time that can vie with it in importance. If we can be made to believe without doubt that Christ was raised from the dead, then we cannot distrust the precious promise that those who "sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Let us consider—

(1) *Facts upon which all are agreed.* Fortunately, in this discussion, there are important considerations which may be assumed without argument on the ground of common consent.

(a) Both friends and enemies are agreed that Jesus was crucified, *was dead*. While we live in an age pre-eminently deistical, an age in which infidelity is even skeptical of its own skepticism, but few have had the temerity to call in question the historic fact that the Christ of the New Testament was put to death under the reign of Pontius Pilate. Those who have denied it are too few in number, and their arguments too weak, to claim attention.

(b) Nor has any one called in question the fact that Jesus was buried in the manner set forth by the sacred writers. Conceding the truth of his death, it is natural to suppose that he would be buried after the fashion of his times. And considering the further fact that he had previously predicted his resurrection, there is nothing marvelous in the *precaution* of rolling a great stone to the door of the sepulcher, placing the Roman seal upon it, and setting a detail of armed soldiers to guard against imposition. While all this precaution may be regarded as providential, yet there is nothing unnatural, and hence no one has called in question the historic facts of Christ's burial.

(c) Both Jew and gentile, infidel and Christian, heterodox and orthodox, are agreed in the proposition that the body of Jesus *left* the tomb. These points of agreement are important for the reason that, preparatory to arriving at the truth, we have nothing to do but to ascertain the *power* by which Jesus was taken from the sepulcher. We may observe, further-

more, that the history upon which both Christianity and infidelity rely gives us but two accounts as to the method by which Christ was taken from the tomb: one, that he was raised from death by Divine power; the other, that his friends took him away. We are thus left with the still easier task of determining which of the two stories is most in keeping with sound reason. If each of the two accounts is seen to involve a miracle, then human judgment must determine which is the more marvelous and hence least to be credited.

(2) *Propositions in which we are not agreed.* The Christian and infidel worlds are not agreed as to the *power* by which Jesus was taken from the sepulcher. While the one maintains that the dead body of Christ was resuscitated and brought from the tomb by the power of the Highest, the other claims that it was taken from the sepulcher by the hands of his friends. Before examining the testimony bearing upon these views, we wish to premise the following suppositions: (*a*) If God has divined a plan of saving our race through the mediation of Jesus Christ; (*b*) If it was planned that he should begin his mediation by assuming the office of public instructor, and clearly proclaiming such truth as had baffled the world's wisdom, and thus should indicate his divine knowledge; (*c*) If the heavenly programme purposed that the Mediator should not only do marvelous things, but such as would be matters of positive knowledge through human senses, about

which there was no possibility of the witness being honestly mistaken ; (*d*) If it was divinely purposed that Christ should live such a life of spotless purity as would not only forever bar intelligent and honest criticism, but would stand out for all ages to come as being but another illustration of his divinity ; (*e*) If it was designed of God that Jesus should seal his mediation as teacher, wonder-worker, lawgiver, and exemplar with his own blood, and thus, while upon the shameful cross, give an exhibition of heavenly love which was superhuman and about which there could be no honest cavil ; (*f*) If the plan of salvation contemplated Christ's resurrection from the dead,—we must then further (*g*) conclude from these suggestions that the same divine painstaking which has characterized every preceding step in the programme will be observed in the relation to each and all of the facts connected with the burial and resurrection of Jesus, that for all time intelligence and honesty shall not *be in doubt* touching a fact of such infinite importance.

From such suppositions we infer that every step of precaution against the possibility of imposition would be divinely supervised. God, as we know, works by human instrumentalities, and often brings wicked men, unwittingly on their part, into his service. The wicked Jews requesting Pilate to secure the sepulcher against the possibility of theft, and the disgraced governor who replied, "Ye have a watch: go your way, make it sure as you can,"

were unknowingly acting under the directions of a wise and beneficent Providence. Had this precaution not been taken, there would have been at least a show of truth in the saying among the Jews, that "his disciples came by night and stole him away." Not by the satanic sagacity of the Jews, but in the predetermined counsel of God, it was planned that every necessary precaution should be taken in the burial of Jesus, so that the wickedness of men should not prevail, nor should intelligence have an excuse at the bar of justice for infidelity.

We conclude, therefore, that the dead body of Jesus was taken from the cross and placed in Joseph's new tomb, which had been hewn out in a rock; that the Roman seal was placed upon it, under the law which imposed death upon the man who would dare to tamper with it; that the sixty chosen soldiers, backed up by the vast army of the Roman Empire, were placed about that tomb to watch, under the law which attached the penalty of death to the soldier who was found sleeping at his post;—we conclude that while all this precaution was the cunning device of wicked men, they were unwittingly carrying out the programme which heaven had designed.

Bearing in mind these several introductory suppositions, we are now prepared to examine the testimony as to whether the power by which Jesus left the tomb was *human* or *divine*.

First, was Christ's body taken from the sepul-

cher by human instrumentality? The sacred historian gives us both sides of the story touching the power by which Jesus left the tomb. He offers first what he regards as truth, namely, that "there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment was white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said to the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said." (Matt. xxviii: 2-6.)

Having stated the facts as he had them from the most invincible testimony, the sacred author next gives us the other side of the story, as follows: "Behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the priests all the things that were done. And when they [the priests] were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept. And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day." (Matt. xxviii: 11-15.)

It will be observed that this plan was adopted in the council of the priests and elders. After all the outrages which these same priests and elders had

been instrumental in having heaped upon Jesus, we can readily see that they felt called upon to make to the public some explanation in vindication of their satanic wickedness. When men holding public trust do a monstrous wrong, they at once seek to cover it up by an explanation backed up by falsehood. And if we take into account the excited condition of the public mind, the distinctness of the line which separated friends and enemies, we can hardly conceive a plan more feasible. The weakest point in the programme is where witnesses are introduced to testify to facts which transpired while they slept. But in the main it is the best that could be done. Certainly it will not do to say that his enemies snatched the body, and thus assist in making "the last error worse than the first." As the report had gone abroad that Jesus had said, "After three days I will rise again," the public will not entertain the thought that any but *friends* would have the temerity to molest the sepulcher. While the priests and elders, to cover their own wickedness, had in council decided upon the best story to be told, even this report would have made no progress among the Jews if the common people had been fully apprised of all the providential safeguards that were placed about the tomb of Jesus. They would have seen at once, as every intelligent and honest mind must now see, that the report was founded on both moral and physical impossibilities.

It may be observed, first, that it was morally im-

possible for those few disciples to have even proposed to steal the body of Jesus, for the reason that the promised reward of such action would in no wise be commensurate with the moral heroism required. (1) Suppose that the friends of Jesus were twelve in number, one of whom had turned traitor, leaving only eleven; (2) Suppose that these eleven friends were illiterate men belonging to a distant and despised country; (3) Suppose that this little company of admiring friends had followed their leader up to the great metropolis for the single purpose of attending the Jewish feast which was held in universal esteem; (4) Suppose that while there, in this world-renowned city, celebrating a religion which had permeated the whole life of the nation, they had seen the wise officials of this religion arrest their leader for heresy, and had heard the sentence pronounced under the sanction of popular sentiments; (5) Suppose that amid the vast assembly they had stood a great way off to witness the awful scenes of Calvary, and heard their Master, with his expiring breath, utter his last words, "It is finished," the spiritual meaning of which they little understood; (6) Suppose that with sorrowing and discouraged heart they saw their leader taken down from the cross, placed in a niche of solid rock, at the door of which was rolled a great stone, a Roman seal placed upon it which it was death to touch, and a guard of sixty armed soldiers placed around, charged with the duty of protecting the sepulcher; (7) Suppose that

the only conceivable motive for theft on the part of these eleven friends was to obtain the *dead* body of their Master, which had already been placed in a most beautiful tomb by the loving hands of his rich friends; (8) Suppose all this, which is in keeping with the historic facts: can we then further suppose that "his disciples came by night and stole him away," with worse than nothing to reward them for such a hazardous undertaking and such unparalleled heroism? *It is humanly impossible. Nothing short of a miracle could ever have induced such action.*

We observe, secondly, that even if it were possible for us to conceive of such unheard-of moral heroism with no promised reward, it was physically impossible for them to have succeeded. From the narrative the only pretense was that "his disciples came by night and stole him away while we [the soldiers] slept." To entertain such a supposition we must conclude that not only one, nor even a dozen, but the entire guard of sixty soldiers had all not only slept on soundly, but were all sleeping at the same moment. We must also conclude that each and all of these soldiers did this in violation of a law the penalty of which was death. Reflection forces us still further to conclude not only that these select men of the guard were all sleeping at the same time, but that this fact must have been known to the disciples. Besides, they must have been fully satisfied that not one or a dozen, but all the soldiers would remain sleeping while they rolled away the

great stone, removed the body, etc., else their undertaking would end in certain death. In the absence of divine interposition, sense and reason must regard such theorizing as involving a physical absurdity. Better suppose that these disciples were shielded with a divine armament and energized by Omnipotence.

To believe, therefore, in the light of all the facts of Christ's burial, that his dead body was taken from that tomb by the hands of his timid disciples, is to exhibit a degree of credulity vastly greater than is necessary to accept the simple story of the resurrection.

Secondly, was the dead body of Jesus resuscitated and brought from the sepulcher by the power of the Highest? As both Christian and infidel are agreed that Jesus was crucified, dead, and buried, and that his body left the tomb; and as it seems to be morally and physically absurd to suppose that his dead body was removed by human instrumentality, the only remaining conclusion that has even the show of reason is, that Christ left the sepulcher by divine interposition. But the Father has not left a subject of such infinite moment to his children to rest upon mere inference. That we might believe, nothing doubting, all that is *circumstantial* and *positive* has been providentially left as a legacy for human intelligence and honesty.

(1) *Jesus repeatedly predicted his resurrection.*

This is a truth of history that none will deny. It

was not only known to his disciples, but to his enemies as well. But for the public prediction, "After three days I will rise again," the priests and elders would not have taken the precaution of guarding the sepulcher. If we reflect upon the doctrine which Jesus taught, the life which he lived, and the religion which he sought to establish, this public prediction comes with the force of an argument in favor of his resurrection. We can hardly believe that a being of such conceded intelligence and purity of life would have made such a marvelous prediction in the absence of a supernatural spirit. Nothing but the fulfillment of this prediction will complete the chain of marvelous events which characterized the entire history of his miraculous career.

(2) *Subsequent events are strongly suggestive of the sublime truth of Christ's resurrection.*

Not only all the previous history of Jesus, connected with his prediction, but all that has since occurred, goes to establish the truth of that prediction. The world has been revolutionized on the supposition of the fulfillment of the prophecy, "After three days I will rise again." Had this last prediction failed, we can readily see that all had gone down in hopeless despair. The world's great Redeemer might have gone far beyond and above the world's wisdom in teaching the sublime truths touching God, human duty, and destiny, as he did; he might have lived a life of spotless purity, and manifested naught but the spirit of the great Father,

as he did ; he might have been cruelly scourged and disgracefully hanged on the cross to become the shameful spectacle of a gainsaying and profligate world, as he was ; he might have at last, as by divine effort, sent up the shout of victory, "It is finished !" and, to attest the absolute divinity of such utterance, the sun may have blushed into darkness and the very earth trembled, as they did ; his body might have been taken by the hands of his friends, and tenderly and lovingly buried in the sepulcher, at the door of which the great stone was laid sealed with the Roman seal, and around which a detail of armed soldiers may have been placed, as it was—all this may have taken place in exact keeping with the sacred history, yet if the last act in the divine programme had failed, all would have come to naught.

Not only all this must be conceded, but reflection goes on : Had Christ not been raised from the dead, then there would have been no civilized Europe nor any "England, mother of us all," whose chief glory is her Bibles ; had there been no resurrection, then there had been no Christian America, with its schools, colleges, and churches, stretching from ocean to ocean. In short, if Jesus had remained in the tomb, then there would have been no Christian civilization, but the world would have been sitting to-day, as it had been sitting for thousands of years, in the darkness of pagan superstition.

Can we suppose, by the largest stretch of imagi-

nation, that Peter would have stood up in the great city of Jerusalem and preached his first gospel sermon had he not fully believed that Jesus had been raised from the dead? Does it come within the line of possibilities that the first Jerusalem church would have been established but for the prevalence of such faith? In the light of reason, can we conclude that the religious world would have been revolutionized but for the doctrine of Christ's resurrection?

Certainly, both Christian and infidel are agreed in the fact that the Gospel began to be preached under the inspiration of this faith, and that the vast temple of Christian civilization rests upon this foundation.

To suppose, therefore, that Christ was not raised from the dead, is to conclude that the propagation of a falsehood has done more to establish truth and righteousness than all else put together: and not only this, but we must further conclude that all we have been accustomed to call good and great has been constructed upon the basis of a lie.

While these antecedent and subsequent events combine to present an array of circumstantial evidence sufficient to establish the truth of Christ's resurrection, as if to make certainty doubly certain we are providentially furnished with *positive* testimony which is simply overwhelming.

(3) *The testimony of the disciples.*

These witnesses are to testify, not to events which took place while they slept, but to a *fact* which they

witnessed, and one about which they could not be mistaken. Had they removed the dead body of Jesus from the tomb, certainly it must have been an event which they knew. Can it be conceived as humanly possible that these disciples could have stolen that body in defiance of law, and then, instead of making away with it and secreting themselves from being caught and punished, have gone into the city and publicly proclaimed that God had raised him from the dead, when they were promised nothing and received nothing but disgrace, persecution, suffering, and at last cruel death? This is so out of keeping with the law of human action, that the man who can believe it exhibits a credulity sufficient to take in all the hobgoblin stories of the Scandinavian mythology.

Nor does wonderment stop here. Why, if these disciples were publicly proclaiming a falsehood, did not those priests and elders who professed to be in possession of the evidence have them arrested for theft and falsehood, and not permit these thieves to turn the city upside down with a doctrine which was not only false, and based upon a crime, as they were prepared to prove, but which was a gross perversion of the established religion which had been committed to their charge, and upon which depended their popularity and support? Their silence under these circumstances proves, conclusively, that they had no confidence in their own report.

(*a*) That these disciples, on the other hand, were

sincerely honest is clearly evinced in all they said, did, and suffered. If we would realize the force of this testimony, we must regard the fact that these disciples did not go back to their own country in Galilee to tell the marvelous story of the resurrection, but, as commanded by their Master, they went directly into the city of Jerusalem, where all these wonderful events had taken place, and there stood up and proclaimed with irrepressible boldness the sublimest truth that ever saluted the ears of mortal.

We learn from the sacred history, that when the day of Pentecost had come, Peter, standing up with the eleven disciples, struck the key-note which was but the prelude to the music of the world's redemption from the tomb of sin. This was not only the first, but it was the most marvelous, gospel sermon ever preached by the mouth of mortal. The great preacher had but two propositions to submit, namely: first, that the Jews had by wicked hands taken Jesus and crucified him; and, secondly, that God had raised him from the dead. If a successful denial was a possibility, then and there were the time and place for such denial. The great orator was so deeply interested in the one all-absorbing thought of Christ's resurrection, that he seemed to think nothing and care nothing for what these jealous priests and elders might say or do, but so deeply was his own soul convinced of the sublime truth, that it seems to have sent forth burning words of eloquence and appeal, until the multitudes "were

pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and the rest of the disciples, Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Thus we see that the spirit of their own deep conviction was carried to the hearts of others, until three thousand were added to the church in a single day. Nor did the work stop here, but, as divinely predicted, it went out from Jerusalem, and spread through Syria, Assyria, Egypt, Babylon, and through all the provinces of Rome, until soon the mightiest empire of the world was revolutionized by the simple story of Jesus and the resurrection.

(*b*) These disciples were not only honest in their conviction that "God had raised Jesus from the dead," but it was a fact about which they could not be mistaken. They had been intimately associated with Jesus for three years, hearing his wonderful words, witnessing his marvelous power, and charmed with his life of spotless purity; so that they could not be mistaken as to his identity. They had personally seen him immediately after his resurrection, and had received instructions to go into Galilee, where they should meet him, as he had previously promised.

This meeting in Galilee would seem to be important for many reasons:

(1) Thus they would escape the animosity of the Jews, and the dangerous excitement which would necessarily attend the meeting if held at Jerusalem.

(2) It would afford an opportunity for his disciples and friends to meet without even the fear of be-

ing molested. While special reference is here only had to the eleven disciples, it is reasonable to suppose that, as this meeting seems to be called with the special object of settling, once and forever, the question of his resurrection, not only the eleven and the "seventy," but the "over five hundred" witnesses of whom Paul speaks were all present at this meeting of divine appointment.

(3) That secluded mountain would afford an opportunity thoroughly to canvass that all-absorbing question of his resurrection. The beautiful simplicity and ungarnished truthfulness of the sacred author are seen in the frank statement, "And when they saw him, they worshiped him: but some *doubted*;" thus incidentally exhibiting the honest sincerity of the inspired historian, and showing that these witnesses were not over-credulous (compare John xx: 24-28), but that their judgment must first be convinced before they could believe.

(4) This divine appointment should be made in Galilee, for the reason that there Jesus had spent most of his ministerial life, and hence there, better than anywhere else, his intimate acquaintances could meet and identify him, and thus be prepared to go forth as competent witnesses of the fact that this is the identical person with whom they had been intimately acquainted. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the "above five hundred brethren" (1 Cor. xv: 6) who saw Jesus at the same time were present at this meeting. So many

intimate acquaintances could hardly have been called together anywhere else. That this meeting was largely attended is further indicated in the statement, "And Jesus came and spake unto them." It would seem that the "some" who "doubted" were standing on the outskirts of the congregation, and hence could not distinctly identify him. It became necessary, therefore, for Jesus to go out and "speak unto them," that all doubts might thus be removed.

As Jesus had previously to his death appointed this meeting in Galilee, for reasons which we can readily understand, among which is the fact that there a larger number of competent witnesses could be called together, it is reasonable to suppose that he had divinely planned that those present at the meeting should constitute the band of missionaries whose work should be to proclaim the glad tidings of a risen Saviour.

Thus it would seem that the commission, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations," was not confined to the twelve, the seventy, nor yet, possibly, to the "above five hundred brethren," but to *all* who were divinely favored with the privilege of attending that remarkable meeting. Thus it was that the heart-cheering message and the soul-vivifying truth of "Jesus and the resurrection" went upon the wings of the morning, soon to be carried to all parts of the then known world.

Coming back to the "eleven" who were especially

chosen and divinely appointed to be witnesses of the resurrection, we are to remember that they were intimate with Jesus, not only before but after he had been raised. It was their exalted privilege, after God had raised him from the dead, to be in his society, more or less, for forty days. For three years they had heard him speak as man never spoke; they had seen him open the eyes of the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, and even raise the dead. They had passed through the awful ordeal of witnessing the disgraceful trial, the cruel suffering, and solemn and fearful death of their Master.

After forty days of joy in the thought of his risen presence, they had seen him taken up into heaven. They therefore had no more doubt of the fact that God had raised him from the dead than they had of their own existence. It is not wonderful, therefore, that they were willing to stake their reputation, their property, their ease, and even their very life upon the reality of Christ's resurrection. This one sublime truth had opened to them the windows of heaven through which they could behold the "land where the angels dwell." In the light of a blessed immortality, worldly honor, riches, pleasure, and even *life* were not worthy to be put into the scale against "the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." They therefore went willingly and joyfully to the task which heaven had assigned them, at the cost of all that this world calls good and great.

Let us summarize: Can any one believe that these eleven disciples who had followed Jesus for three years, witnessing all the joyful and sorrowful scenes through which he passed, were, after all, ignorant of his identity? Certainly, to every thoughtful mind such a conclusion must be totally devoid of all reason.

If they must have known whereof they affirmed, then can any one believe that they were insincere in publishing to the world that their Master had been actually raised from the dead? Can it be conceived as even possible that men will leave all and cross continents and seas to publish a doctrine which they know to be false, with the promise of nothing and the hope of nothing but disgrace, suffering, and death? Is it in keeping with human nature to sacrifice all the pleasures of earth, endure hardships and privations, and at last come willingly to the rack, the fagot, or to cruel death in any form that satanic wickedness could invent, all for the sake of publishing what they know to be a lie? Such a conclusion is out of keeping with sense or reason. It was in the face of all this danger, and in accordance with his own blessed experience, that the great Apostle exclaimed, "Now is Christ risen from the dead."

As a sequel to all this circumstantial and positive proof we have the testimony of Christ himself, "I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore,

"AMEN."



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