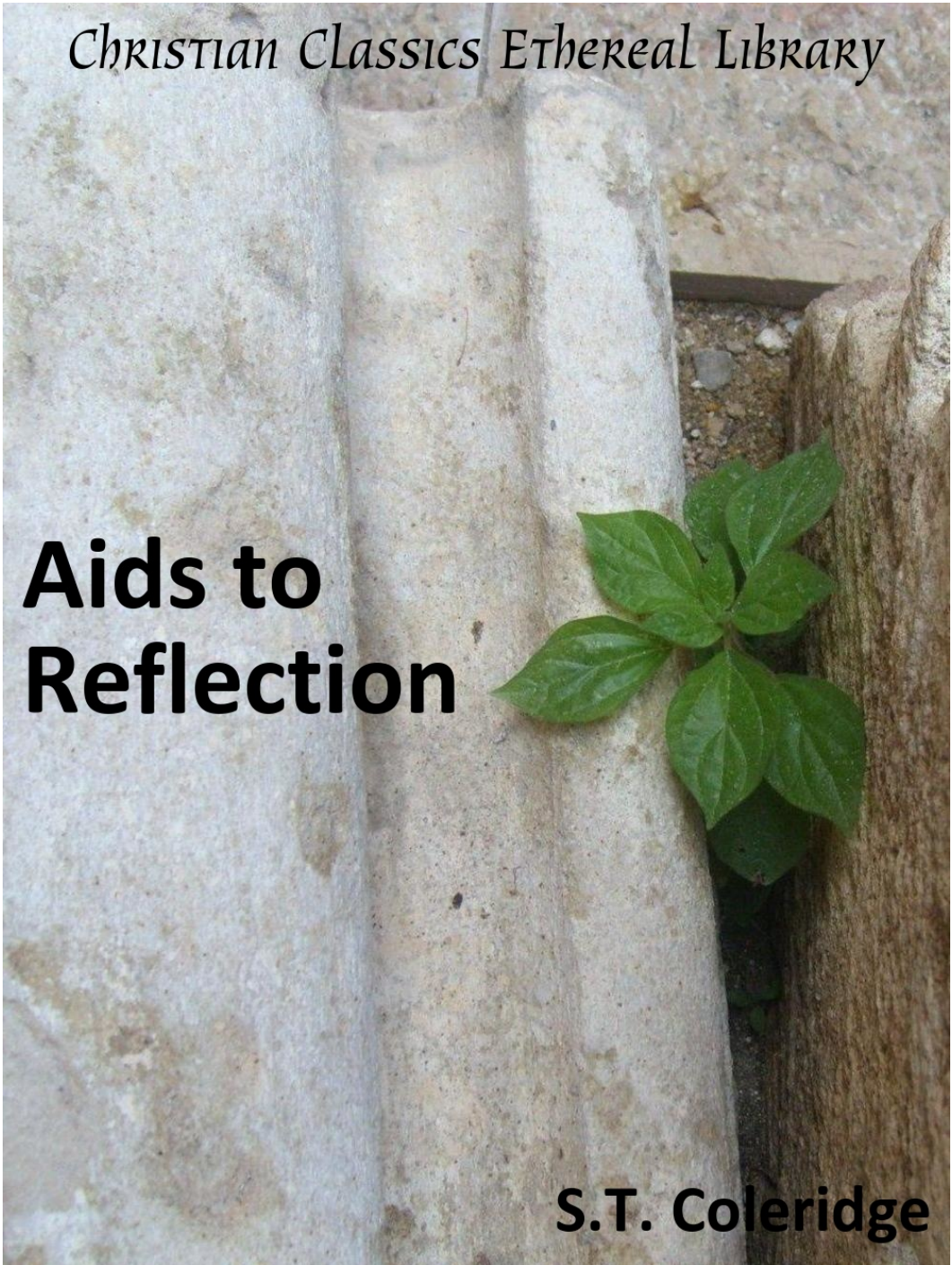


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Aids to Reflection

S.T. Coleridge





Aids to Reflection

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PRELIMINARY ESSAY.

BY THE REV. JOHN M'VICKAR.

In the following reprint of Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection" as recently put forth in London, by his nephew and executor, with the author's final amendments, the Preface therein adopted of the earlier American edition of 1829, has been after full consideration dropped. It is due to the American public as well as to the extended reputation of that Preface, and of its able author, the Key. Dr. James Marsh, to state the reasons which in the judgment of the present editor have rendered its republication inexpedient in connexion with the present stereotype edition, addressed as the work now is generally to the Church at large, but more especially to the members of that communion of which its eminent and lamented author was an affectionate and faithful son.

The reasons are as follows:

- 1 That such Preface is mainly occupied in justifying Coleridge and his philosophy against objections which have no place except on the Calvinistic scheme of Divinity. But these obviously are difficulties in the way of the reception not of Coleridge's but of his commentator's opinions, objections therefore not with churchmen but with dissenters *from* the Church.
- 2 That it inculcates what is deemed a false and dangerous principle, viz. that some system of metaphysical philosophy

[continue]is essential to soundness in Christian doctrine. "For myself" says Dr. Marsh, "I am fully convinced that we can have no right views of Theology till we have right views of the human mind," (*Preface* p. 23.) Now this certainly is not the creed of the Church nor the spirit of its formularies, and as surely it is not the principle inculcated by his author. "Religion," says Coleridge, "has no speculative dogmas—Christianity is not a theory, or a speculation; but a life:—not a philosophy of life, but a life and a living process," (p. 150).

3. That it tends to a misapprehension of Coleridge's Religious views by identifying them with "what among us," says Dr. Marsh, "are termed the Evangelical Doctrines of Religion," (p. 14.) Now this term used as a party name, in which sense alone it can be here understood, is one peculiarly inappropriate as applied to Coleridge—for not only does he everywhere magnify those doctrines which such teachers are understood to make light of; viz., the necessity of union with the one viable Church, and of communion in its spiritual sacraments, and the sin of schism in separating from it; not only too does he decry what such doctrine



is understood to elevate, viz., that "the baptized," to use Coleridge's own words, "are each individually to be called, converted, and chosen, with all the corollaries from this assumption, the watching for signs and sensible assurances, the frames, and the states, and the feelings, and the sudden conversions"--doctrines, says he, which have "never been in any age taught or countenanced by any known or accredited Christian church, or by any body and succession of learned Divines"--not only does he thus teach in double opposition to them, but he further expressly discards the name, and speaks with but little respect of what he terms "the contagious fever-boils of the (most unfitly so called) Evangelicals," (p. 242, *note*). Now, whether right or wrong in his judgment of them, our author certainly, at least, is not to be ranked under the same distinctive appellation with them. 4. That its unqualified eulogium of Coleridge and his opinions renders it an unsafe guide for young and enthusiastic minds, and may lead many of its readers, as it certainly tends to lead all, into a dangerous over trust on human and private authority in the interpretation of Divine truth. Fully sharing with Dr. Marsh as the present editor does, in his affectionate admiration of the genius and writings of Coleridge, and in his belief of their growing and happy influence on the rising generation, and acknowledging in common with him that debt incalculable which all feel as due to one whose words have been to their spirit "words of power," still must he follow Coleridge, and teach others to follow him as a fallible leader, with thoughtful and wary steps, and not only so, but as one who hath actually left behind him slippery as well as safe footprints, in the path of Religious inquiry.

And lastly, it is rejected as being a Preface which takes too much knowledge for granted on the part of the reader, to answer the present demand of an edition fitted for popular use. At the time it was written, Coleridge was a living teacher, and his speculations known and sought after only by the philosophic or professional student. Now his teaching has become the heritage of the public--his name that of an established classic, and his deep disquisitions are passing into the hands of thousands, to whom without some preparatory instruction, they are little better than a sealed book. Under such changed circumstances a new Preface, and one of another character, was obviously needed.

Such are the reasons which to the present editor have seemed imperiously to demand from him, with all the humility he felt for the task, a new, plainer, and more catholic Introduction to Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection."

In entering upon it, he would fain avoid all idea of competition with his predecessor, as being well aware that his own chief fitness for the task, and certainly his only vantage ground in it, arises from his being of "kin" in church and doctrine with the author whose philosophy of both he presumes to comment upon. Than the writer of the rejected Preface, he is well aware, too, that few on this side the Atlantic have more deeply studied, none more eloquently eulogized this same Christian philosophy--and had Dr. Marsh been but as free to deduce from it its necessary results in Church and doctrine, untrammelled by the condi-



tions of a self-constituted ministry, and the fetters of an incongruous metaphysical creed, as he was conclusive in his proof of the premises from which such conclusions flow--had it been thus--none can feel more convincingly than the present editor that in such case there would have been neither room nor demand for his present more humble labors.

With this prolonged explanation rendered indispensable by the circumstances of the case, he now proceeds to the task before him.

Historical Rise of the Philosophy of Coleridge.--Among the great thinkers of the generation now recently past away--few, if any can be named, no one certainly among those using the English language as the medium of thought--who has left behind him so deep and wide an intellectual impress as Coleridge--or given to the rising generation a stronger spiritual impulse. Nor have we as yet seen in all probability either its extent or depth. It has in truth but just begun to take hold upon the public sentiment. Hitherto Coleridge's teaching has formed but here and there an individual mind--or at best, built up some limited, unobserved fraternity of deep and quiet thinkers. It now, on the contrary, begins to indoctrinate the mass of the educated--to enter into general reasoning--bids fair to become the prevailing system taught in Protestant Christendom, and in the estimate of many is to be regarded as among the foremost means now obviously preparing, under the Providence of God, for bringing back an unspiritual age to an earlier, purer, and more Christian philosophy. Whatever estimate may be formed of its value, there can be no doubt of its spreading influence.

The story of its past slow progress is soon told. It began, as is well known, within the narrow circle of Coleridge's personal admirers, and with audience not always "fit tho' few." With the public at large Coleridge was from his earliest years a contemned or feared man--an enthusiast, a disorganizer, or a mystic--in youth decried as a leveller, in manhood as a homeless wanderer, in age as a religious dreamer--and it may not be denied but that some passages of both his public and private life as well as not a few of both his earlier and later tenets gave too good ground, at least on a superficial view, for such scornful estimate of the man and his opinions.

Under such load of contumely, deepened by his characteristic peculiarities of style and thought, no wonder that the occasional works put forth by him whether in prose or verse, with all their rare learning, sweet eloquence, and deep spiritual power, qualities now universally accorded to them, fell almost still-born from the press--like their author at once condemned and scorned--"published" as remarked by his English editor "but not publici juris." To this rule if there was any exception, it relates to the present work "Aids to Reflection," and he never failed, his nephew tells us, to make "a special remark" if he found his visitor to have read the "Friend," or any other of his less known publications. Such, with some gradual enlargement of his philosophic circle, and a corresponding though slow advance of influence, continued to be Coleridge's literary position through life. Acknowledged



genius and contemned opinions--his society courted but his books unread, and his teaching except over a chosen few, unfelt and unregarded.

His conversational powers on the other hand, or rather (for it was not *con*-versation) his deep discursive and eloquent soliloquies on all subjects brought before him by his visitors, whether of taste, politics, philosophy or Religion--these were from the very first both felt and acknowledged to be of magical influence. To these outpourings of a deeply learned but still more deeply self-communing spirit, and which, river-like, seemed to gather strength and volume as they flowed on in their solitary magnificence--his visitors were wont to listen in charmed and mostly silent amazement--for independently of the fascination of thought, their senses too, were taken prisoner; the richest melodies of musical utterance, features serene and passive, as of some sculptured demigod, and an eye inspiring awe from its statue-like, objectless gaze, all conspired to give to Coleridge when thus encircled somewhat of the power, as well as the appearance of an oracular Python, giving forth in solemn chant its mystic, and not always safely interpreted response, to questions reverently propounded by almost worshippers, for his solution. Under this aspect at least, Coleridge appeared to some who had casual access to his society, rather as a brilliant meteor flashing forth dark light, than as a steadfast luminary, by whose guidance Christians might safely walk; and there was unquestionably much in his manner, as well as somewhat in his occasional judgments, that might well excuse such hasty conclusion.*

But with the removal by death of this highly gifted mind, has come a more adequate sense of its value and loss, and a new era has consequently commenced in the history of its influence. Being dead, the Teacher now speaketh more truly than during life. Prejudice has died with the breathing man, and with the living voice and its enchantment, has passed away all possibility of future misapprehension. Coleridge

*In the columns of the Churchman, April 7th, 1832, the present editor has detailed an evening spent with Coleridge under such circumstances, in the month of June, 1830, in company with Irving the Scotch preacher, who had come to consult him touching the modern miracle, of the "gift of tongues." now stands forth revealed to us in his works, and in his works alone. By them he is to be judged, and that verdict is already rendered. Hardly has the world of letters and philosophy, had time thoughtfully to peruse them, before with one voice it has united in ranking their author first among the deep thinkers of his own age and nation, and second to none in any, for his profound insight into the laws of our moral and spiritual being, and his clear, eloquent, and Christian exposition of the truths and duties that flow from them. Therefore in critical estimation is he already numbered with the greatest and wisest, that have ever been esteemed the lights and guides of the earth, and all that is now needed, as we think, to make his fame as wide as it is lofty, is what by degrees is actually effecting both in England and this country, through the medium of stereotype editions, and familiar explanations.



Nor will this triumph, we may confidently predict, of the vital principles of Coleridge's Philosophy, be either a partial or a temporary one; for it is the triumph not of opinions over opinions, but of principles over principles. It is not therefore an impression passively received, that subsequent impressions may efface, but it is the reception into the mind, of living truths--seeds sown in it--light kindled and the spirit of a better age recalled. It is something in short, which the needs of the heart of man as well as the demands of his reason, will not suffer, soon or ever again, we may hope, to be covered up and buried, as it has long been, whether under the flood of an epicurean, and basely material philosophy, or the shifting sands of phenomenal metaphysics, measuring spiritual things by the unspiritual faculty that judgeth according to sense, or the crumbling structure of a merely prudential, and a falsely named, rational faith, or last, but not least, under the modern baseless fabric of the Gospel of Christ without the Church of Christ--Christianity without its exponent. What limit will eventually be set to the influence of this philosophy, or with what rapidity it will be found to advance, not, we mean in its "hay and stubble," but in its gold that stands the fire--that time alone will show. For the present, it is our willing part to labor within our narrow path, to remove or to level such obstructions as ignorance, error, or prejudice may have heretofore raised against it in our country.

Difficulties of Coleridge as arising from the character of his writings.--The chief Prose works of Coleridge are his "Friend," "Biographia Literaria," "Lay Sermons," "Church and State," and "Aids to Reflection." To these are now to be added his equally valuable though less connected disquisitions, which under the title of "Literary Remains," are at present in the course of publication in London, consisting of the contents of his various Note-Books, Marginal Annotations, &c., his usual desultory mode of writing, together with his "Table-Talk," so far at least as such record of his thoughts--genuine and valuable as it is, may be admitted into the list. It is a work at least to which may be justly applied his own eulogium of another--that "his sands were seed pearl." But in all these, one and the same difficulty meets the student, and that is, a frequent reference by the author to what the reader continually wants but can nowhere find, a clear, connected view of Coleridge's System of Philosophy. His speculations are all fragmentary, fractional parts as it were, of some great unity ever brooding in his teeming mind, but never sufficiently developed to be connectedly brought forth. The fulfilment however of such virtual promise under the title of "Philosophy reconciled with the Christian Religion," or as he entitles it more at large in the work before us, "The Assertion of Religion as necessarily involving Revelation, and of Christianity, as the only Revelation of permanent and universal validity;" this is well known to have occupied for many years much of his thoughts, being often alluded to in his writings, as in the present,



where he terms it, "the principal labor of my life since manhood;" still more frequently and openly promised to his enquiring friends, and the hope of its completion, never finally abandoned by himself or despaired of by others, up to the very day of his death. But unhappily for the student, we may say, for the world, that hope is now past, and it will be a bold hand that shall undertake to build up that "temple" as he often reverently termed it, which such a master hand, after preparing the materials and laboring for years at the foundation, either faltered to attempt or failed to accomplish.



Such at any rate, is the aspect of Coleridge's recorded mind, and it is the feature from which springs much doubtless, of the earlier interest, as well as permanent difficulty of his writings. They awaken in the mind of the student, somewhat of the feelings that belong to the delighted yet bewildered traveller in "the gorgeous East," as he muses and mourns over the rich and scattered fragments of some unfinished temple in the desert, to which war or death seems to have put a hasty termination. The deep and solid foundations he sees are laid, and here and there perhaps a solitary column of granite or porphyry erected, giving promise by its enduring material, and its massive and fair proportions, and its richly sculptured capital, and its hieroglyphic frieze and base, what in grandeur and beauty the finished structure would have been, but leaving all else, whether of parts or finish, to vain and puzzled conjecture.

Such is the first aspect of Coleridge to the inquiring unsatisfied eye of the student, and for such disappointment in the midst of his admiration, he must prepare himself. How far this is a remediable defect in the writings of Coleridge, or how far it is but the necessary fate of all inquirers who seek to sound the depths of their own spirit, and to grasp by the power of reason, the circle within which reason is itself contained--this may be variously decided. That there are within us, secrets we cannot unravel and depths we cannot sound, no mind ever felt more deeply or reverently than that of Coleridge, but still it is the very aim of his philosophy to bring us up to the verge of such insoluble problem and perhaps its occasional result however unintended, sometimes to tempt the arrogant or over-musing mind beyond it. But this is a different question from the attempt to reduce into order, and carry out into scientific arrangement, the unconnected truths so profusely scattered throughout his works. This surely may be done, though as surely, it is no easy task, since its accomplishment necessarily involves every question of mental and spiritual philosophy, and demands in them all that the solution given appear alike the product of reason, and the teaching of revelation. Such task it is evident can be successfully grappled with, only by one who shall be at the same time the deepest of philosophers and the most spiritual and learned of Christians.



But there is another hope, which is, that such development may be the maturing growth of many minds in many years--the fruit in short in an age yet to come, of the seed which Coleridge and his co-thinkers sowed in their own, ripening into all the fulness of spiritual truth under that higher teaching whence philosopher as well as Christian derives his truest

light. In the meantime it must be the comfort of the solitary unaided student, to believe and trust that the same unity of plan, which was ever present to the mind of the author, will be by degrees transferred to, and impressed upon that of his thoughtful, docile, and loving reader, and that however such reader may fail to be able to put it forth in words for the benefit of others, it will not be wanting in his own inmost thoughts, for his own spiritual good; there working out within him, what his author ever and chiefly aimed at, namely, that the heart and the reason, the one awakened, and the other enlightened, should become a united temple of praise and love, to the honor of God, and the glory of the Redeemer, and meet for the gracious indwelling of the Spirit of all truth: preparing it for such a philosophy as "flashed conviction on the mind of a Galen and kindled meditation into a hymn of praise."

"Aids to Reflection," and True Method of Studying It.--In taking up the following work, the reader who would not be disappointed, must understand previously what he has to expect. It is not then, a work of amusement, to be read lightly, nor of connected science to be studied continuously, but one to be read, studied and above all meditated upon in its separate truths, just as they are found to strike in upon the mind. Each "aphorism" is as a torch by itself, having its own circle of light, and is therefore to be separately dwelt upon by the student, and tested by his own repeated inward experience, until he see the light and feel its truth, and not only so but can lay hold upon it as a reality, and upon conviction is ready to give it a place in his previously established trains of reasoning and to incorporate it into his actual stock of settled principles in thought and action. In this way, and in this way alone, will the work become to the reader what in its title it promises, "aids to reflection." Nor must the student expect too much on the first perusal of a single aphorism or even of the whole work; a reflecting mind, says our author, is not a "flower that grows wild or comes up of its own accord." But if sincere let him go--try one aphorism--try another--open the volume at hazard--persevere, until at length he find some deep spiritual truth to strike home--then indeed may he pause, for then begins the reign of Coleridge over the thoughtful mind. The reader then for the first time recognizes him as his "Master," for he finds that under his teaching, he can now *speak* what before he had only *thought*; that he has got embodied some new truth, a new steppingstone for his foot to rest upon amid the dark waters. The author who is found to exercise such power over the mind, will soon come, notwithstanding all difficulties of interpretation, to be rightly valued by the student; and if such teaching bear on truths nearest the heart, giving to the mind a new and firmer hold on those already received or new and clearer light to guide it in its further search, such a writer will be at once recognized, not only as a teacher, but as a friend, and there will be quickly established, between the reader and such mind a sense of spiritual relationship, alike loving and reverential, and such as will not afterwards be lightly severed.

That such is, in truth, the influence of Coleridge's mind, over that of his reader, and more especially in this present work, is of course a matter of individual experience, but from



the numbers on both sides of the Atlantic, who have openly acknowledged such obligation and the greater number who from its rapid sale it may be judged, are silently benefitting by it, the editor feels justified in asserting such to be its essential character and influence, and consequently, in recommending its adoption to all who prize for themselves the possession of such a spiritual monitor and guide.

But after all, the work, with ordinary readers will still have its obscurities and its incomprehensible passages; as for instance, the geometrical bi-polar theory of thought, contained in note, p. 130--the algebraic formula, p. 250--the logical synopsis, p. 258, as well as some other occasional touches of transcendental metaphysics. To all this, the only answer is, "pass them over"--"go on"--let not the truth you do feel, be lost upon either your heart or intellect through prejudice of that which you do not feel--take the lesson you do understand, and give your author credit for a meaning even when you perceive it not, and in time you may come to see a deep truth where you now see nothing but mystic words.

General Argument of "Aids to Reflection."--The general scheme of the work, though not always or easily traceable in it, partly from the moral nature of the argument addressing itself rather to the heart than to the logical faculty, and partly from the unconnected "aphorisms" by which it is carried on, is shortly as follows.

Addressing himself to the unspiritual but not un-intellectual mind, Coleridge takes up the religious argument on the supposed reader's professed principles of worldly calculation. First, then, comes Religion, contemplated in the form of prudence; Christened but not Christianized. This is in general the thoughtful mind's first step in the course of conviction: the man stands firm in religion as a matter of policy. Then, "awakened by the cock-crow, (a sermon, a calamity, a sick bed or a providential escape) the Christian pilgrim sets out in the morning twilight, while yet the truth is below the horizon," (p. 18). Travelling onward, he is led up to a higher point in his spiritual course--to "the purifying and remedial virtues"--to religion contemplated under the form of Morality--a holier prudence, than what he first professed, then becomes his guide, even "the steward faithful and discreet"--the *eldest* servant in the family of Faith, and the Ruler over all its household." Last and highest of all, comes Religion, viewed as "spiritual Christianity," morality ascending from uprightness "to God-likeness," and giving to faith its repose by the doctrine of a personal Saviour and communion with his life-giving spirit. This is Religion contemplated in its true form, seeking its summit in the imitation of the Divine nature, in the sincere love of the true as truth, of the good as good, and of God as both in one; and leading the man to "all the acts, exercises, and disciplines of mind, will, and affection that are requisite or conducive to the great design of redemption from the form of the evil one, and of his second creation, or birth in the divine image." (p. 22.)

To the reflecting mind of the supposed pilgrim in these his advancing stages of "Prudence," "Morality," and "Spiritual Religion," are addressed the successive aphorisms



with their commentaries, that constitute the body of the work--deduced in each instance from the predominant faculty under which the man is then walking--that is.

In his first stage of Prudence, from the sense and sensuous understanding.

In the second or that of Morally, from the heart and conscience, and,

In the third or Spiritual state, from the reason and the will.

Such is the argument of the work, though much of its completeness must doubtless come from the reader's own power of thought in supplying what is left deficient and connecting what stands disunited. To do this, however, will be found among the most valuable exercises of Reflection, which the work itself can call forth, and is therefore, as such, seriously recommended to the student. But before passing to another head, it is proper here to note, for the caution of its less learned, or more easily guided readers, that in some minor points, in this work, unconnected with the leading argument, Coleridge's judgment is not to be commended. "Among these spots on the sun," to apply the author's own figure, which as obstructing neither its light nor heat, might have been passed over without notice, but for the natural tendency of the human mind to make a God of the luminary that gives it light, may be indicated the following--our author's allegorized view of the historical circumstances of the fall of man, (p. 144). His defective argument and unjustifiable admissions on the subject of Infant Baptism, as given in his conference with a Baptist, (p. 283,) and most striking of all his false and dangerous estimate, of perhaps the moral worth, certainly the spiritual teaching of one whom he addresses as " Friend, pure of heart and fervent," even the Scotch preacher, Edward Irving--"a mighty wrestler" says he "in the cause of spiritual Religion and Gospel morality, in whom more than in any other contemporary I seem to see the spirit of Luther revived,"(p. 297, *Note*). Nor was this as already noted the limit of Coleridge's delusion touching a friend for whom his fond affection seems to have strangely blinded his judgment. Such lapses of wisdom on the part of those whom God seems to have set forth as peculiarly lights and guides upon earth, it is painful to have witnessed and still more painful to be called upon to record--but, the less willingly, the more scrupulously should it be done, and it is even perhaps so permitted, lest Christians should perchance be tempted in their reverential love to transfer unto fallible man that submission of mind due only to God, his Church, and his word.

General Nature and Originality of Coleridge's Philosophy.--The Philosophy of Coleridge, if at least by such name his teaching is to be called, has been too much looked at both in England and this country in the light of novelty. It has been both cried up and cried down on this argument, and the most popular of the objections against it and conclusive ones had it been true, have been drawn from this its supposed character. But such is neither its merit nor its demerit. It is an old and not a novel school of Philosophy. It was that of Plato, and many other ancient Sages so far forth at least as the speculations of teachers, unenlightened by Revelation, can be said to symbolize with those of a Christian. "Nor were our great divines,"



says Coleridge, "ashamed of this learned discipline, to which they had submitted their minds under Aristotle and Tully, but brought the purified products as sacrificial gifts to Christ. They baptized the logic and manly rhetoric of ancient Greece." (*Notes on Donne.*)

Among Christian teachers too, in every age of Christendom, it has been, that of the deepest and the worthiest--the great fathers of the Church--the soundest Doctors in the schools of Rome--the early Reformers both in England and on the continent, and above all, the greatest Divines in the Church of England in the days of her glory--in the golden age of her Hookers and Barrows and Cudworths and Taylors, these all agree in it; nor is even this its highest authority. It is the philosophy, so far as such name is applicable to revealed teaching of scripture itself. St. Paul and St. John, with reverence be it said, are the pillars of this school--the spiritual truths they teach, when translated into man's language constitute that Christian philosophy now to some so strange, but which in earlier ages of the Church, was not only the current faith, but of the very heart and soul of Christendom.

With the abuse of the Protestant principle, the right of private judgment in the interpretation of scripture, and more especially with its greatest exemplification, the defection of the Puritans in England from the unity of the Church in the 17th century, when the name of Calvin was brought in to sanction novelties which Calvin himself had not taught, came the first and fatal step in that disunion of reason from revelation and of philosophy from Christian doctrine, which the principles of Coleridge now go to reconcile. The fundamental error then fallen into by sectarian teachers, was the substitution of the "understanding" for the "reason," or in other words of "each man's notions" for "all men's wisdom." Hence came necessarily contempt for Christian antiquity--contempt for the voice of the Church and her institutions, contempt, in short for all Christian authority, except that written word which with singular inconsistency, such reasoners received as the word of God solely upon the teaching of that Church which they abandoned and its authority which they rejected. Hence followed of course, in that spirit of reckless independence which taught schism to be no sin, what the elder philosophy could not have received, Christianity without its teacher--the truth without its "pillar and ground," a church without unity--a ministry without origin--sacraments without binding power--and to close all, metaphysics or the speculations of the "understanding" elevated into that high place in the interpretation of Christian doctrine from which Christian philosophy, the reason of the Church, ("*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus*"), had just been dethroned. Under this newly discovered guide, came forth a new creed, and one not merely without harmony, but, in irreconcilable contrariety to the first teachings of reason and to the fundamental laws of conscience--Christianity and Redemption were no longer to be held as they had been, convertible terms, but the doctrines of a partial redemption and unconditional salvation and a will without freedom and grace irresistible, the metaphysical conclusions in short of the puzzled understanding, were made to proclaim a never-ending war between reason and revelation, a war which the philosophy



of Coleridge, and of such reasoners as he--the better wisdom of an elder age, can alone reduce into permanent and harmonious peace.

From this deep fountain of error, came many streams--First, was fed from it the dark pool of fatalism; the whole host of necessitarian arguers, whether infidel or sectarian having ever since drawn their sharpest arrows from this quiver--proceeding to demonstrate by the "understanding," in the face of reason and of conscience, the impossibility of that freedom which in the very moment of demonstration, the man was himself exerting. With such reasoners came too, the perversion of "original sin" into "hereditary guilt," thus "throwing the darkness of storms," says Coleridge, "on an awful fact in human nature, which in itself had only the darkness of negations." (*Notes on Jeremy Taylor*).

Hence too, in a shallower stream, flowed the metaphysics of Locke--shallow through the substitution of the "understanding," for the "reason," being but a vain attempt to build up the temple of spiritual truth, apart from the light of reason, on the sandy foundations of experience. As its tendency was to unspiritualize the mind, so has its result been perhaps to give birth to, certainly to nourish the infidel age that followed, and to clothe materialism with the outward trappings of philosophy.

Hence too at a later day, came that second flood of Epicurean teaching, which under the authority of Paley, has degraded the very name of Ethical science--a system of morals forsooth, built up without even a mention of reason or conscience. In parallel stream and from the same source has flowed also the Socinian error--revelation without mysteries--an error that could find no foothold in Christendom, till, a false philosophy had confounded the "reason" with the "sensuous understanding." The spiritual reason in man stumbles not at revealed mysteries, for it feels itself to be a mystery--but his understanding knows none such, it must be able always to *con*-ceive, that which it *re*-ceives--therefore it is, that a system of divinity, which looks to the understanding, rather than the reason will ever be found willing to reject as fable, or to degrade into metaphor, those spiritual truths which it can neither digest nor translate.

Over this darkening flood of error has come lastly in our own day, the benumbing influences of a mechanical age--forgetting and learning from a base philosophy to deny, amid its mighty conquests over *material* nature those *immaterial* powers, *super*-natural--above and beyond nature--by which alone the hand of art has achieved its conquests.

Under such accumulation of rubbish, philosophical and doctrinal, truths ancient and long held and essential to a Faith at once spiritual and rational, became trodden down in the minds of men, and hidden, but not lost. They were still within the heart of man, in his conscience and in his reason, in his prayers, and in his inextinguishable wants. Such living truths were not always to be denied a voice, and in our own day we find, as if by common impulse, that in every nation of Protestant Christendom, they *have* spoken, and with a reaction as irrepressible as it has been simultaneous, they *have* come forth "conquering," and



we believe "to conquer." This better philosophy has already found an abode in Germany and a resting-place in France, but above all in England it is now rapidly building up its citadel and its home, in the threefold union,--the cord that cannot easily be broken--of learning, orthodoxy, and a spiritual creed. Into the heart of Americans too it has entered widely if not deeply. It has already penetrated the school and the pulpit--it has begun by Christianizing education, it is going on to spiritualize philosophy, and it will find doubtless in time, its completion, in a demonstrated union of reason and revelation, in connection with the teaching of the Apostolic Church of Christ.

Under the view thus given, the claims of Coleridge as the originator of this philosophy, whether urged by friends or charged by enemies, must, it is obvious, be greatly moderated. In such regenerating movement of the race, no individual mind governs, nor, however zealous, can any man be esteemed more than a co-worker. Among such foremost ones, however, Coleridge stands in England, at least, preeminent. In his case, the kindling spark, whencesoever it came, fell on an ardent and mighty mind, one alike fitted for the task, and willing for the encounter to which it called him, and that girded himself to it early and heartfully, and for twenty years, as he himself tells us, bore him, on though without fruit, yet in hope, "casting his bread upon the waters."

But still this pre-eminence excludes not his fellow laborers, among whom another layman, the late Alexander Knox, though within a narrower circle, deserves to be recorded, as well as not a few divines of the Church of England, recent or living, more especially from the university of Oxford, whence this earlier and sounder philosophy had never been wholly cast out.

Leading Principles in Coleridge's Philosophy.--*Distinction between the reason and the understanding.*--The fundamental postulate of Coleridge's reasonings, is that the Reason in man, variously defined by him, as the "light of the mind," the "organ of wisdom," "the source of universal and necessary principles," is a power that sees by its own light, and is therefore, essentially distinct from the "understanding," or "the faculty that judges according to sense." "In no former part of the volume" says Coleridge, when he comes to read of this point, "has the author felt the same anxiety to obtain a patient attention; for he does not hesitate to avow, that on his success in establishing the validity of the distinction between the Reason and the Understanding he rests his hopes of carrying the reader along with him through all that is to follow," (p. 163). "Till this distinction be seen," is elsewhere his language "nothing can be seen aright." "Till this great truth be mastered, and with the sight, that is *insight*, other truths may casually take possession of the mind, but the mind cannot possess them." (*Notes on Donne*).

In this sense of its importance his editor, as may be judged from what he has already said, fully concurs. That such distinction will eventually be granted by every reflecting reader, there can be little doubt. His first, and indeed, only difficulty, he will find to lie, not



in the distinction of the things themselves, "the light" from the faculty that holds the light, for that we all familiarly make on a thousand occasions, but, simply in the appropriation of terms which by long use and common custom, have become confounded, at least with ordinary thinkers. But this obviously is a minor difficulty, and bears not at all on the real question. On that point, reflecting, religious men cannot long or far differ, now and never have, for it is the question whether the living soul of man be dependant or not for its light of truth on the dying body, since, if not, it follows of course that the mind must have its own primitive stock of a knowledge not of this world, and which gives to it its fundamental laws of being--its informing processes of thought,--the moulds into which it casts the impressions of the outward senses, and the weights by which it tries them. This is the "light of reason" "the image in which man was created"--"that through the being of which he became a living soul."--"this is that house *not made with hands*," of which Coleridge ever so eloquently speaks, in which the reflecting mind even here on earth can dwell and find it, "not vacant but gloriously furnished."

But in addition to, and in power of this, its primitive possession of ideas of *obligation* and *duty*, and *truth*, and *order*, and *goodness*, the mind gains through experience a new stock, relating to things of time and space, and this is "understanding"--man *is* reason--he *possesses* understanding.

Reason therefore, is fixed--Understanding is discursive--Reason appeals but to itself, Understanding finds its authority elsewhere--Reason *is* imperative--its word is law--Understanding is relative--its language is expediency--the accommodation of means to ends. Reason is the seat of ideas. Understanding of conceptions--Reason gives birth to experience, and experience, in turn, trains up the Understanding--Reason makes man "wise," a moral, a religious being and fitted under grace for the spiritual things of eternity--Understanding on the other hand, makes man "knowing"--the conqueror of this world, not of the next, and fitted but for the occupations and enjoyments of time and space. Love, duty goodness, faith, the spiritual and the willing mind, all belong to the Reason of our nature--art and its triumphs, the world and its glory, time and its employments, belong to the equally needful, but still unquestionably lower and distinct faculty, the "understanding" of our nature.

Now in these views Coleridge undoubtedly runs counter to Locke and his school, but as he agrees with older and far higher authorities--he is not to be charged herein, as is often done, with either heresy or novelty. "It is what" says he, "no man can learn from another, but which (were it possible,) I might have learned from Plato, Kepler, and Bacon; from Luther, Hooker, Pascal, Leibnitz and Fenelon," (p. 175. *note*).

To this it may be further added, that it is a distinction which has been forgotten by dissenters rather than by churchmen, and that however novel it may now sound to such religious reasoners as have consecrated to themselves the shallow metaphysics of modern times* yet has it never been



*It is the confession of Dr. Marsh, in his Preface, that Brown's philosophy had received the sanction of their "highest ecclesiastical authorities." a strange language unto those familiar with the elder divines of the Church of England, and who hold not to the speculations of individual minds in opposition to the common teaching of the Church Catholic.

Distinction between Nature and Will.--Between these, Coleridge teaches not so truly distinction as contrariety—"Nature" is that which is necessitated, bound by the law of antecedent and consequent, a linked chain of causes and effects; "will" on the other hand, as the exponent of Spirit is that which alone, in creation, is not bound, but free--self-moved--not a matter of mechanism, and consequently not a "nature." An enslaved will is, therefore, a will which by its own act, has admitted to a certain extent, a nature within it. Such is the *natural man*, but though a creaturely will cannot be free, yet the will in a rational creature, may cease to be creaturely, and through grace go forth into the glorious liberty of the Gospel. Now the terms in which this exposition of the necessary freedom of the will, as "will" is made by our author, may sound somewhat novel, but the substance of it is common to all Christian philosophy and doctrine, with the solitary exception of the maintainers of religious fatalism, and the other forms of what is falsely termed "high Calvinism." Against such, and such only, does Coleridge stand in irreconcilable hostility. "The doctrine of modern Calvinism," says he, "as laid down by Jonathan Edwards and the late Dr. Williams, which represents a will absolutely passive, clay in the hands of a potter, destroys all will, takes away its essence and definition . . . with such a system, not the wit of man, nor all the theodicies ever framed by human ingenuity, before and since the celebrated attempt of Leibnitz, can reconcile the sense of responsibility nor the fact of the difference in kind between regret and remorse," (p. 115).

It is for the solution of this insoluble problem, that Dr. Marsh, in his preface so vainly labours. His reason justifies what his creed rejects, and to reconcile Coleridge with Calvinism, is that fruitless task which places him ever in a false position with regard to his own faith, and in a needless one in the light of all others.

Distinction between objective and subjective truths.--These are terms borrowed from the schools, being old and convenient terms for a sound and necessary distinction. "Objective" relates to things as they are in themselves; "Subjective" as they appear to be through the medium of our senses, or the laws of the perceiving mind.--Thus the colours of nature, to take one of the many forms of merely phenomenal existence, have but a subjective not objective reality, and may be said to exist but in reference to the eye that sees them. Truth on the contrary, as all that belongs to spirit, has a reality objective not merely subjective. Its existence does not depend on our perceptions, nor is it at all modified by them. But to apply this--Horne Tooke in analyzing truth into what one "troweth" or thinketh, gave it but a subjective existence, changing with every man's opinion. The teaching of Locke, too, though less unsound, tended obviously to the same fatal result--all truths with him, being "conclu-



sions" of the logical understanding, not objects to the spiritual reason. Even the ideas of *God, eternity, duty, &c.*, are not positive but negative thoughts, arrived at by the process of successive exclusions. The Socinian creed, too, is another form of the same error, denying existence to whatever cannot be contemplated under the intelligible forms of our own subjective understandings.

Now what infidels had thus rejected, and false philosophy anatomized into negatives, and the worldly mind is ever ready to evaporate into metaphor, for these despised truths of our moral and spiritual nature, Coleridge has but reclaimed their earlier and higher rank in philosophy as being actual objects to the eye of the spiritual reason, "living truths" "eternal verities," spiritual things" that are spiritually discerned, and the only realities which abide unchanged in this phenomenal existence. This it is that renders the teaching of Coleridge a truly religious philosophy, not in a mystical but in a Christian sense, for it looks at and addresses man as the scriptures do, *directly* in his spiritual as well as in his intellectual nature, and brings before him the laws and truths and wants of his spiritual being, as familiarly and *objectively* as it does those which relate and are present to his senses. Hence follows the important discrimination, and one marked out with peculiar felicity by Coleridge, between the figurative and the symbolic language of scripture--its figures as being addressed to the "understanding," and intended for illustration of the nature, its symbols as addressed to the reason, or spiritual part of man, and intended for *conviction of the truth*, of that spoken of. "I do not regard" says he, "the words *born again and spiritual life* as figures or metaphors," these are the truths he adds, which the *natural man*, (that is the sensuous understanding), cannot receive *because they are spiritually discerned.*" The influence of this ever present distinction over the mind of the habitual student of Coleridge is one more easily felt than explained--he finds it eventually, to give, as it were substance to what before were shadowy thoughts, and to secure for them a corresponding hold on his spirit, whether looked at in meditation or appealed to in action.

Doctrinal views of Coleridge as exhibited in "Aids to Reflection."--That Coleridge in heart as well as profession, after some early wanderings, settled down a faithful member of the church of England, cannot now be for a moment doubted, however it may have once been, by any one familiar with his writings. Her articles and homilies we find to have been the subject of his most frequent and deepest meditations--her spiritual influence over the land, his affectionate boast and earnest prayer, and her coming dubious fortunes the source of his most painful anxieties. "No man can justly blame me" is elsewhere his touching language, though borrowed from another at the dose of one of his own eloquent eulogiums, "for honouring my spiritual mother, the church of England; in whose womb I was conceived, at whose breast I was nourished, and in whose bosom I hope to die," (*Remains*).

The doctrines contained in this work, are therefore those not of "evangelical dissenters," but of the Church of England, as exhibited in her articles, liturgy and sacraments, though



still under that wise, because necessary, freedom of interpretation which she scripturally permits to all her individual members. But though it is, indeed, part of her glory that she ties up the reason and conscience by no metaphysical subtleties, yet is it also her higher boast that in every age, the majority of her sons, and the ablest of her teachers, have concurred in one common system of church doctrine: now, with them Coleridge substantially and in general, most closely agrees. But as this is a point on which suspicion has been cast by his previous American editor, in applying to him a term popularly used to contra-distinguish those who make light of the necessity of a visible church and its binding sacraments and of the sin of schism in departing from it, it is due to our author to exhibit in his own words this attachment and conformity to the Church of England, in her spiritual, sacramental and catholic character.

Of the Church of Christ, he teaches its visible nature, unity and necessity--"a church visible," says he, is the "exponent" of Christianity. "My fixed principle is, that Christianity without a visible church exercising spiritual authority is vanity and dissolution," (p. 230, *note*).

Of this one catholic apostolic Church he holds that of England to be the purest branch. "Enough for me" is his language, "if in my heart of hearts, free from all fear of man or lust of preferment, I believe (as I do,) the Church of England to be the most Apostolic Church . . . and that the imperfections in its liturgy are but spots in the sun, which impede neither its light nor its heat," (p. 300, *note*).

Touching its great principle, regard for early authority, his language is, "the Church of England has preserved the golden mean between the superstitious reverence of the Romapists and the avowed contempt of the Sectarians for the writings of the fathers, and the authority and unimpeached traditions of the Church during the first three or four centuries," (p. 303, *note*).

Of separation from it, (speaking of a conscientious dissenter), he says, "such person must think of schism under another point of view than that in which I have been taught to contemplate it by St. Paul in his epistles to the Corinthians," (p. 297).

On the right of private judgment, his language is equally orthodox and liberal. "I condemn not the exercise or deny the right of individual judgment. I condemn only the *pretended* right of every individual competent or incompetent to interpret scripture in a sense of his own, in opposition to the judgment of the church, and where the interpreter judges in ignorance or in contempt of uninterrupted tradition, the unanimous consent of fathers and councils, and the universal faith of the church in all ages," (p. 230, *note*).

On the still higher question of Redemption in its extent and covenanted means, his language is that of the great Divines of the church of England in the manhood of its divinity. "That redemption is an *opus perfectum*, a finished work, the claim to which is conferred by baptism; that a Christian cannot speak or think as if his redemption by the blood, and his



justification by the righteousness of Christ alone, were future or contingent events, but must both say and think, 'I have been redeemed,' 'I am justified;' lastly that for as many as are received into his church by baptism, Christ has condemned sin in the flesh, has made it dead in law, that is, no longer imputable as guilt, has destroyed the objective reality of sin--these are truths--the most certain and necessary articles of faith, and the effectual preaching of which Luther declares to be the appropriate criterion, *stantis vel cadentis Ecclesiae*," (p. 242, *note*).

But as within the unbroken unity of the Church there are naturally perhaps necessarily leading differences of doctrinal teaching according as the supremacy of the end, that is the work of the spirit upon the heart, or the equal acknowledged necessity of covenanted means, that is, union with the visible church and its life-giving sacraments, are magnified and pressed home upon the believer, it becomes an interesting question, into which scale the authority of Coleridge and his advancing philosophy, is likely to be cast. The answer is, that it recognizes no division, and admits of no distinction, but as his English editor remarks, kindles for those extremes that lead to it "an unextinguishable beacon of warning or of guidance!" Its great principle is, (teaching as all the formularies of the Church teach), that unto sinful man the appointed means are the end, and that the infidel, that is, the faithless, mind alone, will draw a distinction between them--the end is every thing and the means are everything--Nowhere therefore can be found among teachers, ranking, to use the popular term, as low-churchmen, deeper views than Coleridge gives of revealed truth, or a more experimental insight into the mysteries of personal spiritual religion, whether viewed in its origin, as from the inworkings of God's holy spirit, or in its nature, as bringing back into the enslaved will its lost freedom, or in its fruits, as giving to the life, holiness, to the heart, peace, and to the soul its foretaste of better things. To the Saviour alone he looks and trusts. "When the soul," says he, "is beleagued by enemies, weakness on the walls, treachery at the gates, and corruption in the citadel, then by faith she says 'Lamb of God' slain from the foundation of the world! Thou art my strength, I look to thee for deliverance! and thus she overcomes, *steadfast by faith*," (p. 240). "The Christian preacher," he elsewhere adds, "ought to preach Christ and Christ alone, and all things in him and by him. He should abjure every argument that is not a link in the chain of which Christ is the staple and the staple ring," (*Notes on Donne*).

Such is his intent, nay absorbing gaze upon Christ as the end of the Christian life, yet viewed safely because not arrogantly but through the means appointed. In the teacher therefore he maintains the necessity of that union of learning with orthodoxy, which leaves no room for discretionary independence, and in the private Christian, that deference to the authority of the Church, which bridles the license of self-will, and in all, that union with it and reliance upon it through its covenanted sacraments, which are the only sure means of grace and spiritual advancement.

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If it be further asked, what aspect the teaching of Coleridge bears towards the theology which under the title of the "Oxford Tracts," has recently awakened so much misplaced alarm among well-meaning churchmen both in England and America, the answer is, that it is that of friendly travellers, on roads different indeed, but not diverse, setting out in their journey from distant points, but guided by the same compass and tending to the same haven. These Tracts, to which too much honour we think has been done in regarding them as the "moving power," instead of among the "leading indications" of that change that has *already* come over the spirit of English churchmen and which slumbers awhile in the heart before it comes forth in words, are as their name imports, "Tracts for the Times," even as the writings of Coleridge might be appropriately termed. Both are warring against the same modern errors, both fighting for the same deep, despised, ancient truths, and both exposing and refuting the same logical fallacies--the one in the Church, the other in philosophy, and thus both labouring in a common cause, to bring back an unreflecting, arrogant, all things-understanding age to the docile, reflecting, mystery-admitting spirit of earlier and better times. It were an interesting task to draw out, as might be done in parallel columns, these striking accordances, in language as well as sentiment, between writers, who seem at first sight to have so little in common as Coleridge and the Oxford divines, and it would afford a new and certainly no feeble argument in favour of those common principles, in which the thoughtful mind is found to take refuge as in an impregnable fortress, when driven by error or infidelity to seek the grounds of its faith, either in philosophy or religion. But it would swell our Preface too far to carry out this speculation, suffice it to say, both are evidently the product of the same widespread reaction,--both go to change the current of the age, in the same direction, and however the one may occasionally lead the solitary musing mind unto the very borders of mysticism, or the other delude some reverential spirit into an overestimate of exploded forms or monkish asceticism, still may we believe in them both as mighty elements of good, and chosen instruments of power, working out under the overruling providence of God deeper and more abiding changes upon earth than either friends or enemies seem to look at.

Summary of the beneficial tendencies of "Aids to Reflection" on the mind of the student.

In Habits of Thought.--It tends to awaken in the student the power of, and taste for, self-conscious reflection--and this it does not by verbal directions, which are a vain thing to arouse thought, but by the author going before his reader in the path of self-knowledge, showing him the way, giving him the result, and thus enabling him to retrace for himself, the steps by which it has been reached. Thus does the student by degrees become familiar with his own mind and with all the objects and processes of thinking.

In habits of Language.--It tends to give him an equivalent precision. From Coleridge's command over his reader's mind, the student first comes to know the power of words, and with his author to esteem them not dead, but "living" things, even the embodied and articu-



lated spirit of our race. Thence he proceeds from Coleridge's example, to learn the secret of that power, viz, to use them as "seeds of thought," and always therefore, to have in his own mind "realities" corresponding to the terms he uses.

In Mental Philosophy, or what the mind can know of its own structure.--It tends to make the student not theoretically but practically wise, enabling him, not so much to talk learnedly, as to think rightly. It teaches therefore, no formal system of metaphysics, for all such are necessarily but delusive pictures of an incomprehensible nature, but it furnishes for his adoption a few clear fundamental principles which upon trial he will find in striking agreement with the teaching of scripture, with his own inward experience, and with the highest and best philosophy of every age. Now these simple, but deep truths, as being common to the nature of man, become to him who is familiar with their application, *master-keys* by which to unlock the thoughts and read the minds of others as well as his own.

In Ethical Philosophy, or the Science of Duty.--It tends to give to the mind of the student both clearness and conclusiveness. It gives clearness by its peculiarly accurate discrimination between near-lying principles of action, as for instance, in giving the boundary lines that distinguish though without separating prudence from morality, and morality from religion. And still more does it tend to give conclusiveness by resting all his moral convictions on the primary truths of his inward nature, on the first dictates of conscience, the clear light of reason and the essential responsibilities of a self-conscious will, and thus freeing his moral reasonings from all those metaphysical entangling subtleties by which the understanding is both able and apt to perplex the simplest and clearest conclusions of duty.

In Christian Philosophy, or Revelation viewed in the light of a Rational nature.--Here it tends to give to the student's faith a demonstrative character, by identifying the truths of revelation, not indeed with prior discoveries of reason, but still with its highest subsequently enlightened conclusions, and with all the fundamental laws of our common humanity. "In no case" is its settled principle "can true reason and a right faith stand opposed to each other." "I am one," says Coleridge, "who do not dare to decry the religious instincts of humanity as a baseless dream."

In Spiritual Religion, or Revelation viewed as the Gospel, i. e., "good tidings to the sinner."--It tends to fix the student's thoughts, not upon himself but upon "Christ and him crucified." It teaches him to look upon Redemption as an accomplished work, purchased for all men and made available to all and each who truly seek it, through the operation of God's spirit, working, where they are given, through the covenanted means of grace, a visible church of divine origin, spiritual binding sacraments, prayer having power, and a gradual growth in grace through quiet and loving obedience.

In the mysteries of Faith.--It tends to give repose to the Christian student's belief, not however, by explaining mysteries to his understanding, but by justifying them to his reason. As being spiritual truths, it teaches with St. Paul, that they are to be spiritually discerned,



cognizable therefore, not by the faculty that judges according to sense but solely by the inner man, the inward spiritual light of the mind. It teaches further, that they become stumbling blocks to our faith, only when detached from the living truths of scripture, and looked into by us curiously and unwisely, relatively to God's nature, for which end, they were not given, rather than to man and his duties, for whose guidance they were alone intended.

In the perusal of Scripture.--It tends to unite in the mind of the student, the deepest gratitude with the highest reverence, inspiring him, to use Coleridge's own language, with "an implicit and anticipating faith," making "the wisdom of love to precede the love of wisdom," "learning as children learn, believing, in order to acquire a reason for their belief." The result of such teaching is to make the mind hold fast to scripture in its plain and simple words, and not to be hasty to explain into metaphor, whatsoever in it passes, as all spiritual truth does pass "man's understanding."

In the Temper of our Faith.--It tends to inspire a cheerful Christian confidence, full of hope, full of trust, flowing, not from ourselves, but from Him who hath loved us, and given us the earnest of his spirit. "We are not always to be looking to or brooding over ourselves either for accusation or for confidence, but in the place of "this servile thrall-like fear," says Coleridge, borrowing the words of Milton, "we are to substitute that adoptive and cheerful boldness which our new alliance with God requires of us as Christians."

In the Christian's religious estimate of others.--It tends to unite in his mind, charity with orthodoxy. "Resist every false doctrine," is its principle, "and call no man heretic." "The false doctrine," says Coleridge, "does not make the man a heretic, but an evil heart can make any doctrine heretical." "Scripture is given to teach us our duty, not to enable us to sit in judgment on the souls of our fellow creatures."

And lastly, What man owes to the light of the Gospel.--Coleridge shall say in his own powerful words, "Not therefore, that there is a life to come, and a future state; but what each individual soul may hope for itself therein; and on what grounds: and that this state has been rendered an object of aspiration and fervent desire, and a source of thanksgiving and exceeding great joy; and by whom, and through whom, and for whom, and by what means, and under what conditions--these are the peculiar and distinguishing fundamentals of the Christian Faith; These are the revealed lights and obtained privileges of the Christian Dispensation. Not alone the knowledge of the boon, but the precious inestimable boon itself, is the *grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ*. I believe Moses, I believe Paul; but I believe *in Christ*."

Such in fine is the character of the work now affectionately recommended by its present editor to the Christian confidence of all who seek to build up their faith "in the clear light



of their own self-consciousness." It is sent forth for the benefit of such trustfully, as by one who has himself tried it; it is sent forth in humility as by one who feels that his task of commentator has been above him, and yet is it sent forth without fear, as being with a Christian's prayer and in a Christian's confidence, that what has been rightly intended, will be made available under the light of a better wisdom and the guidance of a Higher Teacher to the spiritual good of those who seek that good in the only temper in which it is ever to be found, the temper of faith, of love, and of humility.

Columbia College,
New-York, Nov., 1, 1839.



THE AUTHOR'S ADDRESS

TO THE READER.

Fellow-Christian! the wish to be admired as a fine writer held a very subordinate place in my thoughts and feelings in the composition of this Volume. Let then its comparative merits and demerits, in respect of style and stimulancy, possess a proportional weight, and no more, in determining your judgment for or against its contents. Read it through: then compare the state of your mind, with the state in which your mind was, when you first opened the book. Has it led you to reflect? Has it supplied or suggested fresh subjects for reflection? Has it given you any new information? Has it removed any obstacle to a lively conviction of your responsibility as a moral agent? Has it solved any difficulties, which had impeded your faith as a Christian? Lastly, has it increased your power of thinking connectedly--especially on the scheme and purpose of the Redemption by Christ? If it have done none of these things, condemn it aloud as worthless: and strive to compensate for your own loss of time, by preventing others from wasting theirs. But if your conscience dictates an affirmative answer to all or any of the preceding questions, declare this, too, aloud, and endeavour to extend my utility.

Marinus

VICO

LACTANTIUS



THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

An Author has three points to settle: To what sort his work belongs, for what description of readers it is intended, and the specific end or object, which it is to answer. There is indeed a preliminary question respecting the end which the writer himself has in view, whether the number of purchasers, or the benefit of the readers. But this may be safely passed by; since where the book itself or the known principles of the writer do not supersede the question, there will seldom be sufficient strength of character for good or for evil to afford much chance of its being either distinctly put or fairly answered.

I shall proceed therefore to state as briefly as possible the intentions of the present volume in reference to the three first-mentioned points, namely, What? For whom? For what?

I. What? The answer is contained in the title-page. It belongs to the class of didactic works. Consequently, those who neither wish instruction for themselves, nor assistance in instructing others, have no interest in its contents.

II. For whom? Generally, for as many in all classes as wish for aid in disciplining their minds to habits of reflection; for all, who desirous of building up a manly character in the light of distinct consciousness, are content to study the principles of moral architecture on the several grounds of prudence, morality, and religion. And lastly, for all who feel an interest in the position which I have undertaken to defend, this, namely, that the Christian Faith is the perfection of human intelligence,—an interest sufficiently strong to insure a patient attention to the arguments brought in its support.

But if I am to mention any particular class or description of readers, who were prominent in my thought during the composition of the volume, my reply must be; that it was especially designed for the studious young at the close of their education or on their first entrance into the duties of manhood and the rights of self-government. And of these, again, in thought and wish I destined the work (the latter and larger portion, at least) yet more particularly to students intended for the ministry; first, as in duty bound, to the members of our Universities: secondly, (but only in respect of this mental precedency second) to all alike of whatever name, who have dedicated their future lives to the cultivation of their race, as pastors, preachers, missionaries, or instructors of youth.

III. For what? The worth of an author is estimated by the ends, the attainment of which he proposed to himself by the particular work; while the value of the work depends on its fitness, as the means. The objects of the present volume are the following, arranged in the order of their comparative importance.



1. To direct the reader's attention to the value of the science of words, their use and abuse, and the incalculable advantages attached to the habit of using them appropriately, and with a distinct knowledge of their primary, derivative, and metaphorical senses. And in furtherance of this object I have neglected no occasion of enforcing the maxim, that to expose a sophism and to detect the equivocal or double meaning of a word is, in the great majority of cases, one and the same thing. Horne Tooke entitled his celebrated work,

winged words: or language, not only the vehicle of thought but the wheels. With my convictions and views, for

that is, words select and determinate, and for

that is, living words. The wheels of the intellect I admit them to be: but such as Ezekiel beheld in the visions of God as he sat among the captives by the river of Chebar. *Whithersoever the Spirit was to go, the wheels went, and thither was their Spirit to go: for the Spirit of the living creature was in the wheels also.*

2. To establish the distinct characters of prudence, morality, and religion: and to impress the conviction, that though the second requires the first, and the third contains and supposes both the former; yet still moral goodness is other and more than prudence or the principle of expediency; and religion more and higher than morality. For this distinction the better Schools even of Pagan Philosophy contended.

3. To substantiate and set forth at large the momentous distinction between reason and understanding. Whatever is achievable by the understanding for the purposes of worldly interest, private or public, has in the present age been pursued with an activity and a success beyond all former experience, and to an extent which equally demands my admiration and excites my wonder. But likewise it is, and long has been, my conviction, that in no age since the first dawning of science and philosophy in this island have the truths, interests, and studies which especially belong to the reason, contemplative or practical, sunk into such utter neglect, not to say contempt, as during the last century. It is therefore one main object of this volume to establish the position, that whoever transfers to the understanding the primacy due to the *reason*, loses the one and spoils the other.

4. To exhibit a full and consistent scheme of the Christian Dispensation, and more largely of all the peculiar doctrines of the Christian Faith; and to answer all the objections to the same, which do not originate in a corrupt will rather than an erring judgment; and to do this in a manner intelligible for all who, possessing the ordinary advantages of education, do in good earnest desire to form their religious creed in the light of their own convictions, and to have a reason for the faith which they profess. There are indeed mysteries, in evidence of which no reasons can be brought. But it has been my endeavour to show, that the true solution of this problem is, that these mysteries are reason, reason in its highest form of self-affirmation.



Such are the special objects of these Aids to Reflection. Concerning the general character of the work, let me be permitted to add the few following sentences. St. Augustine, in one of his Sermons, discoursing on a high point of theology, tells his auditors--*Sic accipite, ut mereamini intelligere. Fides enim debet praecedere intellectum, ut sit intellectus fidei praemium.* Now without a certain portion of gratuitous and (as it were) experimentative faith in the writer, a reader will scarcely give that degree of continued attention, without which no didactic work worth reading can be read to any wise or profitable purpose. In this sense, therefore, and to this extent, every author, who is competent to the office he has undertaken, may without arrogance repeat St. Augustine's words in his own right, and advance a similar claim on similar grounds. But I venture no further than to imitate the sentiment at a humble distance, by avowing my belief that he, who seeks instruction in the following pages, will not fail to find entertainment likewise; but that whoever seeks entertainment only will find neither.

Reader!--You have been bred in a land abounding with men, able in arts, learning, and knowledges manifold, this man in one, this in another, few in many, none in all. But there is one art, of which every man should be master, the art of reflection. If you are not a thinking man, to what purpose are you a man at all? In like manner, there is one knowledge, which it is every man's interest and duty to acquire, namely, self-knowledge: or to what end was man alone, of all animals, endued by the Creator with the faculty of self-consciousness? Truly said the Pagan moralist,

e caelo descendit,

But you are likewise born in a Christian land: and Revelation has provided for you new subjects for reflection, and new treasures of knowledge, never to be unlocked by him who remains self-ignorant. Self-knowledge is the key to this casket; and by reflection alone can it be obtained. Reflect on your own thoughts, actions, circumstances, and--which will be of especial aid to you in forming a habit of reflection,--accustom yourself to reflect on the words you use, hear, or read, their birth, derivation and history. For if words are not things, they are living powers, by which the things of most importance to mankind are actuated, combined, and humanized. Finally, by reflection you may draw from the fleeting facts of your worldly trade, art, or profession, a science permanent as your immortal soul; and make even these subsidiary and preparative to the reception of spiritual truth, "doing as the dyers do, who having first dipt their silks in colours of less value, then give them the last tincture of crimson in grain."



AIDS TO REFLECTION.

INTRODUCTORY APHORISMS.



APHORISM I.

In philosophy equally as in poetry, it is the highest and most useful prerogative of genius to produce the strongest impressions of novelty, while it rescues admitted truths from the neglect caused by the very circumstance of their universal admission. Extremes meet. Truths, of all others the most awful and interesting, are too often considered as so true, that they lose all the power of truth, and lie bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side with the most despised and exploded errors.

APHORISM II.

There is one sure way of giving freshness and importance to the most common-place maxims--that of reflecting on them in direct reference to our own state and conduct, to our own past and future being.

APHORISM III.

To restore a common-place truth to its first uncommon lustre, you need only translate it into action. But to do this, you must have reflected on its truth.

APHORISM IV.

Leighton and Coleridge.

It is the advice of the wise man, "Dwell at home," "or, with yourself; and though there are very few that do this, yet it is surprising that the greatest part of mankind cannot be prevailed upon, at least to visit themselves sometimes; but, according to the saying of the wise Solomon, *The eyes of the fool are in the ends of the earth.*"

A reflecting mind, says an ancient writer, is the spring and source of every good thing--"*Omnis boni principium intellectus cogitabundus.*"--It is at once the disgrace and the misery of men, that they live without forethought. Suppose yourself fronting a mirror. Now what the objects behind you are to their images at the same apparent distance before you, such is reflection to forethought. As a man without forethought scarcely deserves the name of a man, so forethought without reflection is but a metaphorical phrase for the instinct of a beast.



APHORISM V.

As a fruit-tree is more valuable than any one of its fruits singly, or even than all its fruits of a single season, so the noblest object of reflection is the mind itself, by which we reflect:

And as the blossoms, the green, and the ripe, fruit of an orange-tree are more beautiful to behold when on the tree and seen as one with it, than the same growth detached and seen

successively, after their importation into another country and different clime; so it is with the manifold objects of reflection, when they are considered principally in reference to the reflective power, and as part and parcel of the same. No object, of whatever value our passions may represent it, but becomes foreign to us as soon as it is altogether unconnected with our intellectual, moral, and spiritual life. To be ours, it must be referred to the mind, either as motive, or consequence, or symptom.



APHORISM VI.

Leighton

He who teaches men the principles and precepts of spiritual wisdom, before their minds are called off from foreign objects, and turned inward upon themselves, might as well write his instructions, as the Sybil wrote her prophecies, on the loose leaves of trees, and commit them to the mercy of the inconstant winds.

APHORISM VII.

In order to learn, we must attend: in order to profit by what we have learned, we must think--that is, reflect. He only thinks who reflects¹.

APHORISM VIII.

Leighton and Coleridge.

It is a matter of great difficulty, and requires no ordinary skill and address, to fix the attention of men on the world within them, to induce them to study the processes

[continue]and superintend the works which they are themselves carrying on in their own minds; in short, to awaken in them both the faculty of thought² and the inclination to exercise it. For alas! the largest part of mankind are nowhere greater strangers than at home.



1 The indisposition, nay, the angry aversion to think, even in persons who are most willing to attend, and on the subjects to which they are giving studious attention, as political economy, biblical theology, classical antiquities, and the like,--is the phenomenon that forces itself on my notice afresh, every time I enter into the society of persons in the higher ranks. To assign a feeling and a determination of will, as a satisfactory reason for embracing or rejecting this or that opinion or belief, is of ordinary occurrence, and sure to obtain the sympathy and the suffrages of the company. And yet to me this seems little less irrational than to apply the nose to a picture, and to decide on its genuineness by the sense of smell.

2 Distinction between thought and attention. --By thought is here meant the voluntary reproduction in our minds of those states of consciousness, or (to use a phrase more familiar to the religious reader) of those inward experiences, to which, as to his best and most authentic documents, the teacher of moral or religious truth refers us. In attention, we keep the mind passive: in thought, we rouse it into activity. In the former, we submit to an impression we keep the mind steady, in order to receive the stamp. In the latter, we seek to imitate the artist, while we ourselves make a copy or duplicate of his work. We may learn arithmetic, or the elements of geometry, by continued attention alone; but self-knowledge, or an insight into the laws and constitution of the human

APHORISM IX.

Life is the one universal soul, which by virtue of the enlivening Breath, and the informing Word, all organized bodies have in common, each after its kind. This, therefore, all animals possess, and man as an animal. But, in addition to this, God transfused into man a higher gift, and specially imbreathed:--even a living (that is, self-subsisting) soul, a soul having its life in itself. "*And man became a living soul.*" He did not merely possess it; he became it. It was his proper being, his truest self, the man in the man. None then, not one of human kind, so poor and destitute, but there is provided for him, even in his present state, *a house not built with hands.* Aye, and spite of the philosophy (falsely so called) which mistakes the causes, the conditions, and the occasions of our becoming conscious of certain truths and realities for the truths and realities themselves--a

[continue]house gloriously furnished. Nothing is wanted but the eye, which is the light of this house, the light which is the eye of this soul. This seeing light, this enlightening eye, is reflection³. It is more, indeed, than is ordinarily meant by that word; but it is what a Christian ought to mean by it, and to know, too, whence it first came, and still continues to come--of what light even this light is but a reflection. This, too, is thought; and all thought is but unthinking that does not flow out of this, or tend towards it.

**APHORISM X.**

Self-superintendence! that any thing, should overlook itself! Is not this a paradox, and hard to understand? It is, indeed, difficult, and to the imbruted sensualist a direct contradiction: and yet most truly does the poet exclaim,

--Unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how mean a thing is man!

APHORISM XI.

An hour of solitude passed in sincere and earnest prayer, or the conflict with, and conquest over, a single passion or "subtle bosom sin," will teach us more of thought, will more effectually awaken the faculty, and form the habit, of reflection, than a year's study in the schools without them.

APHORISM XII.

In a world, the opinions of which are drawn from outside shows, many things may be paradoxical, (that is,

mind and the grounds of religion and true morality, in addition to the effort of attention requires the energy of thought.

3 The *dianoia* of St. John, 1 Ep. v, 20, inaccurately rendered *understanding* in our translation. To exhibit the full force of the Greek word, we must say, a *power of discernment by reason.*

[continue]contrary to the common notion) and nevertheless true nay, because they are true. How should it be otherwise, as long as the imagination of the worldling is wholly occupied by surfaces, while the Christian's thoughts are fixed on the substance, that which is and abides, and which, because it is the substance⁴, the outward senses cannot recognise. Tertullian had good reason for his assertion, that the simplest Christian (if indeed a Christian) knows more than the most accomplished irreligious philosopher.



COMMENT.

Let it not, however, be forgotten, that the powers of the understanding and the intellectual graces are precious gifts of God; and that every Christian, according to the opportunities vouchsafed to him, is bound to cultivate the one and to acquire the other. Indeed, he is scarcely a Christian who willfully neglects so to do. What says the apostle? Add to your faith knowledge, and to knowledge manly energy, for this is the proper rendering of and not *virtue*, at least in the present and ordinary acceptation of the word⁵.

APHORISM XIII.

Never yet did there exist a full faith in the Divine Word (by whom light, as well as immortality, was brought into the world) which did not expand the intellect, while it purified the heart;--which did not multiply the aims and objects of the understanding, while it fixed and simplified those of the desires and passions⁶.



4 *Quod stat subtus*, that which stands beneath, and (as it were) supports, the appearance. In a language like ours, where so many words are derived from other languages, there are few modes of instruction more useful or more amusing than that of accustoming young people to seek for the etymology, or primary meaning of the words they use. There are cases, in which more knowledge of more value may be conveyed by the history of a word, than by the history of a campaign.

5 I am not ashamed to confess that I dislike the frequent use of the word *virtue*, instead of *righteousness*, in the pulpit: and that in prayer or preaching before a Christian community, it sounds too much like pagan philosophy. The passage in St. Peter's epistle, is the only scripture authority that can be pretended for its use, and I think it right, therefore, to notice, that it rests, either on an oversight of the translators, or on a change in the meaning of the word since their time.

6 The effects of a zealous ministry on the intellects and acquirements of the labouring classes are not only attested by Baxter, and the Presbyterian divines, but admitted by Bishop Burnet, who, during his mission in the west of Scotland, was "amazed to find a poor commonalty so able to argue," &c. But we need not go to a sister church for proof or example. The diffusion of light and knowledge through this kingdom, by the exertions of the bishops and clergy, by Episcopalians and Puritans, from Edward VI, to the Restoration, was as wonderful as it is praiseworthy, and may be justly placed among the most remarkable facts of history.

COMMENT.

If acquiescence without insight; if warmth without light; if an immunity from doubt, given and guaranteed by a resolute ignorance; if the habit of taking for granted the words of a catechism, remembered or forgotten; if a mere sensation of positiveness substituted--I will not say for the sense of certainty, but--for that calm assurance, the very means and conditions of which it supersedes; if a belief that seeks the darkness, and yet strikes no root, immoveable as the limpet from the rock, and, like the limpet, fixed there by mere force of adhesion;--if these suffice to make men Christians, in what sense could the apostle affirm that believers receive, not indeed worldly wisdom, that comes to nought, but the wisdom of God, *that we might know and comprehend* the things that are freely given to us of God? On what grounds could he denounce the sincerest fervour of spirit as defective,
 [continue]where it does not likewise bring forth fruits in the understanding?

APHORISM XIV.

In our present state, it is little less than impossible that the affections should be kept constant to an object which gives no employment to the understanding, and yet cannot be made manifest to the senses. The exercise of the reasoning and reflecting powers, increasing insight, and enlarging views, are requisite to keep alive the substantial faith in the heart.

APHORISM XV.

In the state of perfection, perhaps, all other faculties may be swallowed up in love, or superseded by immediate vision; but it is on the wings of the cherubim, that is (according to the interpretation of the ancient Hebrew doctors) the intellectual powers and energies, that we must first be borne up to the "pure empyrean." It must be seraphs, and not the hearts of imperfect mortals, that can burn unfuelled and self-fed. *Give me understanding* (is the prayer of the royal Psalmist) *and I shall observe thy law with my whole heart.--Thy law is exceedingly broad--*that is, comprehensive, pregnant, containing far more than the apparent import of the words on a first perusal. *It is my meditation all the day.*

COMMENT.

It is worthy of especial observation, that the Scriptures are distinguished from all other writings pretending to inspiration, by the strong and frequent recommendations of knowledge, and a spirit of inquiry. Without reflection, it is evident that neither the one can be acquired nor other exercised.

APHORISM XVI.

The word rational has been strangely abused of late times. This must not, however, disincline us to the weighty consideration, that thoughtfulness, and a desire to bottom all our convictions on grounds of right reason, are inseparable from the character of a Christian.

APHORISM XVII.

A reflecting mind is not a flower that grows wild, or comes up of its own accord. The difficulty is indeed greater than many, who mistake quick recollection for thought, are disposed to admit; but how much less than it would be, had we not been born and bred in a Christian and Protestant land, few of us are sufficiently aware. Truly may we, and thankfully ought we to, exclaim with the Psalmist: *The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding even to the simple.*

APHORISM XVIII.

Examine the journals of our zealous missionaries, I will not say among the Hottentots or Esquimaux, but in the highly civilized, though fearfully uncultivated, inhabitants of ancient India. How often, and how feelingly, do they describe the difficulty of rendering the simplest chain of thought intelligible to the ordinary natives, the rapid exhaustion of their whole power of attention, and with what distressful effort it is exerted while it lasts! Yet it is among these that the hideous practices of self-torture chiefly prevail. O if folly were no easier than wisdom, it being often so very much more grievous, how certainly might these unhappy slaves of superstition be converted to Christianity! But, alas! to swing by hooks passed through the back, or to walk in shoes with nails of iron pointed upwards through the soles—all this is so much less difficult, demands so much less exertion of the will than to reflect, and by reflection to gain knowledge and tranquillity!

COMMENT.

It is not true, that ignorant persons have no notion of the advantages of truth and knowledge. They confess, they see and bear witness to, these advantages in the conduct, the immunities, and the superior powers of the possessors. Were they attainable by pilgrimages the most toilsome, or penances the most painful, we should assuredly have as many pilgrims and self-tormentors in the service of true religion, as now exist under the tyranny of papal or Brahman superstition.

APHORISM XIX.

In countries enlightened by the gospel, however, the most formidable and (it is to be feared) the most frequent impediment to men's turning the mind inwards upon themselves, is that they are afraid of what they shall find there. There is an aching hollowness in the bosom, a dark cold speck at the heart, an obscure and boding sense of a somewhat, that must be kept out of sight of the conscience; some secret lodger, whom they can neither resolve to eject or retain⁷.

⁷ The following sonnet was extracted by me from Herbert's Temple, in a work long since out of print, for the purity of the language and the fulness of the sense. But I shall be excused, I trust, in repeating it here for higher merits and with higher purposes, as a forcible comment on the words in the text.

Graces vouchsafed in a Christian land.

Lord! with what care hast thou begirt us round!
Parents first season us. Then schoolmasters
Deliver us to laws. They send us bound
To rules of reason Holy messengers;

COMMENT.

Few are so obdurate, few have sufficient strength of character, to be able to draw forth an evil tendency or immoral practice into distinct consciousness, without bringing it in the same moment before an awaking conscience. But for this very reason it becomes a duty of conscience to form the mind to a habit of distinct consciousness. An unreflecting Christian walks in twilight among snares and pitfalls! He entreats the heavenly Father not to lead him into temptation, and yet places himself on the very edge of it, because he will not kindle the torch which his Father had given into his hands, as a mean of prevention and lest he should pray too late.



APHORISM XX.

Among the various undertakings of men, can there be mentioned one more important, can there be conceived one more sublime, than an intention to form the human mind anew after the divine image? The very intention, if it be sincere, is a ray of its dawning.

The requisites for the execution of this high intent may be comprised under three heads; the prudential, the moral, and the spiritual:

Pulpits and Sundays; sorrow dogging sin;
Afflictions sorted; anguish of all sizes;
Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in!
Bibles laid open; millions of surprises;
Blessings beforehand; ties of gratefulness;
The sound of glory ringing in our ears:
Without, our shame; within, our consciences;
Angels and grace; eternal hopes and fears!
Yet all these fences, and their whole array,
One cunning bosom sin blows quite away.

APHORISM XXI.

First, Religious Prudence.--What this is, will be best explained by its effects and operations. Prudence consists in the service of religion, in the prevention or abatement of hindrances and distractions; and consequently in avoiding, or removing, all such circumstances as, by diverting the attention of the workman, retard the progress and hazard the



safety of the work. It is likewise (I deny not) a part of this unworldly prudence, to place ourselves as much and as often as it is in our power so to do, in circumstances directly favourable to our great design; and to avail ourselves of all the positive helps and furtherances which these circumstances afford. But neither dare we, as Christians, forget whose and under what dominion the things are, *quae nos circumstant*, that is, which stand around us. We are to remember; that it is the world that constitutes our outward circumstances; that in the form of the world, which is evermore at variance with the divine form (or idea) they are cast and moulded; and that of the means and measures which prudence requires in the forming anew of the divine image in the soul, the far greater number suppose the world at enmity with our design. We are to avoid its snares, to repel its attacks, to suspect its aids and succours, and even when compelled to receive them as allies within our trenches, yet to commit the outworks alone to their charge, and to keep them at a jealous distance from the citadel. The powers of the world are often christened, but seldom christianized. They are but proselytes of the outer gate: or, like the Saxons of old, enter the land as auxiliaries, and remain in it as conquerors and lords.

APHORISM XXII.

The rules of prudence in general, like the laws of the stone tables, are for the most part prohibitive. *Thou shalt not* is their characteristic formula: and it is an especial part of Christian prudence that it should be so. Nor would it be difficult to bring under this head, all the social obligations that arise out of the relations of the present life, which the sensual understanding

Romans viii, 6,) is of itself able to discover, and the performance of which, under favourable circumstances, the merest worldly self-interest, without love or faith, is sufficient to enforce; but which Christian prudence enlivens by a higher principle, and renders symbolic and sacramental. (*Ephesians* v, 32).

COMMENT.

This then, under the appellation of prudential requisites, comes first under consideration: and may be regarded as the shrine and frame-work for the divine image, into which the worldly human is to be transformed. We are next to bring out the divine portrait itself, the distinct features of its countenance, as a sojourner among men; its benign aspect turned towards its fellow-pilgrims, the extended arm, and the hand that blesseth and healeth.

APHORISM XXIII.

The outward service
of ancient religion, the rites, ceremonies and ceremonial vestments of the

*See the epistle of St. James, c. i, v. 26, 27, where, in the authorized version, the Greek word

is falsely rendered religion: whether by mistake of the translator, or from the intended sense having become obsolete, I cannot decide. At all events, for the English reader old law, had morality for their substance. They were the letter, of which morality was the spirit; the enigma, of which morality was the meaning. But morality itself is the service and ceremonial (*cultus exterior*, of the Christian religion. The scheme of grace and truth that became** through Jesus Christ, the faith that looks† down into the perfect law of liberty, has "*light for its garment*:" its very "*robe is righteousness*."

of our times it has the effect of an erroneous translation. It not only obscures the connexion of the passage, and weakens the peculiar force and sublimity of the thought, rendering it comparatively flat and trivial, almost indeed tautological, but has occasioned this particular verse to be perverted into a support of a very dangerous error; and the whole epistle to be considered as a set-off against the epistles and declarations of St. Paul, instead of (what in fact it is) a masterly comment and confirmation of the same. I need not inform the religious reader, that James, c. i, v. 27, is the favourite text and most boasted authority of those divines who represent the Redeemer of the world as little more than a moral reformer, and the Christian faith as a code of ethics, differing from the moral system of Moses and the prophets by an additional motive; or rather, by the additional strength and clearness which the historical fact of the resurrection has given to the same motive.

**The Greek word

unites in itself the two senses of *began to exist* and *was made to exist*. It exemplifies the force of the middle voice, in distinction from the verb reflex. In answer to a note on John i, 2, in the Unitarian version of the New Testament, I think it worth noticing, that the same word is used in the very same sense by Aristophanes in that famous parody on the cosmogonies of the mythic poets, or the creation of the finite, as delivered, or supposed to be delivered, in the Cabiric or Samothracian mysteries, in the Comedy of the Birds.

†James, c. i, v. 25. The Greek word,

signifies the incurvation or bending of the body in the act of *looking down into*; as, for instance, in the endeavour to see the reflected image of a star in the water at the bottom of a well. A more happy or forcible word could not have been chosen to express the nature and ultimate object of reflexion, and to enforce the necessity of it, in order to discover the living fountain and spring-head of the evidence of the Christian faith in the believer himself, and at the same time

COMMENT.

Herein the apostle places the pre-eminence, the peculiar and distinguishing excellence of the Christian religion. The ritual is of the same kind,

though not of the same order, with the religion itself--not arbitrary or conventional, as types and hieroglyphics are in relation to the things expressed by them; but inseparable,

consubstantiated (as it were), and partaking therefore of the same life, permanence, and intrinsic worth with its spirit and principle.

APHORISM XXIV.

Morality is the body, of which the faith in Christ is the soul--so far indeed its earthly body, as it is adapted to its state of warfare on earth, and the appointed form and instrument of its communion with the present world; yet not "*terrestrial*," nor of the world, but a celestial body, and capable of being transfigured from glory to glory, in accordance with the varying circumstances and outward relations of its moving and informing spirit.

to point out the seat and region, where alone it is to be found. *Quantum sumus, scimus.* That which we find within ourselves, which is more than ourselves, and yet the ground of whatever is good and permanent therein, is the substance and life of all other knowledge.

N. B. The Familists of the sixteenth century, and similar enthusiasts of later date, overlooked the essential point, that it was a law, and a law that involved its own end

or law that perfects or completes itself; and therefore, its obligations are called, in reference to human statutes, imperfect duties, i. e., incoercible from without. They overlooked that it was a law that portions out

to allot or make division of) to each man the sphere and limits, within which it is to be exercised--which as St. Peter notices of certain profound passages in the writings of St. Paul, (St. Paul, (2 Pet. c. iii, v. 16,)

APHORISM XXV.

Wo to the man, who will believe neither power, freedom, nor morality, because he nowhere finds either entire, or immixed with sin, thralldom and infirmity. In the natural and intellectual realms, we distinguish what we cannot separate; and in the moral world, we must distinguish in order to separate. Yea, in the clear distinction of good from evil the process of separation commences.

COMMENT.

It was customary with religious men in former times, to make a rule of taking every morning some text, or aphorism*, for their occasional meditation during the day, and thus to fill up the intervals of their attention to business. I do not point it out for imitation, as knowing too well, how apt these self-imposed rules are to degenerate into superstition or hollowness: otherwise I would have recommended the following as the first exercise.

APHORISM XXVI.

It is a dull and obtuse mind, that must divide in order to distinguish; but it is a still worse, that distinguishes



*In accordance with a preceding remark, on the use of etymology in disciplining the youthful mind to thoughtful habits, and as consistent with the title of this work, "Aids to Reflection,": I shall offer no apology for the following and similar notes:--

Aphorism, determinate position, from the Greek *ap*, from; and *horizein*, to bound, or limit; whence our horizon. In order to get the full sense of a word, we should first present to our minds the visual image that forms its primary meaning. Draw lines of different colours round the different counties of England, and then cut out each separately, as in the common play-maps that children take to pieces and put together--so that each district can be contemplated apart from the rest, as a whole in itself. This twofold act of circumscribing, and detaching, when it is exerted by the mind on subjects of reflection and reason, is to aphorize, and the result an aphorism. in order to divide. In the former, we may contemplate the source of superstition and idolatry;** in the latter of schism, heresy,† and a seditious and sectarian spirit.‡

APHORISM XXVII.

Exclusively of the abstract sciences, the largest and worthiest portion of our knowledge consists of aphorisms and the greatest and best of men is but an aphorism.

APHORISM XXVIII.

On the prudential influence which the fear or foresight of the consequences of his actions, in respect of his own loss or gain, may exert on a newly converted believer.

Precautionary Remark.--I meddle not with the dispute respecting conversion, whether, and in what sense, necessary in all Christians. It is sufficient for my purpose, that a very large number of men, even in Christian countries, need to be converted, and that not a few, I trust, have been. The tenet becomes fanatical and dangerous, only when rare and extraordinary exceptions are made to be the general rule;--when what was vouchsafed to the apostle of the Gentiles by especial

**

--*Damasc. de Myst. Egypt*; that is, They divided the intelligible into many and several individualities.

†From

Though well aware of its formal and apparent derivation from *haireō*, I am inclined to refer both words to *airo*, as the primitive term, containing the primary visual image, and therefore should explain *haeresis* as a wilful raising into public notice, an uplifting (for display) of any particular opinion differing from the established belief of the church at large, and making it a ground of schism, that is division.

‡I mean these words in their large and philosophic sense in relation to the spirit, or originating temper and tendency, and not to any one mode under which, or to any one class, in or by which, it may be displayed. A seditious spirit may (it is possible, though not probable)

exist in the council-chamber of a palace as strongly as in a mob in Palace-Yard; and a sectarian spirit in a cathedral, no less than in a conventicle. grace, and for an especial purpose, namely, a conversion^[^*] begun and completed in the same moment, is demanded or expected of all men, as a necessary sign and pledge of their election. Late observations have shown, that under many circumstances the magnetic needle, even after the disturbing influence has been removed, will keep wavering, and require many days before it points aright, and remains steady to the pole. So is it ordinarily with the soul, after it has begun to free itself from the disturbing forces of the flesh, and the world, and to convert^[^†] itself towards God.



APHORISM XXIX.

Awakened by the cock-crow (a sermon, a calamity, a sick bed, or a providential escape) the Christian pilgrim sets out in the morning twilight, while yet the truth (the)

is below the horizon. Certain necessary consequences of his past life and his present undertaking will be seen by the refraction of its light: more will be apprehended and conjectured. The phantasms, that had predominated during the hours of darkness, are still busy. Though they no longer present themselves as distinct forms, they yet remain as formative motions in the pilgrim's soul, unconscious of its own activity and over-mastered by its own workmanship.

^[^*] Whereas Christ's other disciples had a breeding under him, St. Paul was born an apostle; not carved out, as the rest, by degrees and in course of time, but a fusile apostle, an apostle poured out and cast in a mould. As Adam was a perfect man in an instant, so was St. Paul a perfect Christian. The same spirit was the lightning that melted, and the mould that received, and shaped him.--Donne's Sermons--quoted from memory.

^[^†] From the Latin, *convertere*, that is, by an act of the will to turn towards the true pole, at the same time (for this is the force of the prepositive *con*,) that the understanding is convinced and made aware of its existence and direction. Things take the signature of thought. The shapes of the recent dream become a mould for the objects in the distance, and these again give an outwardness and sensation of reality to the shapings of the dream. The bodings inspired by the long habit of selfishness, and self-seeking cunning, though they are now commencing the process of their purification into that fear which is the beginning of wisdom, and which, as such, is ordained to be our guide and safeguard, till the sun of love, the perfect law of liberty, is fully arisen--these bodings will set the fancy at work, and haply, for a time, transform the mists of dim and imperfect knowledge into determinate superstitions. But in either case, whether seen clearly or dimly, whether beholden or only imagined, the consequences contemplated in their bearings on the individual's inherent^[^*] desire of happiness and dread of pain become motives; and (unless all distinction in the words be done away with, and either prudence or virtue be reduced to a superfluous synonyme, a redundancy in all the languages of the civilized world) these motives, and the acts



and forbearances directly proceeding from them, fall under the head of prudence, as belonging to one or other of its three very distinct species.

I. It may be a prudence, that stands in opposition to a higher moral life, and tends to preclude it, and to prevent the soul from ever arriving at the hatred of sin for its own exceeding sinfulness (*Rom. vii, 13*): and this is an evil prudence.

[^*]The following extract from Leighton's Theological Lectures, sect. II, may serve as a comment on this sentence:

"The human mind, however shunned and weakened by the Fall, still retains some faint idea of the good it has lost; a kind of languid sense of its misery and indigence, with affections suitable to these obscure notions. This at least is beyond all doubt and indisputable, that all men

II. Or it may be a neutral prudence, not incompatible with spiritual growth: and to this we may, with especial propriety, apply the words of our Lord, *What is not against us is for us*. It is therefore an innocent, and (being such) a proper, and commendable prudence.

III. Or it may lead and be subservient to a higher principle than itself. The mind and conscience of the individual may be reconciled to it, in the foreknowledge of the higher principle, and with yearning towards it that implies a foretaste of future freedom. The enfeebled convalescent is reconciled to his crutches, and thankfully makes use of them, not only because they are necessary for his immediate support, but likewise, because they are the means and conditions of exercise, and by exercise, of establishing, *gradatim paulatim*, that strength, flexibility, and almost spontaneous obedience of the muscles, which the idea and cheering presentiment of health hold out to him. He finds their value

wish well to themselves; nor can the mind divest itself of this propensity, without divesting itself of its being. This is what the schoolmen mean when in their manner of expression they say, that 'the will (*voluntas*, not *arbitrium*) is carried towards happiness not simply as will, but as nature.'"

I venture to remark that this position, if not more certainly, would be more evidently true, if instead of *beatitudo*, the word *indolentia* (that is, freedom from pain, negative happiness) had been used. But this depends on the exact meaning attached to the term self, of which more in another place. One conclusion, however, follows inevitably from the preceding position, namely, that this propensity can never be legitimately made the principle of morality, even because it is no part or appurtenance of the moral will; and because the proper object of the moral principle is to limit and control this propensity, and to determine in what it may be, and in what it ought to be, gratified; while it is the business of philosophy to instruct the understanding, and the office of religion to convince the whole man, that otherwise than as a regulated, and of course therefore a subordinate, end, this propensity,



innate and inalienable though it be, can never be realized or fulfilled. in their present necessity, and their worth as they are the instruments of finally superseding it. This is a faithful, a wise prudence, having, indeed, its birth-place in the world, and the wisdom of this world for its father; but naturalized in a better land, and having the wisdom from above for its sponsor and spiritual parent. To steal a dropt feather from the spicy nest of the phoenix, (the fond humour, I mean, of the mystic divines and allegorizers of holy writ), it is the *son of Terah from Ur of the Chaldees*, who gives a tithe of all to the King of Righteousness, without father, without mother, without descent, and receives a blessing on the remainder.

IV. Lastly, there is a prudence that co-exists with morality, as morality co-exists with the spiritual life: a prudence that is the organ of both, as the understanding is to the reason and the will, or as the lungs are to the heart and brain. This is a holy prudence, the steward faithful and discreet (*Luke xii, 42*), the *eldest servant* in the family of faith, born in the house, and *made the ruler over his lord's household*.

Let not then, I entreat you, my purpose be misunderstood; as if, in distinguishing virtue from prudence, I wished to divide the one from the other. True morality is hostile to that prudence only, which is preclusive of true morality. The teacher, who subordinates prudence to virtue, cannot be supposed to dispense with virtue; and he, who teaches the proper connexion of the one with the other, does not depreciate the lower in any sense; while by making it a link of the same chain with the higher, and receiving the same influence, he raises it.

In general, morality may be compared to the consonant; prudence to the vowel. The former cannot be uttered (reduced to practice) but by means of the latter.

APHORISM XXX.

What the duties of morality are, the apostle instructs the believer in full, comprising them under the two heads of negative and positive; negative to keep himself pure from the world; and positive, beneficence from lovingkindness, that is, love of his fellow-men (his kind) as himself.

APHORISM XXXI.

Last and highest come the spiritual, comprising all the truths, acts, and duties, that have an especial reference to the timeless, the permanent, the eternal, to the sincere love of the true, as truth, of the good, as good: and of God as both in one. It comprehends the whole ascent from uprightness (morality, virtue, inward rectitude) to godlikeness, with all the acts, exercises, and disciplines of mind, will, and affection, that are requisite or conducive to the great design of our redemption from the form of the evil one, and of our second creation or birth in the divine image.**

**It is worthy of observation, and may furnish a fruitful subject for future reflection, how nearly this scriptural division coincides with the Platonic, which, commencing with the prudential, or the habit of act and purpose proceeding from enlightened self-interest,

[*qui animi imperio, corporis servitio, rerum auxilio, in proprium sui commodum et sibi providus utitur, hunc esse proidentem statuimus,*] ascends to the moral, that is, to the purifying and remedial virtues; and seeks its summit in the imitation of the divine nature. In this last division, answering to that which we have called the spiritual, Plato includes all those inward acts and aspirations, waitings, and watchings, which have a growth in godlikeness for their immediate purpose, and the union of the human soul with the supreme good as their ultimate object. Nor was it altogether without grounds that several of the Fathers ventured to believe that Plato had some dim conception of the necessity of a divine mediator, whether through some indistinct echo of the patriarchal faith, or some rays of light refracted from the Hebrew prophets through a Phoenician

APHORISM XXXII.

It may be an additional aid to reflection, to distinguish the three kinds severally, according to the faculty to which each corresponds, the part of our human nature which is more particularly its organ. Thus: the prudential corresponds to the sense and the understanding; the moral to the heart and the conscience; the spiritual to the will and the reason, that is, to the finite will reduced to harmony with, and in subordination to, the reason, as a ray from that true light which is both reason and will, universal reason, and will absolute.

medium (to which he may possibly have referred in his phrase, the wisdom delivered from God), or by his own sense of the mysterious contradiction in human nature between the will and the reason, the natural appetences and the not less innate law of conscience, (*Romans* ii, 14, 15), we shall in vain attempt to determine. It is not impossible that all three may have co-operated in partially unveiling these awful truths to this plank from the wreck of paradise thrown on the shores of idolatrous Greece, to this divine philosopher,

Che in quella schiera ando piu presso al segno

Al qual aggiunge, a chi dal cielo e dato.

Petrarch. Del Trionfo della Fama, cap. iii, 1, 5, 6.



REFLECTIONS.
INTRODUCTORY TO
MORAL AND RELIGIOUS APHORISMS.

ON SENSIBILITY.

If prudence, though practically inseparable from morality, is not to be confounded with the moral principle; still less may sensibility, that is, a constitutional quickness of sympathy with pain and pleasure, and a keen sense of the gratifications that accompany social intercourse, mutual endearments, and reciprocal preferences, be mistaken, or deemed a substitute, for either. Sensibility is not even a sure pledge of a good heart, though among the most common meanings of that many-meaning and too commonly misapplied expression.

So far from being either morality, or one with the moral principle, it ought not even to be placed in the same rank with prudence. For prudence is at least an offspring of the understanding; but sensibility (the sensibility, I mean, here spoken of) is for the greater part a quality of the nerves, and a result of individual bodily temperament.

Prudence is an active principle, and implies a sacrifice of self, though only to the same self projected, as it were, to a distance. But the very term sensibility, marks its passive nature; and in its mere self, apart from choice and reflection, it proves little more than the coincidence or contagion of pleasurable or painful sensations in different persons.

Alas! how many are there in this over-stimulated age, in which the occurrence of excessive and unhealthy sensitiveness is so frequent, as even to have reversed the current meaning of the word, nervous. How many are there whose sensibility prompts them to remove those evils alone, which by hideous spectacle or clamorous outcry are present to their senses and disturb their selfish enjoyments. Provided the dunghill is not before their parlour window, they are well contented to know that it exists, and perhaps as the hotbed on which their own luxuries are reared. Sensibility is not necessarily benevolence. Nay, by rendering us tremblingly alive to trifling misfortunes, it frequently prevents it, and induces an effeminate selfishness instead,

-----pampering the coward heart
With feelings all too delicate for use.
Sweet are the tears, that from a Howard's eye
Drop on the cheek of one, he lifts from earth:
And he, who works me good with unmoved face,
Does it but half. He chills me, while he aids,
My benefactor, not my brother man.



But even this, this cold benevolence,
 Seems worth, seems manhood, when there rise before me
 The sluggard pity's vision-weaving tribe,
 Who sigh for wretchedness yet shun the wretched,
 Nursing in some delicious solitude
 Their slothful loves and dainty sympathies.

Lastly, where virtue is, sensibility is the ornament and becoming attire of virtue. On certain occasions it may almost be said to become** virtue. But sensibility and all the amiable qualities may likewise become, and too often have become, the panders of vice, and the instruments of seduction.

So must it needs be with all qualities that have their rise only in parts and fragments of our nature. A man of warm passions may sacrifice half his estate to rescue a friend from prison: for he is naturally sympathetic, and the more social part of his nature happened to be uppermost. The same man shall afterwards exhibit the same disregard of money in an attempt to seduce that friend's wife or daughter.

All the evil achieved by Hobbes and the whole school of materialists will appear inconsiderable if it be compared with the mischief effected and occasioned by the sentimental philosophy of Sterne, and his numerous imitators. The vilest appetites and the most remorseless inconstancy towards their objects, acquired the titles of the *heart the irresistible feelings, the too tender sensibility*: and if the frosts of prudence, the icy chains of human law thawed and vanished at the genial warmth of human nature, who could help it? It was an amiable weakness!

About this time, too, the profanation of the word, Love, rose to its height. The French naturalists, Buffon

**There sometimes occurs an apparent play on words, which not only to the moralizer, but even to the philosophical etymologist, appears more than a mere play. Thus in the double sense of the word, *become*. I have known persons so anxious to have their dress become them, as to convert it at length into their proper self, and thus actually to become the dress. Such a one, (safeliest spoken of by the neuter pronoun), I consider as but a suit of live finery. It is indifferent whether we say, it becomes he, or, he becomes it. and others, borrowed it from the sentimental novelists: the Swedish and English philosophers took the contagion; and the muse of science condescended to seek admission into the saloons of fashion and frivolity, rouged like a harlot, and with the harlot's wanton leer. I know not how the annals of guilt could be better forced into the service of virtue, than by such a comment on the present paragraph, as would be afforded by a selection from the sentimental correspondence produced in courts of justice within the last thirty years, fairly translated into the true meaning of the words, and the actual object and purpose of the infamous writers.

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Do you in good earnest aim at dignity of character? By all the treasures of a peaceful mind, by all the charms of an open countenance, I conjure you, O youth! turn away from those who live in the twilight between vice and virtue. Are not reason, discrimination, law, and deliberate choice, the distinguishing characters of humanity? Can aught then worthy of a human being proceed from a habit of soul, which would exclude all these and (to borrow a metaphor from paganism) prefer the den of Trophonius to the temple and oracles of the God of light? Can any thing manly, I say, proceed from those, who for law and light would substitute shapeless feelings, sentiments, impulses, which as far as they differ from the vital workings in the brute animals owe the difference to their former connexion with the proper virtues of humanity; as dendrites derive the outlines, that constitute their value above other clay-stones, from the casual neighbourhood and pressure of the plants, the names of which they assume! Remember, that love itself in its highest earthly bearing, as the ground of the marriage union,** becomes love by an inward fiat of the will, by a completing and sealing act of moral election, and lays claim to permanence only under the form of duty.

**It might be a mean of preventing many unhappy marriages, if the youth of both sexes had it early impressed on their minds, that marriage contracted between Christians is a true and perfect symbol or mystery; that is, the actualizing faith being supposed to exist in the receivers, it is an outward sign co-essential with that which it signifies, or a living part of that, the whole of which it represents. Marriage, therefore, in the Christian sense (*Ephesians* v. 22-33,) as symbolical of the union of the soul with Christ the Mediator, and with God through Christ, is perfectly a sacramental ordinance, and not retained by the reformed churches as one of the sacraments, for two reasons; first, that the sign is not distinctive of the church of Christ, and the ordinance not peculiar, nor owing its origin to the gospel dispensation; secondly, that it is not of universal obligation, nor a means of grace enjoined on all Christians. In other and plainer words, marriage does not contain in itself an open profession of Christ, and it is not a sacrament of the church, but only of certain individual members of the church. It is evident, however, that neither of these reasons affect or diminish the religious nature and dedicative force of the marriage vow, or detract from the solemnity in the apostolic declaration: *This is a great mystery*.

The interest, which the state has in the appropriation of one woman to one man, and the civil obligations therefrom resulting, form an altogether distinct consideration: When I meditate on the words of the apostle, confirmed and illustrated as they are, by so many harmonies in the spiritual structure of our proper humanity, (in the image of God, male and female created he the man), and then reflect how little claim so large a number of legal cohabitations have to the name of Christian marriages--I feel inclined to doubt, whether the plan of celebrating marriages universally by the civil magistrate, in the first instance, and leaving the religious covenant, and sacramental pledge to the election of the parties themselves, adopted during the republic in England, and in our own times by the French



legislature, was not in fact, whatever it might be in intention, reverential to Christianity. At all events, it was their own act and choice, if the parties made bad worse by the profanation of a gospel mystery.



PRUDENTIAL APHORISMS.

APHORISM I.

Leighton and Coleridge.

With respect to any final aim or end, the greater part of mankind live at hazard. They have no certain harbour in view, nor direct their course by any fixed star. But to him that knoweth not the port to which he is bound, no wind can be favourable; neither can he who has not yet determined at what mark he is to shoot, direct his arrow aright.

It is not, however, the less true that there is a proper object to aim at; and if this object be meant by the term happiness, (though I think that not the most appropriate term for a state, the perfection of which consists in the exclusion of all hap, that is, chance), I assert that there is such a thing as human happiness, as *summum bonum* or ultimate good. What this is, the Bible alone shows clearly and certainly, and points out the way that leads to the attainment of it. This is that which prevailed with St. Augustine to study the Scriptures, and engaged his affection to them. "In Cicero, and Plato, and other such writers," says he, "I meet with many things acutely said, and things that excite a certain warmth of emotion, but in none of them do I find these words, *Come unto*

me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." **

COMMENT.

Felicity, in its proper sense is but another word for fortunateness, or happiness; and I can see no advantage in the improper use of words, when proper terms are to be found, but, on the contrary, much mischief. For, by familiarizing the mind to equivocal expressions, that is, such as may be taken in two or more different meanings, we introduce confusion of thought, and furnish the sophist with his best and handiest tools. For the juggle of sophistry consists, for the greater part, in using a word in one sense in the premiss, and in another sense in the conclusion. We should accustom ourselves to think, and reason, in precise and steadfast terms, even when custom, or the deficiency, or the corruption of the language will not permit the same strictness in speaking. The mathematician finds this so necessary to the truths which he is seeking, that his science begins with, and is founded on, the definition of his terms. The botanist, the chemist, the anatomist, &c, feel and submit to this necessity at all costs, even at the risk of exposing their several pursuits to the ridicule of the many, by technical terms, hard to be remembered, and alike quarrelsome to the ear and the tongue. In the business of moral and religious reflection, in the acquisition of clear and distinct



conceptions of our duties, and of the relations in which we stand to God, our neighbour, and ourselves, no such difficulties occur. At the utmost we have only

*** Apud Ciceronem et Platonem, aliosque ejusmodi scriptores, multa sunt acute dicta, et leniter calentia, sed in iis omnibus hoc non invenio, Venite ad me, &c.* (Matt. xii, 28). to rescue words, already existing and familiar, from the false or vague meanings imposed on them by carelessness, or by the clipping and debasing misusage of the market. And surely happiness, duty, faith, truth, and final blessedness, are matters of deeper and dearer interest for all men, than circles to the geometrician, or the characters of plants to the botanist, or the affinities and combining principle of the elements of bodies to the chemist, or even than the mechanism (fearful and wonderful though it be!) of the perishable tabernacle of the soul can be to the anatomist. Among the aids to reflection, place the following maxim prominent: let distinctness in expression advance side by side with distinction in thought. For one useless subtlety in our elder divines and moralists, I will produce ten sophisms of equivocation in the writings of our modern preceptors: and for one error resulting from excess in distinguishing the indifferent, I could show ten mischievous delusions from the habit of confounding the diverse.

Whether you are reflecting for yourself, or reasoning with another, make it a rule to ask yourself the precise meaning of the word, on which the point in question appears to turn; and if it may be (that is, by writers of authority has been) used in several senses, then ask which of these the word is at present intended to convey. By this mean, and scarcely without it, you will at length acquire a facility in detecting the *quid pro quo*. And believe me, in so doing you will enable yourself to disarm and expose four-fifths of the main arguments of our most renowned irreligious philosophers, ancient and modern. For the *quid pro quo* is at once the rock and quarry, on and with which the strongholds of disbelief, materialism, and (more pernicious still) epicurean morality, are built.

APHORISM II.

n o t h g i e L

If we seriously consider what religion is, we shall find the saying of the wise king Solomon to be unexceptionably true: *Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.*

Doth religion require any thing of us more than that we live *soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world?* Now what, I pray, can be more pleasant or peaceable than these? Temperance is always at leisure, luxury always in a hurry: the latter weakens the body and pollutes the soul, the former is the sanctity, purity, and sound state of both. It is one of Epicurus's fixed maxims, "That life can never be pleasant without virtue."

COMMENT.

In the works of moralists, both Christian and Pagan, it is often asserted (indeed there are few common-places of more frequent recurrence) that the happiness even of this life consists solely, or principally in virtue; that virtue is the only happiness of this life; that virtue is the truest pleasure, &c.

I doubt not that the meaning, which the writers intended to convey by these and the like expressions, was true and wise. But I deem it safer to say, that in all the outward relations of this life, in all our outward conduct and actions, both in what we should do, and in what we should abstain from, the dictates of virtue are the very same with those of self-interest; tending to, though they do not proceed from, the same point. For the outward object of virtue being the greatest producible sum of happiness of all men, it must needs include the object of an intelligent self-love, which is the greatest possible happiness of one individual; for what is true of all must be true of each. Hence, you cannot become better, (that is, more virtuous), but you will become happier: and you cannot become worse, (that is, more vicious), without an increase of misery (or at the best a proportional loss of enjoyment) as the consequence. If the thing were not inconsistent with our well being, and known to be so, it would not have been classed as a vice. Thus what in an enfeebled and disordered mind is called prudence, is the voice of nature in a healthful state: as is proved by the known fact, that the prudential duties, (that is, those actions which are commanded by virtue because they are prescribed by prudence), the animals fulfil by natural instinct.

The pleasure that accompanies or depends on a healthy and vigorous body will be the consequence and reward of a temperate life and habits of active industry, whether this pleasure were or were not the chief or only determining motive thereto. Virtue may, possibly, add to the pleasure a good of another kind, a higher good, perhaps, than the worldly mind is capable of understanding, a spiritual complacency, of which in your present sensualized state you can form no idea. It may add, I say, but it cannot detract from it. Thus the reflected rays of the sun that give light, distinction, and endless multiformity to the mind, give at the same time the pleasurable sensation of warmth to the body.

If then the time has not yet come for any thing higher, act on the maxim of seeking the most pleasure with the least pain: and, if only you do not seek where you yourself know it will not be found, this very pleasure and this freedom from the disquietude of pain may produce in you a state of being directly and indirectly favourable to the germination and up-spring of a nobler seed. If it be true, that men are miserable because they are wicked, it is likewise true, that many are wicked because they are miserable. Health, cheerfulness, and easy circumstances, the ordinary consequences of temperance and industry, will at least leave the field clear and open, will tend to preserve the scales of the judgment even: while the consciousness of possessing the esteem, respect, and sympathy of your neighbours, and the sense of your own increasing power and influence, can scarcely fail to give a tone of

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dignity to your mind, and incline you to hope nobly of your own being. And thus they may prepare and predispose you to the sense and acknowledgment of a principle differing, not merely in degree but in kind, from the faculties and instincts of the higher and more intelligent species of animals, (the ant, the beaver, the elephant), and which principle is therefore your proper humanity. And on this account and with this view alone may certain modes of pleasurable or agreeable sensation, without confusion of terms, be honoured with the title of refined, intellectual, ennobling pleasures. For pleasure (and happiness in its proper sense is but the continuity and sum total of the pleasure which is allotted or happens to a man, and hence by the Greeks called *εὐτυχία*, that is, good-hap, or more religiously *εὐδαιμονία*, that is, favourable providence)--pleasure, I say, consists in the harmony between the specific excitability of a living creature, and the exciting causes correspondent thereto. Considered therefore exclusively in and for itself, the only question is *quantum*, not *quale*? How much on the whole? the contrary, that is, the painful and disagreeable, having been subtracted. The quality is a matter of taste: *et de gustibus non est disputandum*. No man can judge for another.

This, I repeat, appears to me a safer language than the sentences quoted above (that virtue alone is happiness; that happiness consists in virtue, &c.) sayings which I find it hard to reconcile with other positions of still more frequent occurrence in the same divines, or with the declaration of St. Paul: "*If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable.*"

At all events, I should rely far more confidently on the converse, namely, that to be vicious is to be miserable. Few men are so utterly reprobate, so imbruted by their vices, as not to have some lucid, or at least quiet and sober, intervals; and in such a moment, *dum desaeviunt irae*, few can stand up unshaken against the appeal to their own experience--what have been the wages of sin? what has the devil done for you? What sort of master have you found him? Then let us in befitting detail, and by a series of questions that ask no loud, and are secure against any false, answer, urge home the proof of the position, that to be vicious is to be wretched: adding the fearful corollary, that if even in the body, which as long as life is in it can never be wholly bereaved of pleasurable sensations, vice is found to be misery, what must it not be in the world to come? There, where even the crime is no longer possible, much less the gratifications that once attended it--where nothing of vice remains but its guilt and its misery--vice must be misery itself, all and utter misery.--So best, if I err not, may the motives of prudence be held forth, and the impulses of self-love be awakened, in alliance with truth, and free from the danger of confounding things (the laws of duty, I mean, and the maxims of interest) which it deeply concerns us to keep distinct, inasmuch as this distinction and the faith therein are essential to our moral nature, and this again the ground-work and pre-condition of the spiritual state, in which the humanity strives after



godliness and, in the name and power, and through the prevenient and assisting grace, of the Mediator, will not strive in vain.

The advantages of a life passed in conformity with the precepts of virtue and religion, and in how many and various respects they recommend virtue and religion even on grounds of prudence, form a delightful subject of meditation, and a source of refreshing thought to good and pious men. Nor is it strange if, transported with the view, such persons should sometimes discourse on the charm of forms and colours to men whose eyes are not yet couched; or that they occasionally seem to invert the relations of cause and effect, and forget that there are acts and determinations of the will and affections, the consequences of which may be plainly foreseen, and yet cannot be made our proper and primary motives for such acts and determinations, without destroying or entirely altering the distinct nature and character of the latter. Sophron is well informed that wealth and extensive patronage will be the consequence of his obtaining the love and esteem of Constantia. But if the foreknowledge of this consequence were, and were found out to be, Sophron's main and determining motive for seeking this love and esteem; and if Constantia were a woman that merited, or was capable of feeling, either the one or the other; would not Sophron find (and deservedly too) aversion and contempt in their stead? Wherein, if not in this, differs the friendship of worldlings from true friendship? Without kind offices and useful services, wherever the power and opportunity occur, love would be a hollow pretence. Yet what noble mind would not be offended, if he were thought to value the love for the sake of the services, and not rather the services for the sake of the love!



APHORISM III.

Though prudence in itself is neither virtue nor spiritual holiness, yet without prudence, or in opposition to it, neither virtue nor holiness can exist.



APHORISM IV.

Art thou under the tyranny of sin? a slave to vicious habits? at enmity with God, and a skulking fugitive from thy own conscience? O, how idle the dispute, whether the listening to the dictates of prudence from prudential and self-interested motives be virtue or merit, when the not listening is guilt, misery, madness, and despair! The best, the most Christianlike pity thou canst show, is to take pity on thy own soul. The best and most acceptable service thou canst render, is to do justice and show mercy to thyself.



MORAL AND RELIGIOUS APHORISMS.

The exactest knowledge of things, is, to know them in their causes; it is then an excellent thing, and worthy of their endeavours who are most desirous of knowledge, to know the best things in their highest causes; and the happiest way of attaining to this knowledge, is, to possess those things, and to know them in experience.



APHORISM IV.

n o t h g i e L

It is one main point of happiness, that he that is happy doth know and judge himself to be so. This being the peculiar good of a reasonable creature, it is to be enjoyed in a reasonable way. It is not as the dull resting of a stone, or any other natural body in its natural place; but the knowledge and consideration of it is the fruition of it, the very relishing and tasting of its sweetness.

REMARK.

As in a Christian land we receive the lessons of morality in connexion with the doctrines of revealed religion, we cannot too early free the mind from prejudices widely spread, in part through the abuse, but far more from ignorance, of the true meaning of doctrinal terms, which, however they may have been perverted to the purposes of fanaticism, are not only scriptural, but of too frequent occurrence in Scripture to be overlooked or passed by in silence. The following extract, therefore, deserves attention, as clearing the doctrine of salvation, in connexion with the divine foreknowledge, from all objections on the score of morality, by the just and impressive view which the Archbishop here gives of those occasional revolutionary moments, that turn of the tide in the mind and character of certain individuals, which (taking a religious course, and referred immediately to the author of all good) were in his day, more generally than at present, entitled effectual calling. The theological interpretation and the philosophic validity of this apostolic triad, election, salvation, and effectual calling, (the latter being the intermediate) will be found among the comments on the aphorisms of spiritual import. For my present purpose it will be sufficient if only I prove that the doctrines are in themselves innocuous, and may be both holden and taught without any practical ill-consequences, and without detriment to the moral frame.



APHORISM V.

. n o t h g i e L

Two links of the chain (namely, election and salvation) are up in heaven in God's own hand; but this middle one (that is, effectual calling) is let down to earth, into the hearts of his children, and they laying hold on it have sure hold on the other two: for no power can sever them. If, therefore, they can read the characters of God's image in their own souls, those are the counterpart of the golden characters of his love, in which their names are written in the book of life. Their believing writes their names under the promises of the revealed book of life (the Scriptures) and thus ascertains them, that the same names are in the secret book of life which God hath by himself from eternity. So that finding the stream of grace in their hearts, though they see not the fountain whence it flows, nor the ocean into which it returns, yet they know that it hath its source in their eternal election, and shall empty itself into the ocean of their eternal salvation.

If election, effectual calling, and salvation, be inseparably linked together, then, by any one of them a man may lay hold upon all the rest, and may know that his hold is sure; and this is the way wherein we may attain, and ought to seek, the comfortable assurance of the love of God. Therefore *make your calling sure*, and by that your *election*; for that being done, this follows of itself. We are not to pry immediately into the decree, but to read it in the performance. Though the mariner sees not the pole-star, yet the needle of the compass which points to it, tells him which way he sails: thus the heart that is touched with the loadstone of divine love, trembling with godly fear, and yet still looking towards God by fixed believing, interprets the fear by the love in the fear, and tells the soul that its course is heavenward, towards the haven of eternal rest. He that loves, may be sure he was loved first; and he that chooses God for his delight and portion, may conclude confidently, that God hath chosen him to be one of those that shall enjoy him, and be happy in him for ever; for that our love and electing of him is but the return and repercussion of the beams of his love shining upon us.

Although from present unsanctification, a man cannot infer that he is not elected; for the decree may, for part of a man's life, run (as it were) underground; yet this is sure, that that estate leads to death, and unless it be broken, will prove the black line of reprobation. A man hath no portion amongst the children of God, nor can read one word of comfort in all the promises that belong to them, while he remains unholy.

REMARK.

In addition to the preceding, I select the following paragraphs as having nowhere seen the terms, spirit, the gifts of the spirit, and the like, so effectually vindicated from the sneers



of the sciolist on the one hand, and protected from the perversions of the fanatic on the other. In these paragraphs the Archbishop at once shatters and precipitates the only draw-bridge between the fanatical and the orthodox doctrine of grace, and the gifts of the spirit. In Scripture the term, spirit, as a power or properly seated in the human soul, never stands singly, but is always specified by a genitive case following; this being a Hebraism instead of the adjective which the writer would have used if he had thought, as well as written, in Greek. It is *the spirit of meekness* (a meek spirit) or *the spirit of chastity*, and the like. The moral result, the specific form and character in which the Spirit manifests its presence, is the only sure pledge and token of its presence; which is to be, and which safely may be, inferred from its practical effects, but of which an immediate knowledge or consciousness is impossible; and every pretence to such knowledge is either hypocrisy or fanatical delusion.



APHORISM VI.

. n o t h g i e L

If any pretend that they have the Spirit, and so turn away from the straight rule of the Holy Scriptures, they have a spirit indeed, but it is a fanatical spirit, the spirit of delusion and giddiness: but the Spirit of God, that leads his children in the way of truth, and is for that purpose sent them from heaven to guide them thither, squares their thoughts and ways to that rule whereof it is author, and that word which was inspired by it, and sanctifies them to obedience. *He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* (1 John ii, 4.)

Now this Spirit which sanctifieth, and sanctifieth to obedience, is within us the evidence of our election, and the earnest of our salvation. And whoso are not sanctified and led by this Spirit, the Apostle tells us what is their condition: If any man have not the *Spirit of Christ, he is none of his*. The stones which are appointed for that glorious temple above, are hewn, and polished, and prepared for it here; as the stones were wrought and prepared in the mountains, for building the temple at Jerusalem.



COMMENT.

There are many serious and sincere Christians who have not attained to a fulness of knowledge and insight, but are well and judiciously employed in preparing for it. Even these may study the master-works of our elder divines with safety and advantage, if they will accustom themselves to translate the theological terms into their moral equivalents; saying to themselves--This may not be all that is meant, but this is meant, and it is that portion of the meaning, which belongs to me in the present stage of my progress. For example: render the words, sanctification of the Spirit, or the sanctifying influenced of the Spirit, by purity in life and action from a pure principle.

He needs only reflect on his own experience to be convinced, that the man makes the motive, and not the motive the man. What is a strong motive to one man, is no motive at all to another. If, then, the man determines the motive, what determines the man--to a good and worthy act, we will say, or a virtuous course of conduct? The intelligent will, or the self-determining power? True, in part it is; and therefore the will is pre-eminently the spiritual constituent in our being. But will any reflecting man admit, that his own will is the only and sufficient determinant of all he is, and all he does? Is nothing to be attributed to the harmony of the system to which he belongs, and to the pre-established fitness of the objects and agents, known and unknown, that surround him, as acting on the will, though, doubtless, with it likewise? a process, which the coinstantaneous yet reciprocal action of the air and the vital energy of the lungs in breathing may help to render intelligible.



Again: in the world we see every where evidences of a unity, which the component parts are so far from explaining, that they necessarily pre-suppose it as the cause and condition of their existing as those parts; or even of their existing at all. This antecedent unity, or cause and principle of each union, it has since the time of Bacon and Kepler been customary to call a law. This crocus, for instance, or any other flower, the reader may have in sight or choose to bring before his fancy. That the root, stem, leaves, petals, &c, cohere to one plant, is owing to an antecedent power or principle in the seed, which existed before a single particle of the matters that constitute the size and visibility of the crocus, had been attracted from the surrounding soil, air, and moisture. Shall we turn to the seed? Here, too, the same necessity meets us. An antecedent unity (I speak not of the parent plant, but of an agency antecedent in the order of operance, yet remaining present as the conservative and reproductive power) must here too be supposed. Analyse the seed with the finest tools, and let the solar microscope come in aid of your senses, what do you find? Means and instruments, a wondrous fairy tale of nature, magazines of food, stores of various sorts, pipes, spiracles, defences--a house of many chambers, and the owner and inhabitant invisible! Reflect further on the countless millions of seeds of the same name, each more than numerically differenced from every other: and further yet, reflect on the requisite harmony of all surrounding things, each of which necessitates the same process of thought, and the coherence of all of which to a system, a world, demands its own adequate antecedent unity, which must therefore of necessity be present to all and in all, yet in no wise excluding or suspending the individual law or principle of union in each. Now will reason, will common sense, endure the assumption, that it is highly reasonable to believe a universal power, as the cause and pre-condition of the harmony of all particular wholes, each of which involves the working principle of its own union--that it is reasonable, I say, to believe this respecting the aggregate of objects, which, without a subject, (that is, a sentient and intelligent existence) would be purposeless: and yet unreasonable and even superstitious or enthusiastic to entertain a similar belief in relation to the system of intelligent and self-conscious beings, to the moral and personal world? But if in this, too, in the great community of persons, it is rational to infer a one universal presence, a one present to all and in all, is it not most irrational to suppose that a finite will can exclude it?

Whenever, therefore, the man is determined (that is, impelled and directed) to act in harmony of intercommunion, must not something be attributed to this all-present power as acting in the will? and by what fitter names can we call this than The Law, as empowering; The Word, as informing; and The Spirit, as actuating?

What has been here said amounts (I am aware) only to a negative conception; but this is all that is required for a mind at that period of its growth which we are now supposing, and as long as religion is contemplated under the form of morality. A positive insight belongs to a more advanced stage: for spiritual truths can only spiritually be discerned. This we know



from revelation, and (the existence of spiritual truths being granted) philosophy is compelled to draw the same conclusion. But though merely negative, it is sufficient to render the union of religion and morality conceivable; sufficient to satisfy an unprejudiced inquirer, that the spiritual doctrines of the Christian religion are not at war with the reasoning faculty, and that they do not run on the same line, or radius, with the understanding, yet neither do they cut or cross it. It is sufficient, in short, to prove, that some distinct and consistent meaning may be attached to the assertion of the learned and philosophic Apostle, that *the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit*, that is, with the will, as the supernatural in man and the principle of our personality--of that, I mean, by which we are responsible agents; persons, and not merely living things.*

It will suffice to satisfy a reflecting mind, that even at the porch and threshold of revealed truth there is a great and worthy sense in which we may believe the Apostle's assurance, that not only doth *the Spirit aid our infirmities*; that is, act on the will by a pre-disposing influence from without, as it were, though in a spiritual manner, and without suspending or destroying its freedom (the possibility of which is proved to us in the influences of education, of providential occurrences, and, above all, of example) but that in regenerate souls it

Whatever is comprised in the chain and mechanism of cause and effect, of course necessitated, and having its necessity in some other thing, antecedent or concurrent--this is said to be natural; and the aggregate and system of all such things is Nature. It is, therefore, a contradiction in terms to include in this the free-will, of which the verbal definition is--that which originates an act or state of being. In this sense, therefore, which is the sense of St. Paul, and indeed of the New Testament throughout, spiritual and supernatural are synonymous. may act in the will; that uniting and becoming one with our will or spirit it may *make intercession for us*; nay, in this intimate union taking upon itself the form of our infirmities, may intercede for us *with groanings that cannot be uttered*. Nor is there any danger of fanaticism or enthusiasm as the consequence of such a belief, if only the attention be carefully and earnestly drawn to the concluding words of the sentence ([Romans viii. 26](#)); if only the due force and the full import be given to the term *unutterable* or incommunicable, in St. Paul's use of it. In this, the strictest and most proper use of the term, it signifies, that the subject, of which it is predicated, is something which I cannot, which from the nature of the thing it is impossible that I should communicate to any human mind (even of a person under the same condition with myself) so as to make it in itself the object of his direct and immediate consciousness. It cannot be the object of my own direct and immediate consciousness; but must be inferred. Inferred it may be from its workings; it cannot be perceived in them. And, thanks to God! in all points in which the knowledge is of high and necessary concern to our moral and religious welfare, from the effects it may safely be inferred by us, from the workings it may be assuredly known; and the Scriptures furnish the clear and un-

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failing rules for directing the inquiry, and for drawing the conclusion. If any reflecting mind be surprised that the aids of the

*Some distant and faint similitude of this, that merely as a similitude may be innocently used to quiet the fancy, provided it be not imposed on the understanding as an analogous fact, or as identical in kind, is presented to us in the power of the magnet to awaken and strengthen the magnetic power in a bar of iron, and (in the instance of the compound magnet) acting in and with the latter. divine Spirit should be deeper than our consciousness can reach, it must arise from the not having attended sufficiently to the nature and necessary limits of human consciousness. For the same impossibility exists as to the first acts and movements of our own will--the farthest distance our recollection can follow back the traces never leads us to the first foot-mark--the lowest depth that the light of our consciousness can visit even with a doubtful glimmering, is still at an unknown distance from the ground: and so, indeed, must it be with all truths, and all modes of being that can neither be counted, coloured, or delineated. Before and after, when applied to such subjects, are but allegories, which the sense or imaginations supplies to the understanding. The position of the Aristoteleans, *nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*, on which Mr. Locke's Essay is grounded, is irrefragable: Locke erred only in taking half the truth for a whole truth. Conception is consequent on perception. What we cannot imagine, we cannot, in the proper sense of the word, conceive.

I have already given one definition of nature. Another, and differing from the former in words only, is this: Whatever is representable in the forms of time and space, is nature. But whatever is comprehended in time and space, is included in the mechanism of cause and effect. And conversely, whatever, by whatever means, has its principle in itself, so far as to originate its actions, cannot be contemplated in any of the forms of space and time; it must, therefore, be considered as spirit or spiritual by a mind in that stage of its development which is here supposed, and which we have agreed to understand under the name of morality or the moral state: for in this stage we are concerned only with the forming of negative conceptions, negative convictions; and by spiritual I do not pretend to determine what the will is, but what it is not--namely, that it is not nature. And as no man who admits a will at all, (for we may safely presume, that no man not meaning to speak figuratively, would call the shifting current of a stream the will* of the river), will suppose it below nature, we may safely add, that it is supernatural; and this without the least pretence to any positive notion or insight.

Now morality accompanied with convictions like these, I have ventured to call religious morality. Of the importance I attach to the state of mind implied in these convictions, for its own sake, and as the natural preparation for a yet higher state and a more substantive knowledge, proof more than sufficient, perhaps, has been given in the length and minuteness of this introductory discussion, and in the foreseen risk which I run of exposing the volume

at large to the censure which every work, or rather which every writer, must be prepared to undergo, who, treating of subjects that cannot be seen, touched, or in any other way made matters of outward sense, is yet anxious both to attach to and to convey a distinct meaning by, the words he makes use of--the censure of being dry, abstract, and (of all qualities most scaring and opprobrious to the ears of the present generation) metaphysical: though how it is possible that a work not physical, that is, employed on objects known or believed on the evidence of senses, should be other than metaphysical, that is, treating on subjects, the evidence of which is not derived from the senses, is a problem

*"The river windeth at his own sweet will."

Wordsworth's exquisite Sonnet on Westminster Bridge at sunrise.

But who does not see that here the poetic charm arises from the known and felt impropriety of the expression, in the technical sense, of the word impropriety, among grammarians? which critics of this order find it convenient to leave unsolved.

The author of the present volume, will, indeed, have reason to think himself fortunate, if this be all the charge! How many smart quotations, which (duly cemented by personal allusions to the author's supposed pursuits, attachments, and infirmities) would of themselves make up a review of the volume, might be supplied with the works of Butler, Swift, and Warburton. For instance: "It may not be amiss to inform the public, that the compiler of the Aids to Reflection, and commenter on a Scotch Bishop's Platonico-Calvinistic commentary on St. Peter, belongs to the sect of the Aeolists, whose fruitful imaginations led them into certain notions, which although in appearance very unaccountable, are not without their mysteries and their meanings; furnishing plenty of matter for such, whose converting imaginations dispose them to reduce all things into types; who can make shadows, no thanks to the sun; and then mould them into substances, no thanks to philosophy; whose peculiar talent lies in fixing tropes and allegories to the letter, and refining what is literal into figure and mystery."--*Tale of the Tub*, sect. xi.

And would it were my lot to meet with a critic, who, in the might of his own convictions, and with arms of equal point and efficiency from his own forge, would come forth as my assailant; or who, as a friend to my purpose, would set forth the objections to the matter and pervading spirit of these aphorisms, and the accompanying elucidations. Were it my task to form the mind of a young man of talent, desirous to establish his opinions and belief on solid principles, and in the light of distinct understanding, I would commence his theological studies, or, at least, that most important part of them respecting the aids which religion promises in our attempts to realize the ideas of morality, by bringing together all the passages scattered throughout the writings of Swift and Butler, that bear on enthusiasm, spiritual operations, and pretences to the gifts of the spirit, with the whole train of new lights, raptures, experiences, and the like. For all that the richest wit, in intimate union with profound sense and steady observation, can supply on these topics, is to be found in the



works of these satirists; though unhappily alloyed with much that can only tend to pollute the imagination.

Without stopping to estimate the degree of caricature in the portraits sketched by these bold masters, and without attempting to determine in how many of the enthusiasts brought forward by them in proof of the influence of false doctrines, a constitutional insanity, that would probably have shown itself in some other form, would be the truer solution, I would direct my pupil's attention to one feature common to the whole group--the pretence, namely, of possessing, or a belief and expectation grounded on other men's assurances of their possessing, an immediate consciousness, a sensible experience, of the Spirit in and during its operation on the soul. It is not enough that you grant them a consciousness of the gifts and graces infused, or an assurance of the spiritual origin of the same, grounded on their correspondence to the Scripture promises, and their conformity with the idea of the divine giver. No! they all alike, it will be found lay claim (or at least look forward) to an inward perception of the Spirit itself and of its operating.

Whatever must be misrepresented in order to be ridiculed, is in fact not ridiculed; but the thing substituted for it. It is a satire on something else, coupled with a lie on the part of the satirist, who knowing, or having the means of knowing the truth, chose to call one thing by the name of another. The pretensions to the supernatural, pilloried by Butler, sent to Bedlam by Swift, and (on their re-appearance in public) gibbeted by Warburton, and anatomized by Bishop Lavington, one and all have this for their essential character, that the Spirit is made the immediate object of sense or sensation. Whether the spiritual presence and agency are supposed cognizable by indescribable feeling or unimaginable vision by some specific visual energy; whether seen or heard, or touched, smelt, and tasted--for in those vast storehouses of fanatical assertion, the volumes of ecclesiastical history and religious auto-biography, instances are not wanting even of the three latter extravagancies;--this variety in the mode may render the several pretensions more or less offensive to the taste; but with the same absurdity for the reason, this being derived from a contradiction in terms common and radical to them all alike, the assumption of a something essentially supersensual, that is nevertheless the object of sense, that is, not supersensual.

Well then!--for let me be allowed still to suppose the reader present to me, and that I am addressing him in the character of companion and guide--the positions recommended for your examination not only do not involve, but exclude, this inconsistency. And for aught that hitherto appears, we may see with complacency the arrows of satire feathered with wit, weighted with sense, and discharged by a strong arm, fly home to their mark. Our conceptions of a possible spiritual communion, though they are but negative, and only preparatory to a faith in its actual existence, stand neither in the level or the direction of the shafts.

If it be objected, that Swift and Warburton did not choose openly to set up the interpretations of later and more rational divines against the decisions of their own church, and from

prudential considerations did not attack the doctrine *in toto*: that is their concern (I would answer) and it is more charitable to think otherwise. But we are in the silent school of reflection, in the secret confessional of thought. Should we *lie for God*, and that to our own thoughts?--They indeed, who dare do the one, will soon be able to do the other. So did the comforters of Job: and to the divines, who resemble Job's comforters, we will leave both attempts.

But (it may be said) a possible conception is not necessarily a true one; nor even a probable one, where the facts can be otherwise explained. In the name of the supposed pupil I would reply--That is the very question I am preparing myself to examine; and am now seeking the vantage ground where I may best command the facts. In my own person, I would ask the objector, whether he counted the declarations of Scripture among die facts to be explained. But both for myself and my pupil, and in behalf of all rational inquiry, I would demand that the decision should not be such, in itself or in its effects, as would prevent our becoming acquainted with the most important of these facts; nay, such as would, for the mind of the decider, preclude their very existence. *Unless ye believe, says the prophet, ye cannot understand.* Suppose (what is at least possible) that the facts should be consequent on the belief, it is clear that without the belief the materials, on which the understanding is to exert itself, would be wanting.

The reflections that naturally arise out of this last remark, are those that best suit the stage at which we last halted, and from which we now recommence our progress--the state of a moral man, who has already welcomed certain truths of religion, and is inquiring after other and more special doctrines: still, however, as a moralist, desirous indeed, to receive them into combination with morality, but to receive them as its aid, not as its substitute. Now, to such a man I say,--Before you reject the opinions and doctrines asserted and enforced in the following extract from Leighton, and before you give way to the emotions of distaste or ridicule, which the prejudices of the circle in which you move, or your own familiarity with the mad perversions of the doctrine by fanatics in all ages, have connected with the very words, spirit, grace, gifts, operations, &c, re-examine the arguments advanced in the first pages of this introductory comment, and the simple and sober view of the doctrine, contemplated in the first instance as a mere idea of the reason, flowing naturally from the admission of an infinite omnipresent mind as the ground of the universe. Reflect again and again, and be sure that you understand the doctrine before you determine on rejecting it. That no false judgments, no extravagant conceits, no practical ill-consequences need arise out of the belief of the spirit, and its possible communion with the spiritual principle in man, or can arise out of the right belief, or are compatible with the doctrine truly and scripturally explained, Leighton, and almost every single period in the passage here transcribed from him, will suffice to convince you.



On the other hand, reflect on the consequences of rejecting it. For surely it is not the act of a reflecting mind, nor the part of a man of sense to disown and cast out one tenet, and yet persevere in admitting and clinging to another that has neither sense nor purpose, that does not suppose and rest on the truth and reality of the former! If you have resolved that all belief of a divine comforter present to our inmost being and aiding our infirmities, is fond and fanatical--if the Scriptures promising and asserting such communion are to be explained away into the action of circumstances, and the necessary movements of the vast machine, in one of the circulating chains of which the human will is a petty link--in what better light can prayer appear to you, than the groans of a wounded lion in his solitary den, or the howl of a dog with his eyes on the moon? At the best, you can regard it only as a transient bewilderment of the social instinct, as a social habit misapplied! Unless indeed you should adopt the theory which I remember to have read in the writings of the late Dr. Jebb, and for some supposed beneficial re-action of praying on the prayer's own mind, should practise it as a species of animal magnetism to be brought about by a wilful eclipse of the reason, and a temporary make-believe on the part of the self-magnetizer!

At all events, do not pre-judge a doctrine, the utter rejection of which must oppose a formidable obstacle to your acceptance of Christianity itself, when the books, from which alone we can learn what Christianity is arid what it teaches, are so strangely written, that in a series of the most concerning points, including (historical facts excepted) all the peculiar tenets of the religion, the plain and obvious meaning of the words, that in which they were understood by learned and simple for at least sixteen centuries, during the far larger part of which the language was a living language, is no sufficient guide to their actual sense or to the writer's own meaning! And this, too, where the literal and received sense involves nothing impossible, or immoral, or contrary to reason. With such a persuasion, deism would be a more consistent creed. But, alas! even this will fail you. The utter rejection of all present and living communion with the universal spirit impoverishes deism itself, and renders it as cheerless as atheism, from which indeed it would differ only by an obscure impersonation of what the atheist receives unpersonified under the name of fate or nature.



APHORISM VII.

Leighton and Coleridge.

The proper and natural effect, and in the absence of all disturbing or intercepting forces, the certain and sensible accompaniment of peace (or reconciliation) with God, is our own inward peace, a calm and quiet temper of mind. And where there is a consciousness of earnestly desiring, and of having sincerely striven after the former, the latter may be considered as a sense of its presence. In this case, I say, and for a soul watchful and under the discipline of the gospel, the peace with a man's self may be the medium or organ through which the assurance of his peace with God is conveyed. We will not therefore condemn this mode of speaking, though we dare not greatly recommend it. Be it, that there is, truly and in sobriety of speech, enough of just analogy in the subjects meant, to make this use of the words, if less than proper, yet something more than metaphorical; still we must be cautious not to transfer to the object the defects or the deficiency of the organ, which must needs partake of the imperfections of the imperfect beings to whom it belongs. Not without the co-assurance of other senses and of the same sense in other men, dare we affirm that what our eye beholds is verily there to be beholden. Much less may we conclude negatively, and from the inadequacy, or the suspension, or from every other affection of sight infer the non-existence, or departure, or changes of the thing itself. The chameleon darkens in the shade of him that bends over it to ascertain its colours. In like manner, but with yet greater caution, ought we to think respecting a tranquil habit of the inward life, considered as a spiritual sense as the medial organ in and by which our peace with God, and the lively working of his grace on our spirit, are perceived by us. This peace which we have with God in Christ, is inviolable; but because the sense and persuasion of it may be interrupted, the soul that is truly at peace with God may for a time be disquieted in itself, through weakness of faith, or the strength of temptation, or the darkness of desertion, losing sight of that grace, that love and light of God's countenance, on which its tranquillity and joy depend. *Thou didst hide thy face*, saith David, *and I was troubled*. But when these eclipses are over, the soul is revived with new consolation, as the face of the earth is renewed and made to smile with the return of the sun in the spring; and this ought always to uphold Christians in the saddest times, namely, that the grace and love of God towards them depend not on their sense, nor upon any thing in them, but is still in itself, incapable of the smallest alteration.

A holy heart that gladly entertains grace, shall find that it and peace cannot dwell asunder; while an ungodly man may sleep to death in the lethargy of carnal presumption and impenitency; but a true, lively, solid peace, he cannot have. *There is no peace to the wicked*, saith my God, Isa. lvii, 21.



APHORISM VIII.

WORLDLY HOPES.

Leighton.

Worldly hopes are not living, but lying hopes; they die often before us, and we live to bury them, and see our own folly and infelicity in trusting to them; but at the utmost, they die with us when we die, and can accompany us no farther. But the lively hope, which is the Christian's portion, answers expectation to the full, and much beyond it, and deceives no way but in that happy way of far exceeding it.

A living hope, living in death itself! The world dares say no more for its device than *Dum spiro spero*; but the children of God can add, by virtue of this living hope, *Dum exspiro spero*.

APHORISM IX.

THE WORLDLING'S FEAR.

Leighton.

It is a fearful thing when a man and all his hopes die together. Thus saith Solomon of the wicked, Prov. xi, 7, When he dieth, then die his hopes; (many of them before, but at the utmost then,* all of them;) but *the righteous hath hope in his death.* Prov. xiv, 32.

APHORISM X.

WORLDLY MIRTH.

Leighton and Coleridge.

As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, and as vinegar upon nitre, so is he that singeth songs

*One of the numerous proofs against those who with a strange inconsistency hold the Old Testament to have been inspired throughout, and yet deny that the doctrine of a future state is taught therein. *to a heavy heart.* Prov. xxv, 20. Worldly mirth is so far from curing spiritual grief, that even worldly grief, where it is great and takes deep root is not allayed but increased by it. A man who is full of inward heaviness, the more he is encompassed about with mirth, it exasperates and enrages his grief the more; like ineffectual weak physic, which removes not the humour, but stirs it and makes it more unquiet. But spiritual joy is seasonable for all estates; in prosperity, it is pertinent to crown and sanctify all other enjoyments, with this which so far surpasses them; and in distress, it is the only *Nepenthe*, the cordial of fainting spirits: so Psal. iv, 7, *He hath put joy into my heart.* This mirth makes way for itself, which other mirth cannot do. These songs are sweetest in the night of distress.

There is something exquisitely beautiful and touching in the first of these similes: and the second, though less pleasing to the imagination, has the charm of propriety, and expresses the transition with equal force and liveliness. A grief of recent birth is a sick infant that must have its medicine administered in its milk, and sad thoughts are the sorrowful hearth's natural food. This is a complaint that is not to be cured by opposites, which for the most part only reverse the symptoms while they exasperate the disease--or like a rock in the mid channel of a river swollen by a sudden rain-flush from the mountain, which only detains the excess of waters from their proper outlet, and makes them foam, roar, and eddy. The soul in her desolation hugs the sorrow close to her, as her sole remaining garment: and this must be drawn off so gradually, and the garment to be put in its stead so gradually slipt on and feel so like the former, that the sufferer shall be sensible of the change only by the refreshment. The true spirit of consolation is well content to detain the tear in the eye, and finds a surer pledge of its success in the smile of resignation that dawns through that, than in the liveliest shows of a forced and alien exhilaration.



APHORISM XI. Plotinus thanked God, that his soul was not tied to an immortal...

APHORISM XI. Plotinus thanked God, that his soul was not tied to an immortal body.

APHORISM XII.

Leighton and Coleridge.

What a full confession do we make of our dissatisfaction with the objects of our bodily senses, that in our attempts to express what we conceive the best of beings, and the greatest of felicities to be, we describe by the exact contraries of all, that we experience here--the one as infinite, incomprehensible, immutable, &c, the other as incorruptible, undefiled, and that passeth not away. At all events, this coincidence, say rather, identity of attributes is sufficient to apprise us, that to be inheritors of bliss, we must become the children of God.

This remark of Leighton's is ingenious and startling. Another, and more fruitful, perhaps more solid, inference from the fact would be, that there is something in the human mind which makes it know (as soon as it is sufficiently awakened to reflect on its own thoughts and notices) that in all finite quantity there is an infinite, in all measure of time an eternal; that the latter are the basis, the substance, the true and abiding reality of the former; and that as we truly are, only as far as God is with us, so neither can we truly possess (that is, enjoy) our being or any other real good, but by living in the sense of his holy presence.

A life of wickedness is a life of lies; and an evil being, or the being of evil, the fest and darkest mystery.



APHORISM XIII.

THE WISEST USE OF THE IMAGINATION.

Leighton.

It is not altogether unprofitable; yea, it is great wisdom in Christians to be arming themselves against such temptations as may befall the hereafter, though they have not as yet met with them; to labour to overcome them before-hand, to suppose the hardest things that may be incident to them, and to put on the strongest resolutions they can attain unto. Yet all that is but an imaginary effort; and therefore there is no assurance that the victory is any more than imaginary, too, till it come to action, and then, they that have spoken and thought very confidently, may prove but (as one said of the Athenians) *fortes in tabula*, patient and courageous in picture or fancy; and, notwithstanding all their arms, and dexterity in handling them by way of exercise, may be foully defeated when they are to fight in earnest.

APHORISM XIV.

THE LANGUAGE OF SCRIPTURE.

The word of God speaks to men, and therefore it speaks the language of the children of men. This just and pregnant thought was suggested to Leighton by Gen. xxii, 12. The same text has led me to unfold and expand the remark.--On moral subjects, the Scriptures speak in the language of the affections which they excite in us; on sensible objects, neither metaphysically, as they are known by superior intelligences; nor theoretically, as they would be seen by us were we placed in the sun; but as they are represented by our human senses in our present relative position. Lastly, from no vain, or worse than vain, ambition of seeming *to walk on the sea* of mystery in my way to truth, but in the hope of removing a difficulty that presses heavily on the minds of many who in heart and desire are believers, and which long pressed on my own mind, I venture to add: that on spiritual things, and allusively to the mysterious union or conspiracy of the divine with the human in the spirits of the just, spoken of in Rom. vii, 27, the word of God attributes the language of the spirit sanctified to the Holy One, the Sanctifier.

Now the spirit in man (that is, the will) knows its own state in and by its acts alone: even as in geometrical reasoning the mind knows its constructive faculty in the act of constructing, and contemplates the act in the product (that is, the mental figure or diagram) which is inseparable from the act and co-instantaneous.

Let the reader join these two positions; first, that the divine Spirit acting in the human will is described as one with the will so filled and actuated: secondly, that our actions are the means, by which alone the will becomes assured of its own state: and he will understand, though he may not perhaps adopt my suggestion, that the verse, in which God speaking of himself, says to Abraham, *Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou has not withheld*



thy son, thy only son, from me--may be more than merely figurative. An accommodation I grant; but in the thing expressed, and not altogether in the expressions. In arguing with infidels, or with the weak in faith, it is a part of religious prudence, no less than of religious morality, to avoid whatever looks like an evasion. To retain the literal sense, wherever the harmony of Scripture permits, and reason does not forbid, is ever the honester, and, nine times in ten, the more rational and pregnant interpretation. The contrary plan is an easy and approved way of getting rid of a difficulty; but nine times in ten a bad way of solving it. But alas! there have been too many commentators who are content not to understand a text themselves, if only they can make the reader believe they do.

Of the figures of speech in the sacred volume, that are only figures of speech, the one of most frequent occurrence is that which describes an effect by the name of its most usual and best-known cause: the passages for instance, in which grief, fury, repentance, &c, are attributed to the Deity. But these are far enough from justifying the (I had almost said, dishonest) fashion of metaphorical glosses, in as well as out of the church; and which our fashionable divines have carried to such an extent, as in the doctrinal part of their creed, to leave little else but metaphors. But the reader who wishes to find this latter subject, and that of the aphorism, treated more at large, is referred to Mr. Southey's *Omniana*, vol. ii, p. 7-12, and to the note in p. 62-67, of the author's second Lay Sermon.

AMORISM XV.

THE CHRISTIAN NO STOIC.

Leighton and Coleridge.

Seek not altogether to dry up the stream of sorrow, but to bound it and keep it within its banks. Religion doth not destroy the life of nature, but adds to it a life more excellent; yea, it doth not only permit, but requires some feeling of afflictions. Instead of patience, there is in some men an affected pride of spirit suitable only to the doctrine of the Stoics as it is usually taken. They strive not to feel at all the afflictions that are on them; but where there is no feeling at all, there can be no patience.

Of the sects of ancient philosophy the Stoic is, perhaps, the nearest to Christianity. Yet even to this sect Christianity is fundamentally opposite. For the Stoic attaches the highest honour (or rather, attaches honour solely) to the person that acts virtuously in spite of his feelings, or who has raised himself above the conflict by their extinction; while Christianity instructs us to place small reliance on a virtue that does not begin by bringing the feelings to a conformity with the commands of the conscience. Its especial aim, its characteristic operation, is to moralize the affections. The feelings, that oppose a right act, must be wrong feelings. The act, indeed, whatever the agent's feelings might be, Christianity would command: and under certain circumstances would both command and commend it--command it, as



a healthful symptom in a sick patient; and commend it, as one of the ways and means of changing the feelings, or displacing them by calling up the opposite.

COROLLARIES TO APHORISM XV.

I. The more consciousness in our thoughts and words, and the less in our impulses and general actions, the better and more healthful the state both of head and heart. As the flowers from an orange tree in its time of blossoming, that burgeon forth, expand, fall, and are momentarily replaced, such is the sequence of hourly and momentarily charities in a pure and gracious soul. The modern fiction which depicts the son of Cytherea with a bandage round his eyes, is not without a spiritual meaning. There is a sweet and holy blindness in Christian love even as there is a blindness of life, yea, and of genius, too, in the moment of productive energy.

II. Motives are symptoms of weakness, and supplements for the deficient energy of the living principle, the law within us. Let them then be reserved for those momentous acts and duties in which the strongest and best balanced natures must feel themselves deficient, and where humility, no less than prudence, prescribes deliberation. We find a similitude of this, I had almost said a remote analogy, in organized bodies. The lowest class of animals or *protozoa*, the *polypi* for instance, have neither brain nor nerves. Their motive powers are all from without. The sun, light, the warmth, the air are their nerves and brain. As life ascends, nerves appear; but still only as the conductors of an external influence; next are seen the knots or ganglions, as so many *foci* of instinctive agency, that imperfectly imitate the yet wanting centre. And now the promise and token of a true individuality are disclosed; both the reservoir of sensibility and the imitative power that actuates the organs of motion, (the muscles) with the net-work of conductors, are all taken inward and appropriated; the spontaneous rises into the voluntary, and finally after various steps and a long ascent, the material and animal means and conditions are prepared for the manifestations of a free will, having its law within itself and its motive in the law--and thus bound to originate its own acts, not only without, but even against, alien stimulants. That in our present state we have only the dawning of this inward sun (the perfect law of liberty) will sufficiently limit and qualify the preceding position, if only it have been allowed to produce its two-fold consequence--the excitement of hope and the repression of vanity.

APHORISM XVI.

Leighton.

As excessive eating or drinking both makes the body sickly and lazy, fit for nothing but sleep, and besots the mind, as it clogs up with, crudities the way through which the spirits should pass*, bemiring them, and making them move heavily, as a coach in a deep way; thus doth all immoderate use of the world and its delights wrong the soul in its spiritual condition, makes it sickly and feeble, full of spiritual distempers and inactivity, benumbs the graces of



the Spirit, and fills the soul with sleepy vapours, makes it grow secure and heavy in spiritual exercises, and obstructs the way and motion of the Spirit of God, in the soul. Therefore, if you would be spiritual, healthful, and vigorous, and enjoy much of the consolations of Heaven, be sparing and sober in those of the earth, and what you abate of the one, shall be certainly made up in the other.

APHORISM XVII.

INCONSISTENCY.

Leighton and Coleridge.

It is a most unseemly and unpleasant thing, to see a man's life full of ups and downs, one step like a Christian, and another like a worldling; it cannot choose but both pain himself and mar the edification of others.

*Technical phrases of an obsolete system will yet retain their places, nay, acquire universal currency, and become sterling in the language, when they at once represent the feelings, and give an apparent solution of them by visual images easily managed by the fancy. Such are many terms and phrases from the humoral physiology long exploded, but which are far more popular than any description would be from the theory that has taken its place.

The same sentiment, only with a special application to the maxims and measures of our cabinet statesmen, has been finely expressed by a sage poet of the preceding generation, in lines which no generation will find inapplicable or superannuated.

God and the world we worship both together, Draw not our laws to Him, but His to ours; Untrue to both, so prosperous in neither.

The imperfect will brings forth but barren flowers! Unwise as all distracted interests be, Strangers to God, fools in humanity: Too good for great things, and too great for good, While still "I dare not" waits upon "I wou'd."



APHORISM XVII CONTINUED.

THE ORDINARY MOTIVE TO INCONSISTENCY.

Leighton.

What though the polite man count thy fashion a little odd and too precise, it is because he knows nothing above that model of goodness which he hath set himself, and therefore approves of nothing beyond it: he knows not God, and therefore doth not discern and esteem what is most like Him. When courtiers come down into the country, the common home-bred people possibly think their habit strange; but they care not for that, it is the fashion at court. What need, then, that Christians should be so tender-foreheaded, as to be put out of countenance because the world looks on holiness as a singularity? It is the only fashion in the highest courts yea, of the King of kings himself.

APHORISM XVIII.

SUPERFICIAL RECONCILIATIONS, AND SELF-DECEIT IN FORGIVING.

When, after variances, men are brought to an agreement, they are much subject to this, rather to cover their remaining malices with superficial verbal forgiveness, than to dislodge them and free the heart of them. This is a poor self-deceit. As the philosopher said to him, who being ashamed that he was espied by him in a tavern in the outer room, withdrew himself to the inner, he called after him, "That is not the way out; the more you go that way, you will be the further in!" So when hatreds are upon admonition not thrown out, but retire inward to hide themselves, they grow deeper and stronger than before; and those constrained semblances of reconcilment are but a false healing, do but skin the wound over and therefore it usually breaks forth worse again.



APHORISM XIX.

OF THE WORTH AND THE DUTIES OF THE PREACHER.

Leighton.

The stream of custom and our profession bring us to the preaching of the Word, and we sit out our hour under the sound; but how few consider and prize it as the great ordinance of God for the salvation of souls, the beginner and the sustainer of the divine life of grace within us! And certainly, until we have these thoughts of it, and seek to feel it thus ourselves, although we hear it most frequently, and let slip no occasion, yea, hear it with attention and some present delight, yet still we miss the right use of it, and turn it from its true end while we take it not as *that ingrafted word which is able to save our souls*. James i, 21.

Thus ought they who preach to speak the word; to endeavour their utmost to accommodate it to this end, that sinners may be converted, begotten again, and believers nourished and strengthened in their spiritual life; to regard no lower end, but aim steadily at that mark.

Their hearts and tongues ought to be set on fire with holy zeal for God and love to souls, kindled by the Holy Ghost, that came down on the apostles in the shape of fiery tongues.

And those that hear should remember this as the end of their hearing, that they may receive spiritual life and strength by the word. For though it seems a poor despicable business, that a frail, sinful man like yourselves should speak a few words in your hearing, yet, look upon it as the way wherein God communicates happiness to those who believe, and works that believing unto happiness, alters the whole frame of the soul, and makes a new creation as it begets it again to the inheritance of glory. Consider it thus, which is its true notion; and then, what can be so precious?



APHORISM XX.

Leighton.

The difference is great in our natural life, in some persons especially; that they who in infancy were so feeble, and wrapped up as others in swaddling clothes, yet afterwards come to excel in wisdom and in the knowledge of sciences, or to be commanders of great armies, or to be kings: but the distance is far greater and more admirable, betwixt the small beginnings of grace, and our after perfection, that fulness of knowledge that we look for, and that crown of immortality which all they are born to who are born of God.

But as in the faces or actions of some children, characters and presages of their after-greatness have appeared (as a singular beauty in Moses' face, as they write of him, and as Cyrus was made king among the shepherds' children with whom he was brought up, &c.) so also, certainly, in these children of God, there be some characters and evidences that they are bom for Heaven by their new birth. That holiness and meekness, that patience and faith which shine in the actions and sufferings of the saints, are characters of their Father's image, and show their high original, and foretel their glory to come; such a glory as doth not only surpass the world's thoughts, but the thoughts of the children of God themselves.
1 *John* iii, 2.



COMMENT.

This aphorism would, it may seem, have been placed more fitly in the chapter following. In placing it here, I have been determined by the following convictions: 1. Every state, and consequently that which we have described as the state of religious morality, which is not progressive, is dead or retrograde. 2. As a pledge of this progression, or, at least, as the form in which the propulsive tendency shows itself, there are certain hopes, aspirations, yearnings, that with more or less of consciousness, rise and stir in the heart of true morality as naturally as the sap in the full-formed stem of a rose flows towards the bud, within which the flower is maturing. 3. No one, whose own experience authorizes him to confirm the truth of this statement, can have been conversant with the volumes of religious biography, can have perused (for instance) the lives of Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Wishart, Sir Thomas More, Bernard Gilpin, Bishop Bedel, or of Egede, Swartz, and the missionaries of the frozen world, without an occasional conviction, that these men lived under extraordinary influences, which in each instance and in all ages of the Christian era bear the same characters, and both in the accompaniments and the results evidently refer to a common origin. And what can this be? is the question that must needs force itself on the mind in the first moment of reflection on a phenomenon so interesting and apparently so anomalous. The answer is as necessarily contained in one or the other of two assumptions. These influences are either the product of delusion, *insania amabilis*, and the reaction of disordered nerves), or they argue the existence of a relation to some real agency, distinct from what is experienced or acknowledged by the world at large, for which as not merely natural on the one hand, and yet not assumed to be miraculous* on the other, we have no apter name than spiritual. Now, if neither analogy justifies nor the moral feelings permit the former assumption and we decide therefore in favour of the reality of a state other and higher than the mere moral man, whose religion† consists in morality, has attained under these convictions, can the existence of a transitional state appear other than probable? or that these very convictions, when accompanied by correspondent dispositions and stirrings of the heart, are among the marks and indications of such a state? And thinking it not unlikely that among the readers of this volume, there may be found some individuals, whose inward state, though disquieted by doubts and oftener still perhaps by blank misgivings, may, nevertheless, betoken the commencement of a transition

*In check of fanatical pretensions, it is expedient to confine the term miraculous, to cases where the senses are appealed to, in proof of something that transcends, or can be a part of, the experience derived from the senses.

†For let it not be forgotten, that morality, as distinguished from prudence, implying, (it matters not under what name, whether of honour, or duty, or conscience, still, I say, implying), and being grounded in, an awe of the invisible and a confidence therein beyond

(nay, occasionally in apparent contradiction to) the inductions of outward experience, is essentially religious. from a not irreligious morality to a spiritual religion, with a view to their interests I placed this aphorism under the present head.



APHORISM XXI.

Leighton.

The most approved teachers of wisdom, in a human way, have required of their scholars, that to the end their minds might be capable of it, they should be purified from vice and wickedness. And it was Socrates' custom, when any one asked him a question, seeking to be informed by him, before he would answer them, he asked them concerning their own qualities and course of life.

APHORISM XXII.

Knowledge not the ultimate end of religious pursuits.

Leighton and Coleridge.

The hearing and reading of the word, under which I comprise theological studies generally, are alike defective when pursued without increase of knowledge, and when pursued chiefly for increase of knowledge. To seek no more than a present delight, that vanisheth with the sound of the words that die in the air, is not to desire the word as meat, but as music, as God tells the prophet Ezekiel of his people, *Ezek. xxxiii, 32. And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well upon an instrument; for they hear thy words, and they do them not.* To desire the word for the increase of knowledge, although this is necessary and commendable, and, being rightly qualified, is a part of spiritual accretion, yet, take it as going no further, it is not the true end of the word. Nor is the venting of that knowledge in speech and frequent discourse of the word and the divine truths that are in it; which, where it is governed with Christian prudence, is not to be despised, but commended; yet, certainly, the highest knowledge, and the most frequent and skilful speaking of the word severed from the growth here mentioned, misses the true end of the word. If any one's head or tongue should grow apace, and all the rest stand at a stay, it would certainly make him a monster; and they are no other, who are knowing and discoursing Christians, and grow daily in that respect, but not at all in holiness of heart and life, which is the proper growth of the children of God. Apposite to their case is Epictetus's comparison of the sheep; they return not what they eat in grass, but in wool.



APHORISM XXIII.

THE SUM OF CHURCH HISTORY.

Leighton.

In times of peace, the Church may dilate more, and build as it were into breadth, but in times of trouble, it arises more in height; it is then built upwards: as in cities where men are straitened, they build usually higher than in the country.

APHORISM XXIV.

**WORTHY TO BE FRAMED AND HUNG UP IN THE LIBRARY OF EVERY
THEOLOGICAL STUDENT.**

Leighton and Coleridge.

Where there is a great deal of smoke and no clear flame, it argues much moisture in the matter, yet it witnesseth certainly that there is fire there; and therefore dubious questioning is a much better evidence, than that senseless deadness which most take for believing. Men that know nothing in sciences, have no doubts. He never truly believed, who was not made first sensible and convinced of unbelief.

Never be afraid to doubt, if only you have the disposition to believe, and doubt in order that you may end in believing the truth. I will venture to add in my own name and from my own conviction the following:



APHORISM XXV.

He, who begins by loving Christianity, better than truth, will proceed by loving his own sect or church better than Christianity, and end in loving himself better than all.

APHORISM XXVI.

**THE ABSENCE OF DISPUTES, AND A GENERAL AVERSION TO RELIGIOUS
CONTROVERSIES, NO PROOF OF TRUE UNANIMITY.**

Leighton and Coleridge.

The boasted peaceableness about questions of faith too often proceeds from a superficial temper, and not seldom from a supercilious disdain of whatever has no marketable use or value, and from indifference to religion itself. Toleration is a herb of spontaneous growth in the soil of indifference; but the weed has none of the virtues of the medicinal plant, reared by humility in the garden of zeal. Those, who regard religions as matters of taste, may consistently include all religious differences in the old adage, *de gustibus non est disputandum*. And many there be among these of Gallio's temper, who *care for none of these things*, and who account all questions in religion, as he did, but matters of words and names. And by this all religions may agree together. But that were not a natural union produced by the active heat of the spirit, but a confusion rather, arising from the want of it; not a knitting together, but a freezing together, as cold congregates all bodies how heterogeneous soever, sticks, stones, and water; but heat makes first a separation of different things, and then unites those that are of the same nature.

Much of our common union of minds, I fear, proceeds from no other than the aforementioned causes, want of knowledge, and want of affection to religion. You that boast you live conformably to the appointments of the Church, and that no one hears of your noise, we may thank the ignorance of your minds for that kind of quietness.

The preceding extract is particularly entitled to our serious reflections, as in a tenfold degree more applicable to the present times than to the age in which it was written. We all know, that lovers are apt to take offence and wrangle on occasions that perhaps are but trifles, and which assuredly would appear such to those who regard love itself as folly. These quarrels may, indeed, be no proof of wisdom; but still, in the imperfect state of our nature the entire absence of the same, and this, too, on far more serious provocations, would excite a strong suspicion of a comparative indifference in the parties who can love so coolly where they profess to love so well. I shall believe our present religious tolerancy to proceed from the abundance of our charity and good sense, when I see proofs that we are equally cool and forbearing as litigants and political partizans.



APHORISM XXVII.

The influence of worldly views, (or what are called a man's prospects in life), the bane of the Christian Ministry.

Leighton.

It is a base, poor thing for a man to seek himself; far below that royal dignity that is here put upon Christians, and that priesthood joined with it. Under the law, those who were squint-eyed were incapable of the priesthood: truly, this squinting toward our own interest, the looking aside to that, in God's affairs especially, so deforms the face of the soul, that makes it altogether unworthy the honour of this spiritual priesthood. Oh! this is a large task, an infinite task. The several creatures bear their part in this; the sun says somewhat, and moon and stars, yea, the lowest have some share in it; the very plants and herbs of the field speak of God; and yet, the very highest and best, yea, all of them together, the whole concert of heaven and earth cannot show forth all His praise to the full. No, it is but a part, the smallest part of that glory, which they can reach.



APHORISM XXVIII.

Despise none; despair of none.

Leighton.

The Jews would not willingly tread upon the smallest piece of paper in their way, but took it up; for possibly, said they, the name of God may be on it. Though there was a little superstition in this, yet truly there is nothing but good religion in it, if we apply it to men. Trample not on any; there maybe some work of grace there, that thou knowest not of. The name of God may be written upon that soul thou treadest on; it may be a soul that Christ thought so much of, as to give his precious blood for it; therefore despise it not.

APHORISM XXIX.

Men of least merit most apt to be contemptuous, because most ignorant and most overweening of themselves.

Leighton.

Too many take the ready course to deceive themselves; for they look with both eyes on the failings and defects of others, and scarcely give their good qualities half an eye, while, on the contrary, in themselves, they study to the full their own advantages, and their weaknesses and defects, (as one says,) they skip over, as children do their hard words in their lesson, that are troublesome to read; and making this uneven parallel, what wonder if the result be a gross mistake of themselves!



APHORISM XXX.

Vanity may strut in rags, and humility be arrayed in purple and fine linen.
Leighton.

It is not impossible that there may be in some an affected pride in the meanness of apparel, and in others, under either neat or rich attire, a very humble unaffected mind: using it upon some of the forementioned engagements, or such like, and yet, the heart not at all upon it. *Magnus qui fictilibus utitur tanquam argento, nec ille minor qui argento tanquam fictilibus*, says Seneca: Great is he who enjoys his earthenware as if it were plate, and not less great is the man to whom all his plate is no more than earthenware.

APHORISM XXXI.

Of the detraction among religious professors.

They who have attained to a self-pleasing pitch of civility or formal religion, have usually that point of presumption with it, that they make their own size the model and rule to examine all by. What is below it, they condemn indeed as profane; but what is beyond it, they account needless and affected preciseness: and therefore are as ready as others to let fly invectives or bitter taunts against it, which are the keen and poisoned shafts of the tongue, and a persecution that shall be called to a strict account.

The slanders, perchance, may not be altogether forged or untrue; they may be the implements, not the inventions, of malice. But they do not on this account escape the guilt of detraction. Rather, it is characteristic of the evil spirit in question, to work by the advantage of real faults; but these stretched and aggravated to the utmost. It is not expressible how deep a wound a tongue sharpened to this work will give, with no noise and a very little word. This is the true white gunpowder, which the dreaming projectors of silent mischiefs and insensible poisons sought for in the laboratories of art and nature, in a world of good; but which was to be found in its most destructive form in "the world of evil, the tongue."



APHORISM XXXII.

The remedy.

Leighton

All true remedy must begin at the heart; otherwise it will be but a mountebank cure, a false imagined conquest. The weights and wheels are there, and the clock strikes according to their motion. Even he that speaks contrary to what is within him, guilefully contrary to his inward conviction and knowledge, yet speaks conformably to what is within him in the temper and frame of his heart, which is double, *a heart and a heart*, as the Psalmist hath it, Psal. xii, 2.

APHORISM XXXIII.

Leighton and Coleridge.

It is an argument of a candid ingenuous mind, to delight in the good name and commendations of others; to pass by their defects and take notice of their virtues; and to speak and hear of those willingly, and not endure either to speak or hear of the other; for in this indeed you may be little less guilty than the evil speaker, in taking pleasure in it, though you speak it not. He that willingly drinks in tales and calumnies, will, from the delight he hath in evil hearing, slide insensibly into the humour of evil speaking. It is strange how most persons dispense with themselves in this point, and that in scarcely any societies shall we find a hatred of this ill, but rather some tokens of taking pleasure in it; and until a Christian sets himself to an inward watchfulness over his heart, not suffering in it any thought that is uncharitable, or vain self-esteem, upon the sight of others' frailties, he will still be subject to somewhat of this, in the tongue or ear at least. So then, as for the evil of guile in the tongue, a sincere heart, *truth in the inward parts*, powerfully redresses it; therefore it is expressed, Psal. XV, 2, *That speaketh the truth from his heart*; thence it flows. Seek much after this, to speak nothing with God, nor men, but what is the sense of a single unfeigned heart. O sweet truth! excellent but rare sincerity! he that *loves that truth within*, and who is himself at once the truth and the life, He alone can work it there! Seek it of him.

It is characteristic of the Roman dignity and sobriety, that, in the Latin, *to favour with the tongue* (*favere lingua*) means, *to be silent*. We say. Hold your tongue! as if it were an injunction, that could not be carried into effect but by manual force, or the pincers of the forefinger and thumb! And verily--I blush to say it--it is not women and Frenchmen only that would rather have their tongues bitten than bitted, and feel their souls in a strait-waistcoat, when they are obliged to remain silent.



APHORISM XXXIV.

On the passion for new and striking thoughts.

Leighton.

In conversation seek not so much either to vent thy knowledge, or to increase it, as to know more spiritually and effectually what thou dost know. And in this way those mean despised truths, that every one thinks he is sufficiently seen in, will have a new sweetness and use in them, which thou didst not so well perceive before (for these flowers cannot be sucked dry,) and in this humble sincere way thou shalt *grow in grace and in knowledge*, too.

APHORISM XXXV.

The radical difference between the good man and the vicious man.

Leighton and Coleridge.

The godly man hates the evil he possibly by temptation hath been drawn to do, and loves the good he is frustrated of, and, having intended, hath not attained to do. The sinner, who hath his denomination from sin as his course, hates the good which sometimes he is forced to do, and loves that sin which many times he does not, either wanting occasion and means, so that he cannot do it, or through the check of an enlightened conscience possibly dares not do; and though so bound up from the act, as a dog in a chain, yet the habit, the natural inclination and desire in him, is still the same, the strength of his affection is carried to sin. So in the weakest sincere Christian, there is that predominant sincerity and desire of holy walking, according to which he is called a righteous person, the Lord is pleased to give him that name, and account him so, being upright in heart, though often failing.

Leighton adds, "There is a righteousness of a higher strain." I do not ask the reader's full assent to this position: I do not suppose him as yet prepared to yield it. But thus much he will readily admit, that here, if anywhere, we are to seek the fine line which, like stripes of light in light, distinguishes, not divides, the summit of religious morality from spiritual religion.

"A righteousness (Leighton continues,) that is not in him, but upon him. He is clothed with it." This, Reader! is the controverted doctrine, so warmly asserted and so bitterly decried under the name of "imputed righteousness. Our learned Archbishop, you see, adopts it; and it is on this account principally, that by many of our leading churchmen his orthodoxy has been more than questioned, and his name put in the list of proscribed divines, as a Calvinist. That Leighton attached a definite sense to the words above quoted, it would be uncandid to doubt; and the general spirit of his writings leads me to presume that it was compatible with the eternal distinction between things and persons, and therefore opposed to modern Calvinism. But what it was, I have not (I own) been able to discover. The sense, however, in which I think he might have received this doctrine, and in which I avow myself a believer in it, I shall have an opportunity of showing in another place. My present object is to open out the road by the removal of prejudices, so far at least as to throw some disturbing doubts on the secure taking-for-granted, that the peculiar tenets of the Christian faith asserted in the articles and homilies of our national Church are in contradiction to the common sense of mankind. And with this view, (and not in the arrogant expectation or wish, that a mere *ipse dixit* should be received for argument) I here avow my conviction, that the doctrine of



imputed righteousness, rightly and scripturally interpreted, is so far from being either irrational or immoral, that reason itself prescribes the idea in order to give a meaning and an ultimate object to morality; and that the moral law in the conscience demands its reception in order to give reality and substantive existence to the idea presented by the reason.



ASPHORISM XXXVI.

Your blessedness is not,--no, believe it, it is not where most of you seek it, in things below you. How can that be? It must be a higher good to make you happy

COMMENT.

Every rank of creatures, as it ascends in the scale of creation, leaves death behind it or under it. The metal at its height of being seems a mute prophecy of the coming vegetation, into a mimic semblance of which it crystallizes. The blossom and flower, the acme of vegetable life, divides into correspondent organs with reciprocal functions, and by instinctive motions and approximations seems impatient of that fixure, by which it is differenced in kind from the flower-shaped Psyche, that flutters with free wing above it. And wonderfully in the insect realm doth the irritability, the proper seat of instinct, while yet the nascent sensibility is subordinated thereto— most wonderfully, I say, doth the muscular life in the insect, and the musculo-arterial in the bird, imitate and typically rehearse the adaptive understanding, yea, and the moral affections and charities, of man. Let us carry ourselves back, in spirit, to the mysterious week, the teeming work-days of the creator: as they rose in vision before the eye of the inspired historian of *the generations of the heaven and the earth, in the days that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens*. And who that hath watched their ways with an understanding heart, could, as the vision evolving, still advanced towards him, contemplate the filial and loyal bee; the home building, wedded, and divorceless swallow; and above all the manifoldly intelligent** ant tribes, with their commonwealths and confederacies, their warriors and miners, the husbandfolk, that fold in their tiny flocks on the honeyed leaf, and the virgin sisters with the holy instincts of maternal love, detached and in selfless purity-- and not say to himself. Behold the shadow of approaching humanity, the sun rising from behind, in the kindling mom of creation! Thus all lower natures find their highest good in semblances and seekings of that which is higher and better. All things strive to ascend, and ascend in their striving. And shall man alone stoop? Shall his pursuits and desires, the reflections of his inward life, be like the reflected image of a tree on the edge of a pool, that grows downward, and seeks a mock heaven in the unstable element beneath it, in neighbourhood with the slim water-weeds and oozy bottom-grass that are yet better than itself and more noble, in as far as substances that appear as shadows are preferable to shadows mistaken for substance! No! it must be a higher good to make you happy. While you labour for any thing below your proper humanity, you seek a happy life in the region of death. Well saith the moral poet--

Unless above himself he can
Erect himself, how mean a thing is man!

** See *Huber on Bees, and on Ants*.

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APHORISM XXXVII.

Leighton.

There is an imitation of men that is impious and wicked, which consists in taking the copy of their sins. Again, there is an imitation which though not so grossly evil, yet, is poor and servile, being in mean things, yea, sometimes descending to imitate the very imperfections of others, as fancying some comeliness in them: as some of Basil's scholars, who imitated his slow speaking, which he had a little in the extreme, and could not help. But this is always laudable, and worthy of the best minds, to be imitators of that which is good, wheresover they find it; for that stays not in any man's person, as the ultimate pattern, but rises to the highest grace, being man's nearest likeness to God, His image and resemblance, bearing His stamp and superscription, and belonging peculiarly to Him, in what hand soever it be found, as carrying the mark of no other owner than Him.

APHORISM XXXVIII.

Leighton.

Those who think themselves high-spirited, and will bear least, as they speak, are often, even by that, forced to bow most, or to burst under it; while humility and meekness escape many a burden, and many a blow, always keeping peace within, and often without, too.

APHORISM XXXIX.

Leighton.

Our condition is universally exposed to fears and troubles, and no man is so stupid but he studies and projects for some fence against them, some bulwark to break the incursion of evils, and so to bring his mind to some ease, ridding it of the fear of them. Thus, men seek safety in the greatness, or multitude, or supposed faithfulness, of friends; they seek by any means to be strongly underset this way, to have many, and powerful, and trust-worthy friends. But wiser men, perceiving the unsafety and vanity of these and all external things, have cast about for some higher course. They see a necessity of withdrawing a man from externals, which do nothing but mock and deceive those most who trust most to them; but they cannot tell whither to direct him. The best of them bring him into himself, and think to quiet him so, but the truth is, he finds as little to support him there; there is nothing truly strong enough within him, to hold out against the many sorrows and fears which still from without do assault him. So then, though it is well done, to call off a man from outward things, as moving sands, that he build not on them, yet, this is not enough; for his own spirit is as unsettled a piece as is in all the world, and must have some higher strength than its own, to fortify and fix it. This is the way that is here taught, *Fear not their fear, but sanctify the Lord your God in your hearts*; and if you can attain this latter, the former will follow of itself.



APHORISM XL.

Worldly Troubles Idols.

Leighton.

The too ardent love or self-willed desire of power, or wealth, or credit in the world, is (an Apostle has assured us) idolatry. Now among the words or synonymes for idols, in the Hebrew language, there is one that in its primary sense signifies *troubles* (*tegrim*), other two that signify *terrors* (*miphletzeth* and *emim*). And so it is certainly. All our idols prove so to us. They fill us with nothing but anguish and troubles, with cares and fears, that are good for nothing but to be fit punishments of the folly, out of which they arise.



APHORISM XLI.

On the right treatment of infidels.

Leighton and Coleridge.

A regardless contempt of infidel writings is usually the fittest answer; *Spreta vilescerent*. But where the holy profession of Christians is likely to receive either the main or the indirect blow, and a word of defence may do any thing to ward it off, there we ought not to spare to do it.

Christian prudence goes a great way in the regulating of this. Some are not capable of receiving rational answers, especially in divine things; they were not only lost upon them, but religion dishonoured by the contest.

Of this sort are the vulgar railers at religion, the foulmouthed beliers of the Christian faith and history. Impudently false and slanderous assertions can be met only by assertions of their impudent and slanderous falsehood: and Christians will not, must not, condescend to this. How can mere railing be answered by them who are forbidden to return a railing answer? Whether, or on what provocations, such offenders may be punished or coerced on the score of incivility, and ill-neighbourhood, and for abatement of a nuisance, as in the case of other scolds and endangerers of the public peace, must be trusted to the discretion of the civil magistrate. Even then, there is danger of giving them importance, and flattering their vanity, by attracting attention to their works, if the punishment be slight; and if severe, of spreading far and wide their reputation as martyrs, as the smell of a dead dog at a distance is said to change into that of musk. Experience hitherto seems to favour the plan of treating these *betes puantes* and *enfants de Diable*, as their four-footed brethren, the skink and squash, are treated** by the American woodmen, who turn their backs upon the fetid intruder, and make appear not to see him, even at the cost of suffering him to regale on the favourite viand of these animals, the brains of a stray goose or crested *thrasso* of the dunghill. At all events, it is degrading to the majesty, and injurious to the character of religion, to make its safety the plea for their punishment, or at all to connect the name of Christianity with the castigation of indecencies that properly belong to the beadle, and the perpetrators of which would have equally deserved his lash, though the religion of their fellow-citizens, thus assailed by them, had been that of Fo or of Juggernaut.

On the other hand, we are to answer every one that inquires a reason, or an account; which supposes something receptive of it. We ought to judge ourselves engaged to give it, be it an enemy, if he will hear; if it gain him not, it may in part convince and cool him; much more, should it be one who ingenuously inquires for satisfaction, and possibly inclines to receive the truth, but has been prejudiced by misrepresentations of it.

**About the end of the same year (says Kalm) another of these animals (*Mephitis Americana*) crept into our cellar; but did not exhale the smallest scent, *because it was not*



disturbed. A foolish old woman, however, who perceived it at night, by the shining, and thought, I suppose, that it would set the world on fire, killed it; and at that moment its stench began to spread.

We recommend this anecdote to the consideration of sundry old women, on this side of the Atlantic, who, though they do not wear the appropriate garment, are worthy to sit in their committee-room, like Bickerstaff in the Tatler, under the canopy of their grandam's hoop-petticoat.



APHORISM XLII.

Passion no friend to truth.

Leighton.

Truth needs not the service of passion; yea, nothing so deserves it, as passion when set to serve it. The *Spirit of truth* is withal the *Spirit of meekness*. The Dove that rested on that great champion of truth, who is The Truth itself, is from Him derived to the lovers of truth, and they ought to seek the participation of it. Imprudence makes some kind of Christians lose much of their labour, in speaking for religion, and drive those further off, whom they would draw into it.

The confidence that attends a Christian's belief makes the believer not fear men, to whom he answers, but still he fears his God, for whom he answers, and whose interest is chief in those things he speaks of. The soul that hath the deepest sense of spiritual things, and the truest knowledge of God, is most afraid to miscarry in speaking of Him, most tender and wary how to acquit itself when engaged to speak of and for God.**

**To the same purpose are the two following sentences from Hilary:

Etiam quae pro religione dicimus, cum grandi metu et disciplina dicere debemus.--Hilarius de Trinit. Lib. 7.

*Non rdictus est hominum eloquiis de Dei rebus alius quam Dei sermo.--Idem.

The latter, however, must be taken with certain qualifications and exceptions: as when any two or more texts are in apparent contradiction, and it is required to state a truth that comprehends and reconciles both, and which, of course, cannot be expressed in the words of either:--for example, the Filial subordination (*My father is greater than I*), in the equal Deity (*My Father and I are one*).

APHORISM XLIII.

On the conscience.

Leighton.

It is a fruitless verbal debate, whether conscience be a faculty or a habit. When all is examined, conscience will be found to be no other than the mind of a man, under the notion of a particular reference to himself and his own actions.

Comment.

What conscience is, and that it is the ground and antecedent of human (or self-) consciousness, and not any modification of the latter, I have shown at large in a work announced for the press, and described in the chapter following. I have selected the preceding extract as an exercise for reflection; and because I think that in too closely following Thomas a Kempis, the Archbishop has strayed from his own judgment. The definition, for instance, seems to say all, and in fact says nothing; for if I asked. How do you define the human mind? the answer must at least contain, if not consist of, the words, "a mind capable of conscience." For conscience is no synonyme of consciousness, nor any mere expression of the same as modified by the particular object. On the contrary, a consciousness properly human, (that is, self-consciousness,) with the sense of moral responsibility, pre-supposes the conscience as its antecedent condition and ground. Lastly, the sentence, "It is a fruitless verbal debate," is an assertion of the same complexion with the contemptuous sneers at verbal criticism by the contemporaries of Bentley. In questions of philosophy or divinity that have occupied the learned and been the subjects of many successive controversies, for one instance of mere logomachy I could bring ten instances of logodaedaly, or verbal legerdemain, which have perilously confirmed prejudices, and withstood the advancement of truth, in consequence of the neglect of verbal debate, that is, strict discussion of terms. In whatever sense, however, the term conscience may be used, the following aphorism is equally true and important. It is worth noticing, likewise, that Leighton himself in a following page, (vol. ii, p. 97), tells us, that a good conscience is the root of a good conversation: and then quotes from St. Paul a text, [Titus 1, 15](#), in which the mind and the conscience are expressly distinguished.



APHORISM XLIV.

The light of knowledge a necessary accompaniment of a good conscience.

Leighton.

If you would have a good conscience, you must all means have so much light, so much knowledge of the will of God, as may regulate you, and show you your way, may teach you how to do, and speak, and think, as in His presence.

APHORISM XLV.

Yet the knowledge of the rule, though accompanied by an endeavour to accommodate our conduct to this rule, will not of itself form a good conscience.

Leighton.

To set the outward actions right, though with an honest intention, and not so to regard and find out the inward disorder of the heart, whence that in the actions flows, is but to be still putting the index of a clock right with your finger, while it is foul, or out of order within, which is a continual business and does no good. Oh! but a purified conscience, a soul renewed and refined in its temper and affections, will make things go right without, in all the duties and acts of our calling.



APHORISM XLVI.

The depth of the conscience.

How deeply seated the conscience is in the human soul, is seen in the effect which sudden calamities produce on guilty men, even when unaided by any determinate notion or fears of punishment after death. The wretched criminal, as one rudely awakened from a long sleep, bewildered with the new light, and half recollecting, half striving to recollect, a fearful something, he knows not what, but which he will recognize as soon as he hears the name, already interprets the calamities into judgments, executions of a sentence passed by an invisible judge; as if the vast pyre of the last judgment were already kindled in an unknown distance, and some flashes of it, darting forth at intervals beyond the rest, were flying and lighting upon the face of his soul. The calamity may consist in loss of fortune, or character, or reputation; but you hear no regrets from him. Remorse extinguishes all regret; and remorse is the implicit creed of the guilty.

APHORISM XLVII.

Leighton and Coleridge.

God hath suited every creature He hath made with a convenient good to which it tends, and in the obtainment of which it rests and is satisfied. Natural bodies have all their own natural place, whither, if not hindered, they move incessantly till they be in it; and they declare, by resting there, that they are (as I may say) where they would be. Sensitive creatures are carried to seek a sensitive good, as agreeable to their rank in being, and, attaining that, aim no further. Now in this is the excellency of man, that he is made capable of a communion with his Maker, and, because capable of it, is unsatisfied without it: the soul, being cut out (so to speak) to that largeness, cannot be filled with less. Though he is fallen from his right to that good, and from all right desire of it, yet, not from a capacity of it, no, nor from a necessity of it, for the answering and filling of his capacity.

Though the heart once gone from God turns continually further away from Him, and moves not towards Him till it be renewed, yet, even in that wandering, it retains that natural relation to God, as its centre, that it hath no true rest elsewhere, nor can by any means find it. It is made for Him, and is therefore still restless till it meet with Him.

It is true, the natural man takes much pains to quiet his heart by other things, and digests many vexations with hopes of contentment in the end and accomplishment of some design he hath; but still the heart misgives. Many times he attains not the thing he seeks; but if he do, yet he never attains the satisfaction he seeks and expects in it, but only learns from that to desire something further, and still hunts on after a fancy, drives his own shadow before him, and never overtakes it; and if he did, yet it is but a shadow. And so, in running from God, besides the sad end, he carries an interwoven punishment with his sin, the natural disquiet and vexation of his spirit, fluttering to and fro, and *finding no rest for the sole of his foot; the waters of inconstancy and vanity covering the whole face of the earth.*

These things are too gross and heavy. The soul, the immortal soul, descended from heaven, must either be more happy or remain miserable. The highest, the uncreated Spirit, is the proper good, *the Father of spirits*, that pure and full good which raises the soul above itself; whereas all other things draw it down below itself. So, then, it is never well with the soul, but when it is near unto God, yea, in its union with Him, married to Him: mismatching itself elsewhere it hath never any thing but shame and sorrow. *All that forsake Thee shall be ashamed*, says the Prophet, Jer. xvii, 13; and the Psalmist, *They that are far off from Thee shall perish*. Psal. lxxiii, 27. And this is indeed our natural miserable condition, and it is often expressed this way, by estrangedness and distance from God.

The same sentiments are to be found in the works of Pagan philosophers and moralists. Well then may they be made a subject of reflection in our days. And well may the pious deist, if such a character now exists, reflect that Christianity alone both teaches the way, and



provides the means, of fulfilling the obscure promises of this great instinct for all men, which the philosophy of boldest pretensions confined to the sacred few.

APHORISM XLVIII.

A contracted sphere, or what is called retiring from the business of the world, no security from the spirit of the world.

Leighton.

The heart may be engaged in a little business as much, if thou watch it not, as in many and great affairs. A man may drown in a little brook or pool, as well as in a great river, if he be down and plunge himself into it, and put his head under water. Some care thou must have, that thou mayest not care. Those things that are thorns indeed, thou must make a hedge of them, to keep out those temptations that accompany sloth, and extreme want that waits, on it; but let them be the hedge: suffer them not to grow within the garden.



APHORISM XLIX.

On church-going, as a part of religious morality, when not in reference to a spiritual religion.

Leighton.

It is a strange folly in multitudes of us, to set ourselves no mark, to propound no end in the hearing of the Gospel. The merchant sails not merely that he may sail, but for traffic, and traffics that he may be rich. The husbandman ploughs not merely to keep himself busy, with no further end, but ploughs that he may sow, and sows that he may reap with advantage. And shall we do the most excellent and fruitful work fruitlessly--hear, only to hear, and look no further? This is indeed a great vanity and a great misery, to lose that labour, and gain nothing by it, which, duly used, would be of all others most advantageous and gainful; and yet all meetings are full of this!

APHORISM L.

On the hopes and self-satisfaction of a religious moralist, independent of a spiritual faith--on what are they grounded?

Leighton.

There have been great disputes one way or another, about the merit of good works; but I truly think they who have laboriously engaged in them have been very idly, though very eagerly, employed about nothing, since the more sober of the schoolmen themselves acknowledge there can be no such thing as meriting from the blessed God, in the human, or, to speak more accurately in any created nature whatsoever: nay, so far from any possibility of merit, there can be no room for reward any otherwise than of the sovereign pleasure and gracious kindness of God; and the more ancient writers, when they use the word merit, mean nothing by it but a certain correlate to that reward which God both promises and bestows of mere grace and benignity. Otherwise, in order to constitute what is properly called merit, many things must concur, which no man in his senses will presume to attribute to human works, though ever to excellent; particularly, that the thing done must not previously be matter of debt, and that it be entire, or our own act, unassisted by foreign aid; it must also be perfectly good, and it must bear an adequate proportion to the reward claimed in consequence of it. If all these things do not concur, the act cannot possibly amount to merit. Whereas I think no one will venture to assert, that any one of these can take place in any human action whatever. But why should I enlarge here, when one single circumstance overthrows all those titles: the most righteous of mankind would not be able to stand, if his works were weighed in the balance of strict justice; how touch less then could they deserve that immense glory which is now in question! Nor is this to be denied only concerning the unbeliever and the sinner, but concerning the righteous and pious believer, who is not only free from all the guilt of his former impenitence and rebellion, but endowed with the gift of the Spirit. *For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?* I Peter iv, 17, 18. The Apostle's interrogation expresses the most vehement negation, and signifies that no mortal, in whatever degree he is placed, if he be called to the strict examination of divine justice, without daily and repeated forgiveness, could be able to keep his standing, and much less could he arise to that glorious height. "That merit," says Bernard, "on which my hope relies, consists in these three things; the love of adoption, the truth of the promise, and the power of its performance." This is the threefold cord which cannot be broken.



COMMENT.

Often have I heard it said by advocates for the Socinian scheme--True! we are all sinners; but even in the Old Testament God has promised forgiveness on repentance. One of the Fathers (I forget which) supplies the retort--True! God has promised pardon on penitence: but has he promised penitence on sin?--He that repenteth shall be forgiven: but where is it said. He that sinneth shall repent? But repentance, perhaps, the repentance required in Scripture, the passing into a new and contrary principle of action, this *Metanoia*** , is in the sinner's own power! at his own liking! He has but to open his eyes to the sin, and the tears are close at hand to wash it away! Verily, the exploded tenet of transubstantiation is scarcely at greater variance with the common sense and experience of mankind, or borders more closely on a contradiction in terms, than this volunteer transmutation, this self-change, as the easy† means of self-salvation! But the reflections of our evangelical author on this subject will appropriately commence the aphorisms relating to spiritual religion.

***Metanoia*, the New Testament word, which we render by repentance, compounded of *mens*, the spirit, or practical reason.

†May I without offence be permitted to record the very appropriate title, with which a stem humorist lettered a collection of Unitarian tracts? "Salvation made easy; or, Every man his own Redeemer."

ELEMENTS OF RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY,

PRELIMINARY TO THE APHORISMS ON

SPIRITUAL RELIGION.

Philip saith unto him: Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him. He that hath seen me hath seen the Father: and how sayest thou then. Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father and the Father in me? And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth: whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you. And in that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me and I in you. John xiv, 8, 9, 10, 16, 17, 20.

PRELIMINARY.

If there be aught spiritual in man, the will must be such.

If there be a will, there must be a spirituality in man.

I suppose both positions granted. The reader admits the reality of the power, agency, or mode of being expressed in the term, spirit; and the actual existence of a will. He sees clearly, that the idea of the former is necessary to the conceivability of the latter; and that, *vice versa*, in asserting the fact of the latter he presumes and instances the truth of the former—just as in our common and received systems of natural philosophy, the being of imponderable matter is assumed to render the loadstone intelligible, and the fact of the loadstone adduced to prove the reality of imponderable matter,

In short, I suppose the reader, whom I now invite to the third and last division of the work, already disposed to reject for himself and his human brethren the insidious title of "Nature's noblest animal," or to retort it as the unconscious irony of the Epicurean poet on the animalizing tendency of his own philosophy. I suppose him convinced, that there is more in man than can be rationally referred to the life of nature and the mechanism of organization; that he has a will not included in this mechanism; and that the will is in an especial and preeminent sense the spiritual part of our humanity.

Unless, then, we have some distinct notion of the will, and some acquaintance with the prevalent errors respecting the same, an insight into the nature of spiritual religion is scarcely possible; and our reflections on the particular truths and evidences of a spiritual state will remain obscure, perplexed, and unsafe. To place my reader on this requisite vantage-ground, is the purpose of the following exposition.

We have begun, as in geometry, with defining our terms; and we proceed, like the geometers, with stating our postulates; the difference being, that the postulates of geometry no man can deny, those of moral science are such as no good man will deny. For it is not

in our power to disclaim our nature as sentient beings; but it is in our power to disclaim our nature as moral beings. It is possible, (barely possible, I admit,) that a man may have remained ignorant or unconscious of the moral law within him: and a man need only persist in disobeying the law of conscience to make it possible for himself to deny its existence, or to reject and repel it as a phantom of superstition. Were it otherwise, the Creed would stand in the same relation to morality as the multiplication table.

This then is the distinction of moral philosophy--not that I begin with one or more assumptions; for this is common to all science; but--that I assume a something, the proof of which no man can give to another, yet every man may find for himself. If any man assert that he cannot find it, I am bound to disbelieve him. I cannot do otherwise without unsettling the very foundations of my own moral nature. For I either find it as an essential of the humanity common to him and me: or I have not found it at all, except as an hypochondriast finds glass legs. If, on the other hand, he will not find it, he excommunicates himself. He forfeits his personal rights, and becomes a thing: that is, one who may rightfully be employed, or used, as* means to an end, against his will, and without regard to his interest.

All the significant objections of the Materialist, and Necessitarian are contained in the term, morality, all the objections of the infidel in the term, religion. The very terms, I say, imply a something granted, which the objection supposes not granted. The term presumes what the objection denies, and in denying presumes the contrary. For it is most important to observe that the reasoners on both sides commence by taking something for granted, our assent to which they ask or demand: that is, both set of with an assumption in the form of a postulate

*On this principle alone is it possible to justify capital, or ignominious punishments, or indeed any punishment not having the reformation of the criminal as one of its objects. Such punishments, like those inflicted on suicides, must be regarded as posthumous: the wilful extinction of the moral and personal life being, for the purposes of punitive justice, equivalent to a wilful destruction of the natural life. If the speech of Judge Burnet to the horse-stealer (You are not hanged for stealing a horse; but, that horses may not be stolen) can be vindicated to all, it must be on this principle; and not on the all-unsettling scheme of expedience, which is the anarchy of morals. But the Epicurean assumes what according to himself he neither is nor can be under any obligation to assume, and demands what he can have no right to demand: for he denies the reality of all moral obligation, the existence of any right. If he use the words, right and obligation, he does it deceptively, and means only power and compulsion. To overthrow the faith in aught higher or other than nature and physical necessity, is the very purpose of his argument. He desires you only to take for granted, that all reality is included in nature, and he may then safely, defy you to ward off his conclusion--that nothing is excluded!

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But as he cannot morally demand, neither can he rationally expect, your assent to this premiss: for he cannot be ignorant, that the best and greatest of men have devoted their lives to the enforcement of the contrary; that the vast majority of the human race in all ages and in all nations have believed in the contrary; and that there is not a language on earth, in which he could argue, for ten minutes, in support of his scheme, without sliding into words and phrases that imply the contrary. It has been said, that the Arabic has a thousand names for a lion; but this would be a trifle compared with the number of superfluous words and useless synonymes that would be found in an *index expurgatorius* of any European dictionary constructed on the principles of a consistent and strictly consequential Materialism.

The Christian likewise grounds his philosophy on assertions; but with the best of all reasons for making them--namely that he ought so to do. He asserts what he can neither prove, nor account for, nor himself comprehend; but with the strongest inducements, that of understanding thereby whatever else it most concerns him to understand aright. And yet his assertions have nothing in them of theory or hypothesis; but are in immediate reference to three ultimate facts; namely, the reality of the law of conscience; the existence of a responsible will, as the subject of that law; and lastly, the existence of evil--of evil essentially such, not by accident of outward circumstances, not derived from its physical consequences, nor from any cause out of itself. The first is a fact of consciousness; the second a fact of reason necessarily concluded from the first; and the third a fact of history interpreted by both.

Omnia exeunt in mysterium, says a Schoolman: that is. There is nothing, the absolute ground of which is not a mystery. The contrary were indeed a contradiction in terms: for how can that, which is to explain all things, be susceptible of an explanation? It would be to suppose the same thing first and second at the same time.

If I rested here, I should merely have placed my creed in direct opposition to that of the Necessitarians, who assume (for observe, both parties begin in an assumption and cannot do otherwise) that motives act on the will, as bodies act on bodies; and that whether mind and matter are essentially the same, or essentially different, they are both alike under one and the same law of compulsory causation. But this is far from exhausting my intention. I mean at the same time to oppose the disciples of Shaftesbury and those who, substituting one faith for another, have been well called the pious Deists of the last century, in order to distinguish them from the infidels of the present age, who persuade themselves, (for the thing itself is not possible,) that they reject all faith. I declare my dissent from these two, because they imposed upon themselves an idea for a fact: a most sublime idea indeed, and so necessary to human nature, that without it no virtue is conceivable; but still an idea.

In contradiction to their splendid but delusory tenets, I profess a deep conviction that man was and is a fallen creature, not by accidents of bodily constitution or any other cause, which human wisdom in a course of ages might be supposed capable of removing; but as



diseased in his will, in that will which is the true and only strict synonyme of the word, I, or the intelligent self. Thus at each of these two opposite roads, (the philosophy of Hobbes and that of Shaftesbury), I have placed a directing post, informing my fellow-travellers, that on neither of these roads can they see the truths to which I would direct their attention.

But the place of starting was at the meeting of foot roads, and one only was the right road. I proceed therefore to preclude the opinion of those likewise, who indeed agree with me as to the moral responsibility of man in opposition to Hobbes and the anti-moralists, and that he is a fallen creature, essentially diseased, in opposition to Shaftesbury and the misinterpreters of Plato; but who differ from me in exaggerating the diseased weakness of the will into an absolute privation of all freedom, thereby making moral responsibility; not a mystery above comprehension, but a direction contradiction, of which we do distinctly comprehend the absurdity. Among the consequences of this doctrine, is that direful one of swallowing up all the attributes of the Supreme Being in the one attribute of infinite power, and thence deducing that things are good and wise because they were created, and not created through wisdom and goodness. Thence, too, the awful attribute of justice is explained away into a mere right of absolute property; the sacred distinction between things and persons is erased; and the selection of persons for virtue and vice in this life, and for eternal happiness or misery in the next, is represented as the result of a mere will, acting in the blindness and solitude of its own infinity. The title of a work written by the great and pious Boyle is "Of the awe, which the human mind owes to the Supreme Reason." This, in the language of these gloomy doctors, must be translated into--"The horror, which a being capable of eternal pleasure or pain is compelled to feel at the idea of an Infinite Power, about to inflict the latter on an immense majority of human souls, without any power on their part either to prevent it or the actions which are (not indeed its causes but) its assigned signals, and preceding links of the same iron chain!"

Against these tenets I maintain, that a will conceived separately from intelligence is a nonentity, and a mere phantasm of abstraction; and that a will, the state of which does in no sense originate in its own act, is an absolute contradiction. It might be an instinct, an impulse, a plastic power, and, if accompanied with consciousness, a desire; but a will it could not be. And this every human being knows with equal clearness, though different minds may reflect on it with different degrees of distinctness; for who would not smile at the notion of a rose willing to put forth its buds and expand them into flowers? That such a phrase would be deemed a poetic license proves the difference in the things: for all metaphors are grounded on an apparent likeness of things essentially different. I utterly disclaim the notion that any human intelligence, with whatever power it might manifest itself, is alone adequate to the office of restoring health to the will: but at the same time I deem it impious and absurd to hold that the Creator would have given us the faculty of reason, or that the Redeemer would in so many varied forms of argument and persuasion have appealed to it, if it had



been either totally useless or wholly impotent. Lastly, I find all these several truths reconciled and united in the belief, that the imperfect human understanding can be effectually exerted only in subordination to, and in a dependent alliance with, the means and aids supplied by the All-perfect and Supreme Reason; but that under these conditions it is not only an admissible, but a necessary, instrument of bettering both ourselves and others.

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We may now proceed to our reflections on the spirit of religion. The first three or four aphorisms I have selected from the theological works of Dr. Henry More, a contemporary of Archbishop Leighton, and like him held in suspicion by the Calvinists of that time as a Latitudinarian and Platonizing divine, and who probably, like him, would have been arraigned as a Calvinist by the Latitudinarians (I cannot say, Platonists) of this day, had the suspicion been equally groundless. One or two I have ventured to add from my own reflections. The purpose, however, is the same in all--that of declaring, in the first place, what spiritual religion is not, what is not a religious spirit, and what are not to be deemed influences of the Spirit. If after these disclaimers I shall without proof be charged by any with renewing or favouring the errors of the Familists, Vanists, Seekers, Behmenists, or by whatever other names Church history records the poor bewildered enthusiasts, who in the swarming time of our Republic turned the facts of the Gospel into allegories, and superseded the written ordinances of Christ by a pretended teaching and sensible presence of the Spirit, I appeal against them to their own consciences as wilful slanderers. But if with proof I have in these aphorisms signed and sealed my own condemnation.

"These things I could not forbear to write. For the light within me, that is, my reason and conscience, does assure me, that the ancient and Apostolic faith according to the historical meaning thereof, and in the literal sense of the Creed, is solid and true: and that Familism in its fairest form and under whatever disguise, is a smooth tale to seduce the simple from their allegiance to Christ."

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Henry More.

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APHORISMS

On Spiritual Religion

And here it will not be impertinent to observe, that what the eldest Greek philosophy entitled the Reason (NOYL) and ideas, the philosophic Apostle names the *Spirit* and *truths spiritually* discerned; while to those who in the pride of learning or in the overweening meanness of modern metaphysics decry the doctrine of the Spirit in man and its possible communion with the Holy Spirit, as vulgar enthusiasm, I submit the following sentences from a Pagan philosopher, a nobleman and a minister of state--"Ita dico, Lucili, sacer intra nos Spiritus sedet, malorum bonorumque nostrorum observator et custos. Hic prout a nobis tractatus est, ita nos ipse tractat. Bonus vero vir seine Deo nemo est." Seneca. Epist. xli.

APHORISM I.

H. More.

Every one is *to give a reason of his faith*; but priests and ministers more punctually than any, their province being to make good every sentence of the Bible to a rational inquirer into the truth of these oracles. Enthusiasts find it an easy thing to heat the fancies of unlearned and unreflecting hearers; but when a sober man would be satisfied of the grounds from whence they speak, he shall not have one syllable or the least tittle of a pertinent answer. Only they will talk big of the Spirit, and inveigh against reason with bitter reproaches, calling it carnal or fleshly, though it be indeed no soft flesh, but enduring and penetrant steel, even the sword of the Spirit, and such as pierces to the heart.



Aphorism II.

H. More.

There are two very bad things in this resolving of men's faith and practice into the immediate suggestion of a Spirit not acting on our understandings, or rather into the illumination of such a Spirit as they can give no account of, such as does not enlighten their reason or enable them to render their doctrine intelligible to others. First, it defaces and makes useless that part of the image of God in us, which we call reason: and secondly, it takes away that advantage, which raises Christianity above all other religions, that she dare appeal to so solid a faculty.

APHORISM III.

It is the glory of the Gospel charter and the Christian constitution, that its author and head is the Spirit of truth, essential Reason as well as absolute and incomprehensible Will. Like a just monarch, he refers even his own causes to the judgment of his high courts.--He has his King's Bench in the reason, his Court of Equity in the conscience; that the representative of his majesty and universal justice, this the nearest to the king's heart, and the dispenser of his particular decrees. He has likewise his Court of Common Pleas in the understanding, his Court of Exchequer in the prudence. The laws are his laws. And though by signs and miracles he has mercifully condescended to interline here and there with his own hand the great statute-book, which he had dictated to his *amanuensis*, Nature; yet has he been graciously pleased to forbid our receiving as the king's mandates aught that is not stamped with the Great Seal of the conscience, and countersigned by the reason.



APHORISM IV.

On an unlearned ministry, under pretence of a call of the Spirit, and inward graces superseding outward helps.

H. More.

Tell me, ye high-flown perfectionists, ye boasters of the light within you, could the highest perfection of your inward light ever show to you the history of past ages, the state of the world at present, the knowledge of arts and tongues, without books or teachers? How then can you understand the providence of God, or the age, the purpose, the fulfilment of prophecies, or distinguish such as have been fulfilled from those to the fulfilment of which we are to look forward? How can you judge concerning the authenticity and uncorruptedness of the Gospels, and the other sacred Scriptures? And how without this knowledge can you support the truth of Christianity? How can you either have, or give a reason for, the faith which you profess? This light within, that loves darkness, and would exclude those excellent gifts of God to mankind, knowledge and understanding, what is it but a sullen self-sufficiency within you, engendering contempt of superiors, pride and a spirit of division, and inducing you to reject for yourselves, and to undervalue in others, the helps without, which the grace of God has provided and appointed for his Church--nay, to make them grounds or pretexts of your dislike or suspicion of Christ's ministers who have fruitfully availed themselves of the helps afforded them?

APHORISM V.

H. More.

There are wanderers, whom neither pride nor a perverse humour have led astray; and whose condition is such, that I think few more worthy of a man's best directions. For the more imperious sects having put such unhandsome vizards on Christianity, and the *sincere milk of the word* having been every where so sophisticated by the humours and inventions of men, it has driven these anxious melancholists to seek for a teacher that cannot deceive, the voice of the eternal Word within them; to which if they be faithful, they assure themselves it wilt be faithful to them in return. Nor would this be a groundless presumption, if they had sought this voice in the reason and the conscience, with the Scripture articulating the same, instead of giving heed to their fancy and mistaking bodily disturbances, and the vapors resulting therefrom, for inspiration and the teaching of the Spirit.



APHORISM VI.

Hacket.

When every man is his own end, all things will come to a bad end. Blessed were those days, when every man thought himself rich and fortunate by the good success of the public wealth and glory. We want public souls, we want them. I speak it with compassion: there is no sin and abuse in the world that affects my thought so much. Every man thinks, that he is a whole commonwealth in his private family. *Omnes quae sua sunt quaerunt*. All seek their own.

COMMENT.

Selfishness is common to all ages and countries. In all ages self-seeking is the rule, and self-sacrifice the exception. But if to seek our private advantage in harmony with, and by the furtherance of, the public prosperity, and to derive a portion of our happiness from sympathy with the prosperity of our fellowmen--if this be public spirit, it would be morose and querulous to pretend that there is any want of it in this country and at the present time. On the contrary, the number of "public souls" and the general readiness to contribute to the public good, in science and in religion, in patriotism and in philanthropy, stand prominent** among the characteristics of this and the preceding generation. The habit of referring actions and opinions to fixed laws; convictions rooted in principles; thought, insight, system;--these, had the good Bishop lived in our time, would have been his *desiderata*, and the theme of his complaints. "We want *thinking* souls, we want them."

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This and the three preceding extracts will suffice as precautionary aphorisms. And here, again, the reader may exemplify the great advantages to be obtained from the habit of tracing the proper meaning and history of words. We need only recollect the common and idiomatic phrases in which the word "spirit" occurs in a physical or material sense (as, fruit has lost its *spirit* and flavour), to be convinced that its property is to improve,

**The very marked, positive as well as comparative, magnitude and prominence of the bump, entitled benevolence (see Spurzheim's map of the human skull) on the head of the late Mr. John Thurtel, has woefully unsettled the faith of many ardent phrenologists, and strengthened the previous doubts of a still greater number into utter disbelief. On my mind, this fact (for a fact it is) produced the directly contrary effect; and inclined me to suspect, for the first time, that there may be some truth in the Spurzheimian scheme. Whether future craniologists may not see cause to new-name this and one or two other of these convex gnomons, is quite a different question. At present, and according to the present use of words, any such change would be premature: and we must be content to say, that Mr. Thurtel's benevolence was insufficiently modified by the unprotrusive and unindicated convolutes of the brain, that secrete honesty and common sense. The organ of destructiveness was indirectly potentiated by the absence or imperfect development of the glands of reason and conscience, in this "*unfortunate gentleman!*" enliven, actuate some other thing, not constitute a thing in its own name. The enthusiast may find one exception to this where the material itself is called spirit. And when he calls to mind, how this spirit acts when taken alone by the unhappy persons who in their first exultation will boast that it is meat, drink, fire, and clothing to them, all in one--when he reflects, that its properties are to inflame, intoxicate, madden, with exhaustion, lethargy, and atrophy for the sequels;--well for him, if in some lucid interval he should fairly put the question to his own mind, how far this is analogous to his own case, and whether the exception does not confirm the rule. The letter without

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the spirit killeth; but does it follow, that the spirit is to kill the letter? To kill that which it is its appropriate office to enliven?

However, where the ministry is not invaded, and the plain sense of the Scriptures is left undisturbed, and the believer looks for the suggestions of the Spirit only or chiefly in applying particular passages to his own individual case and exigencies; though in this there maybe touch weakness, some delusion and imminent danger of more, I cannot but join with Henry More in avowing, that I feel knit to such a man in the bonds of a common faith far more closely, than to those who receive neither the letter nor the Spirit, turning the one into metaphor and oriental hyperbole, in order to explain away the other into the influence of motives suggested by their own understandings, and realized by their own strength.



APHORISMS

On that which is indeed spiritual religion.

In the selection of the extracts that form the remainder of this volume and of the comments affixed, I had the following objects principally in view:--first, to exhibit the true and Scriptural meaning and intent of several articles of faith, that are rightly classed among the mysteries and peculiar doctrines of Christianity:--secondly, to show the perfect rationality of these doctrines, and their freedom from all just objection when examined by their proper organ, the reason and conscience of man:--lastly, to exhibit from the works of Leighton, who perhaps of all our learned Protestant theologians best deserves the title of a spiritual divine, an instructive and affecting picture of the contemplations, reflections, conflicts, consolations and monitory experiences of a philosophic and richly-gifted mind, amply stored with all the knowledge that books and long intercourse with men of the most discordant characters could give, under the convictions, impressions, and habits of a spiritual religion.

To obviate a possible disappointment in any of my readers, who may chance to be engaged in theological studies, it may be well to notice, that in vindicating the peculiar tenets of our Faith, I have not entered on the doctrine of the Trinity, or the still profounder mystery of the origin of moral evil--and this for the reasons following. 1. These doctrines are not (strictly speaking) subjects of reflection, in the proper sense of this word: and both of them demand a power and persistency of abstraction, and a previous discipline in the highest forms of human thought, which it would be unwise, if not presumptuous, to expect from any, who require aids to reflection, or would be likely to seek them in the present work. 2. In my intercourse with men of various ranks and ages, I have found the far larger number of serious and inquiring persons little, if at all, disquieted by doubts respecting articles of faith simply above their comprehension. It is only where the belief required of them jars with their moral feelings: where a doctrine, in the sense in which they have been taught to receive it, appears to contradict their clear notions of right and wrong, or to be at variance with the divine attributes of goodness and justice, that these men are surprised, perplexed, and alas! not seldom offended and alienated. Such are the doctrines of arbitrary election and reprobation; the sentence to everlasting torment by an eternal and necessitating decree; vicarious atonement, and the necessity of the abasement, agony and ignominious death of a most holy and meritorious person, to appease the wrath of God. Now it is more especially for such persons, unwilling sceptics, who believing earnestly ask help for their unbelief, that this volume was compiled, and the comments written: and therefore, to the Scripture doctrines, intended by the above-mentioned, my principal attention has been directed.

But lastly, the whole scheme of the Christian Faith, including all the articles of belief common to the Greek and Latin, the Roman and the Protestant Churches, with the threefold

proof, that it is ideally, morally, and historically true, will be found exhibited and vindicated in a proportionally larger work, the principal labour of my life since manhood, and which might be entitled, "Assertion of religion, as necessarily involving revelation; and of Christianity, as the only revelation of permanent and universal validity."



APHORISM I.

Leighton.

Where, if not in Christ, is the power that can persuade a sinner to return, that can *bring home a heart to God*?

Common mercies of God, though they have a leading faculty to repentance, (Rom. ii, 4,) yet, the rebellious heart will not be led by them. The judgments of God, public or personal, though they ought to drive us to God, yet the heart, unchanged, runs the farther from God. Do we not see it by ourselves and other sinners about us? They look not at all towards Him who smites, much less do they return; or if any more serious thoughts of returning arise upon the surprise of an affliction, how soon vanish they, either the stroke abating, or the heart, by time, growing hard and senseless under it! Leave Christ out, I say, and all other means work not this way; neither the works nor the word of God sounding daily in his ear, *Return, return*. Let the noise of the rod speak it, too, and both join together to make the cry the louder, *yet the wicked will do wickedly*. Dan. xi, 10.

COMMENT.

By the phrase "in Christ," I understand all the supernatural aids vouchsafe and conditionally promised in the Christian dispensation: and among them the spirit of truth, which the world cannot receive, were it only that the knowledge of spiritual truth is of necessity immediate, and intuitive; and the world or natural man possesses no higher intuitions than those of the pure sense, which are the subjects of mathematical science. But aids, observe:--therefore, not by the will of man alone; but neither without the will. The doctrine of modern Calvinism, as laid down by Jonathan Edwards and the late Dr. Williams, which represents a will absolutely passive, clay in the bands of a potter, destroys all will, takes away its essence and definition, as effectually as in saying--This circle is square--I should deny the figure to be a circle at all. It was in strict consistency therefore, that these writers supported the Necessitarian scheme, and made the relation of cause and effect the law of the universe, subjecting to its mechanism the moral world no less than the material or physical. It follows, that all is nature. Thus, though few writers use the term spirit more frequently, they in effect deny its existence, and evacuate the term of all its proper meaning. With such a system not the wit of man nor all the theodicies ever framed by human ingenuity, before and since the attempt of the celebrated Leibnitz, can reconcile the sense of responsibility, nor the fact of the difference in kind between regret and remorse. The same compulsion of consequence drove the fathers of modern (or pseudo-) Calvinism to the origination of holiness in power, of justice in right of property, and whatever other outrages on the common sense and moral feelings of mankind they have sought to cover under the fair name of sovereign grace.

I will not take on me to defend sundry harsh and inconvenient expressions in the works of Calvin. Phrases equally strong and assertions not less rash and startling are no rarities in the writings of Luther: for *catachresis* was the favourite figure of speech in that age. But let not the opinions of either on this most fundamental subject be confounded with the New-England system, now entitled Calvinistic. The fact is simply this. Luther considered the pretensions to free-will boastful, and better suited to the budge doctors of the Stoic Fur, than to the preachers of the Gospel, whose great theme is the redemption of the will from slavery; the restoration of the will to perfect freedom being the end and consummation of the redemptive process, and the same with the entrance of the soul into glory, that is, its union with Christ: "*glory*" (John xvii, 5), being one of the names or tokens or symbols of the spiritual Messiah. Prospectively to this we are to understand the words of our Lord, *At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me*, (John xiv, 20:) the freedom of a finite will being possible under this condition only, that it has become one with the will of God. Now as the difference of a captive and enslaved will, and no will at all, such is the difference between the Lutheranism of Calvin and the Calvinism of Jonathan Edwards.

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APHORISM II.

Leighton.

There is nothing in religion farther out of nature's reach, and more remote from the natural man's liking and believing, than the doctrine of redemption by a Saviour, and by a crucified Saviour. It is comparatively easy to persuade men of the necessity of an amendment of conduct; it is more difficult to make them see the necessity of repentance in the Gospel sense, the necessity of a change in the principle of action; but to convince men of the necessity of the death of Christ is the most difficult of all. And yet the first is but varnish and whitewash without the second; and the second but a barren nation without the last. Alas! of those who admit the doctrine in words, how large a number evade it in fact, and empty it of all its substance and efficacy, making the effect the efficient cause, or attributing their election to salvation to supposed foresight of their faith, and obedience. But it is most vain to imagine a faith in such and such men, which, being foreseen by God, determined him to elect them for salvation: were it only that nothing at all is future, or can have this imagined futurition, but as it is decreed, and because it is decreed, by God so to be.



COMMENT.

No impartial person, competently acquainted with the history of the Reformation, and the works of the earlier Protestant divines at home and abroad, even to the close of Elizabeth's reign, will deny that the doctrines of Calvin on redemption and the natural state of fallen man are in all essential points the same as those of Luther, Zuinglius, and the first Reformers collectively. These doctrines have, however, since the re-establishment of the Episcopal Church at the return of Charles II, been as generally* exchanged for what is commonly entitled

*At a period, in which Doctors Marsh and Wordsworth have, by the zealous on one side, been charged with Popish principles on account of their anti-bibliolatry and the sturdy adherents of the doctrines common to Luther and Calvin, and the literal interpreters of the Articles and Homilies, are (I wish I could say, altogether without any fault of their own) regarded by the clergy generally as virtual schismatics, dividers of, though not from, the Church, it is serving the cause of charity to assist in circulating the following instructive passage from the Life of Bishop Hackett respecting the disputes between the Augustinians, or Luthero-Calvinistic divines and the Grotians of his age: in which controversy (says his biographer) he, Hackett, "was ever very moderate."

"But having been bred under Bishop Davenant and Dr. Ward in Arminianism, but which, taken as a complete and explicit scheme of belief, it would be both historically and theologically more accurate to call Grotianism, or Christianity according to Grotius. The change was not, we may readily believe, effected without a struggle. In the Romish Church this latitudinarian system, patronized by the Jesuits, was manfully resisted by Jansenius, Arnauld, and Pascal; in our own Church by the Bishops Davenant, Sanderson, Hall, and the Archbishops Usher and Leighton: and in this latter half of the preceding aphorism the reader has a specimen of the reasonings by which Leighton strove to invalidate or counterpoise the reasonings of the innovators.

Passages of this sort are, however, of rare occurrence in Leighton's works. Happily for thousands, he was more usefully employed in making his readers feel that the doctrines in question, Scripturally treated and taken as co-organized parts of a great organic whole, need no

Cambridge, he was addicted to their sentiments. Archbishop Usher would say, that Davenant understood those controversies better than ever any man did since St. Augustine. But he (Bishop Hackett) used to say, that he was sure he had three excellent men of his opinion in this controversy; 1. Padre Paolo (Father Paul) whose Letter is extant in Heinsius, *anno* 1604. 2. Thomas Aquinas. 3. St. Augustine. But besides and above them all, he believed in his conscience that St. Paul was of the same mind likewise. Yet at the same time he would profess that he disliked no Arminians, but such as revile and defame every one who is not

so: and he would often commend Arminius himself for his excellent wit and parts, but only tax his want of reading and knowledge in antiquity. And he ever held, it was the foolishness in the world to say the Arminians were Popishly inclined, when so many Dominicans and Jansenists were rigid followers of Augustine in these points: and no less foolish to say that the Anti-Arminians were Puritans and Presbyterians, when Ward and Davenant, and Prideaux, and Browning, those stout champions for Episcopacy, were decided Anti-Arminians: while Arminius himself was ever a Presbyterian. Therefore he greatly commended the moderation of our Church, which extended equal communion to both." such reasonings. And better still would it have been, had he left them altogether for those, who, severally detaching the great features of Revelation from the living context of Scripture, do by that very act destroy their life and purpose. And then, like the eyes of the Indian spider,** they become clouded microscopes, to exaggerate and distort all the other parts and proportions. No offence then will be occasioned, I trust, by the frank avowal that I have given to the preceding passage a place among the spiritual aphorisms for the sake of comment: the following remarks having been the first marginal note I had pencilled on Leighton's pages, and thus (remotely, at least), the occasion of the present work.

Leighton, I observed, throughout his inestimable work, avoids all metaphysical views of Election, relatively to God, and confines himself to the doctrine in its relation to man; and in that sense, too, in which every Christian may judge of it who strives to be sincere with his own heart. The following may, I think, be taken as a safe and useful rule in religious inquiries. Ideas, that derive their origin and substance from the moral being, and to the reception of which as true objectively (that is, as corresponding to a reality out of the human mind) we are determined by a practical interest exclusively, may not, like theoretical positions, be pressed onward into all their logical consequences.† The law

** *Aranea prodigiosa*. See Baker's Microscopic Experiments.

† May not this rule be expressed more intelligibly (to a mathematician at least) thus:-- Reasoning from finite to finite on a basis of truth; also, reasoning from infinite to infinite on a basis of truth; will always lead to truth as intelligibly as the basis on which such truths respectively rest. While reasoning from finite to infinite, or from infinite to finite, will lead to apparent absurdity, although the basis be true: and is not such apparent absurdity another expression for "truth unintelligible by a finite mind?" of conscience, and not the canons of discursive reasoning, must decide in such cases. At least, the latter have no validity, which the single *veto* of the former is not sufficient to nullify. The most pious conclusion is here the most legitimate.

It is too seldom considered, though most worthy of consideration, how far even those ideas or theories of pure speculation, that bear the same name with the objects of religious faith, are indeed the same. Out of the principles necessarily presumed in all discursive thinking, and which being, in the first place, universal, and secondly, antecedent to every

particular exercise of the understanding, are therefore referred to the reason, the human mind (wherever its powers are sufficiently developed, and its attention strongly directed to speculative or theoretical inquiries,) forms certain essences, to which for its own purposes it gives a sort of notional subsistence. Hence they are called *entia rationalia*: the conversion of which into *entia realia*, or real objects, by aid of the imagination, has in all times been the fruitful stock of empty theories and mischievous superstitions, of surreptitious premisses and extravagant conclusions. For as these substantiated notions were in many instances expressed by the same terms, as the objects of religious faith; as in most instances they were applied, though deceptively, to the explanation of real experiences; and lastly, from the gratifications, which the pride and ambition of man received from the supposed extension of his knowledge and insight; it was too easily forgotten or overlooked, that the stablest and most indispensable of these notional beings were but the necessary forms of thinking, taken abstractedly: and that like the breadthless lines, depthless surfaces, and perfect circles of geometry, they subsist wholly and solely in and for the mind that contemplates them. Where the evidence of the senses fails us, and beyond the precincts of sensible experience, there is no reality attributable to any notion, but what is given to it by Revelation, or the law of conscience, or the necessary interests of morality.

Take an instance:

It is the office, and as it were, the instinct of reason to bring a unity into all our conceptions and several knowledges. On this all system depends; and without this we could reflect connectedly neither on nature nor our own minds. Now this is possible only on the assumption or hypothesis of a One as the ground and cause of the universe, and which in all succession and through all changes is the subject neither of time nor change. The One must be contemplated as eternal and immutable.

Well! the idea, which is the basis of religion, commanded by the conscience and required by morality, contains the same truths, or at least truths that can be expressed in no other terms; but this idea presents itself to our mind with additional attributes, and these too not formed by mere abstraction and negation--with the attributes of holiness, providence, love, justice, and mercy. It comprehends, moreover, the independent (extra-mundane) existence and personality of the Supreme One, as our Creator, Lord, and Judge.

The hypothesis of a one ground and principle of the universe (necessary as an hypothesis, but having only a logical and conditional necessity), is thus raised into the idea of the Living God, the supreme object of our faith, love, fear, and adoration. Religion and morality do indeed constrain us to declare him eternal and immutable. But if from the eternity of the Supreme Being a reasoner should deduce the impossibility of a creation; or conclude with Aristotle, that the creation was co-eternal; or, like the later Platonists, should turn creation into emanation, and make the universe proceed from the Deity, as the sunbeams from the solar orb;--or if from the divine immutability he should infer that all prayer and supplication

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must be vain and superstitious: then however evident and logically necessary such conclusions may appear, it is scarcely worth our while to examine, whether they are so or not. The positions themselves must be false. For were they true, the idea would lose the sole ground of its reality. It would be no longer the idea intended by the believer in his premiss--in the premiss, with which alone religion and morality are concerned. The very subject of the discussion would be changed. It would no longer be the God, in whom we believe; but a stoical Fate, or the superessential One of Plotinus, to whom neither intelligence, nor self-consciousness, nor life, nor even being can be attributed; or lastly, the world itself, the indivisible one and only substance (*substantia una et unica*) of Spinoza, of which all *phaenomena*, all particular and individual things, lives, minds, thoughts, and actions are but modifications.

Let the believer never be alarmed by objections wholly speculative, however plausible on speculative grounds such objections may appear, if he can but satisfy himself, that the result is repugnant to the dictates of conscience, and irreconcilable with the interests of morality. For to baffle the objector we have only to demand of him, by what right and under what authority he converts a thought into a substance, or asserts the existence of a real somewhat corresponding to a notion not derived from the experience of his senses. It will be of no purpose for him to answer that it is a legitimate notion. The notion may have its mould in the understanding; but its realization must be the work of the fancy.

A reflecting reader will easily apply these remarks to the subject of Election, one of the stumbling stones in the ordinary conceptions of the Christian Faith, to which the Infidel points in scorn, and which far better men pass by in silent perplexity. Yet surely, from mistaken conceptions of the doctrine. I suppose the person, with whom I am arguing, already so far a believer, as to have convinced himself, both that a state of enduring bliss is attainable under certain conditions; and that these conditions consist in his compliance with the directions given and rules prescribed in the Christian Scriptures. These rules he likewise admits to be such, that, by the very law and constitution of the human mind, a full and faithful compliance with them cannot but have consequences of some sort or other. But these Consequences are moreover distinctly described, enumerated, and promised in the same Scriptures, in which the conditions are recorded; and though some of them may be apparent to God only, yet the greater number of them are of such a nature that they cannot exist unknown to the individual, in and for whom they exist. As little possible is it, that he should find these consequences in himself, and not find in them the sure marks and the safe pledges that he is at the time in the right road to the life promised under these conditions. Now I dare assert that no such man, however fervent his charity and however deep his humility may be, can peruse the records of history with a reflecting spirit, or look round the world with an observant eye, and not find himself compelled to admit, that all men are not on the



right road. He cannot help judging that even in Christian countries many,--a fearful many,--have not their faces turned toward it.

This then is a mere matter of fact. Now comes the question. Shall the believer, who thus hopes on the appointed grounds of hope, attribute this distinction exclusively to his own resolves and strivings,--or if not exclusively, yet primarily and principally? Shall he refer the first movements and preparations to his own will and understanding, and bottom his claim to the promises on his own comparative excellence? If not, if no man dare take this honour to himself, to whom shall he assign it, if not to that Being in whom the promise originated, and on whom its fulfilment depends? If he stop here, who shall blame him? By what argument shall his reasoning be invalidated, that might not be urged with equal force against any essential difference between obedient and disobedient, Christian and worldling;--that would not imply that both sorts alike are, in the sight of God, the sons of God by adoption? If he stop here, I say, who shall drive him from his position? For thus far he is practically concerned;--this the conscience requires; this the highest interests of morality demand. It is a question of facts, of the will and the deed, to argue against which on the abstract notions and possibilities of the speculative reason, is as unreasonable, as an attempt to decide a question of colors by pure geometry, or to unsettle the classes and specific characters of natural history by the doctrine of fluxions.

But if the self-examinant will abandon this position, and exchange the safe circle of religion and practical reason for the shifting sand-wastes and *mirages* of speculative theology; if instead of seeking after the marks of Election in himself he undertakes to determine the ground and origin, the possibility and mode of Election itself in relation to God; in this case, and whether he does it for the satisfaction of curiosity, or from the ambition of answering those, who would call God himself to account, why and by what right certain souls were born in Africa instead of England;--or why (seeing that it is against all reason and goodness to choose a worse, when being omnipotent He could have created a better) God did not create beasts men, and men angels;--or why God created any men but with foreknowledge of their obedience, and left any occasion for Election;--in this case, I say, we can only regret that the inquirer had not been better instructed in the nature, the bounds, the true purposes and proper objects of his intellectual faculties, and that he had not previously asked himself, by what appropriate sense, or organ of knowledge, he hoped to secure an insight into a nature which was neither an object of his senses, nor a part of his self-consciousness; and so leave him to ward off shadowy spears with the shadow of a shield, and to retaliate the nonsense of blasphemy with the *abracadabra* of presumption. He that will fly without wings must fly in his dreams: and till he awakes, will not find out that to fly in a dream is but to dream of flying.

Thus then the doctrine of Election is in itself a necessary inference from an undeniable fact--necessary at least for all who hold that the best of men are what they are through the



grace of God. In relation to the believer it is a hope, which if it spring out of Christian principles, be examined by the tests and nourished by the means prescribed in Scripture, will become a lively and an assured hope, but which cannot in this life pass into knowledge, much less certainty of fore-knowledge. The contrary belief does indeed make the article of Election both tool and parcel of a mad and mischievous fanaticism.

But with what force and clearness does not the Apostle confute, disclaim, and prohibit the pretence, treating it as a downright contradiction in terms! See Rom. viii, 24.

But though I hold the doctrine handled as Leighton handles it (that is, practically, morally, humanly) rational, safe, and of essential importance, I see many** reasons resulting from the peculiar circumstances, under which St. Paul preached and wrote, why a discreet minister of the Gospel should avoid the frequent use of the term, and express and meaning in other words perfectly equivalent and equally Scriptural; lest in saying truth he may convey error.

Had my purpose been confined to one particular tenet, an apology might be required for so long a comment. But the reader will, I trust, have already perceived, that my object has been to establish a general rule of interpretation and vindication applicable to all doctrinal tenets, and especially to the (so called) mysteries of the Christian faith: to provide a safety-lamp for religious inquirers. Now this I find in the principle, that all revealed truths

**For example: at the date of St. Paul's Epistles, the (Roman) world may be resembled to a mass in the furnace in the first moment of fusion, here a speck and there a spot of the melted metal shining pure and brilliant amid the scum and dross. To have received the name of Christian was a privilege, a high and distinguishing favour. No wonder, therefore, that in St. Paul's writings the words, elect and election often, nay, most often, mean the same as *eccalumeni*, *ecclesia*, that is, these who have been *called out* of the world: and it is a dangerous perversion of the Apostle's word to interpret it in the sense, in which it was used by our Lord, viz., in opposition to the called. (*Many are called but few chosen*). In St. Paul's sense and at that time the believers collectively formed a small and select number; and every Christian, real or nominal, was one of the elect. Add, too, that this ambiguity is increased by the accidental circumstance, that the *Kyriak*, *aedes Dominicae*, Lord's House, *kirk*; and *eclesia*, the sum total of the *eccalumeni*, *evocati*, *called-out*; are both rendered by the same word Church. are to be judged of by us, as far as they are possible subjects of human conception, or grounds of practice, or in some way connected with our moral and spiritual interests. In order to have a reason for forming a judgment on any given article, we must be sure that we possess a reason, by and according to which a judgment may be formed. Now in respect of all truths, to which a real independent existence is assigned, and which yet are not contained in, or to be imagined under, any form of space or time, it is strictly demonstrable, that the human reason, considered abstractly, as the source of positive science and theoretical insight, is not such a reason. At the utmost, it has only a negative voice. In other

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words, nothing can be allowed as true for the human mind, which directly contradicts this reason. But even here, before we admit the existence of any such contradiction, we must be careful to ascertain, that there is no equivocation in play, that two different subjects are not confounded under one and the same word. A striking instance of this has been adduced in the difference between the notional One of the Ontologists, and the idea of the living God.

But if not the abstract or speculative reason, and yet a reason there must be in order to a rational belief--then it must be the practical reason of man, comprehending the will, the conscience, the moral being with its inseparable interests and affections--that reason, namely, which is the organ of wisdom, and (as far as man is concerned) the source of living and actual truths.

From these premisses we may further deduce, that every doctrine is to be interpreted in reference to those, to whom it has been revealed, or who have, or have had the means of knowing or hearing the same. For instance: the doctrine that *there is no name under heaven, by which a man can be saved, but the name of Jesus*. If the word here rendered name, may be understood (as it well may, and as in other texts it most be) as meaning the power, or originating cause, I see no objection on the part of the practical reason to our belief of the declaration in its whole extent. It is true universally or not true at all. If there be any redemptive power not contained in the power of Jesus, then Jesus is not the Redeemer: not the Redeemer of the world, not the Jesus (that is, Saviour) of mankind. But if with Tertullian and Augustine we make the text assert the condemnation and misery of all who are not Christians by Baptism and explicit belief in the revelation of the New Covenant--then I say, the doctrine is true to all intents and purposes. It is true, in every respect, in which any practical, moral, or spiritual interest or end can be connected with its truth. It is true in respect to every man who has had, or who might have had, the Gospel preached to him. It is true and obligatory for every Christian community and for every individual believer, wherever the opportunity is afforded of spreading the light of the Gospel, and making known the name of the only Saviour and Redeemer. For even though the uninformed Heathens should not perish, the guilt of their perishing will attach to those who not only had no certainty of their safety, but who are commanded to act on the supposition of the contrary. But if, on the other hand, a Geological dogmatist should attempt to persuade me that this text was intended to give us an historical knowledge of God's future actions and dealings--and for the gratification of our curiosity to inform us, that Socrates and Phocion, together with all the savages in the woods and wilds of Africa and America, will be sent to keep company with the Devil and his angels in everlasting torments--I should remind him, that the purpose of Scripture was to teach us our duty, not to enable us to sit in judgment on the souls of our fellow creatures.

One other instance will, I trust, prevent all misconception of my meaning. I am clearly convinced, that the Scriptural and only true** idea of God will, in its development, be found to involve the idea of the Triunity. But I am likewise convinced, that previously to the pro-



mulgation of the Gospel the doctrine had no claim on the faith of mankind: though it might have been a legitimate contemplation for a speculative philosopher, a theorem in metaphysics valid in the Schools.

I form a certain notion in my mind, and say: This is what I understand by the term, God. From books and conversation I find that the learned generally connect the same notion with the same word. I then apply the rules laid down by the masters of logic, for the involution and evolution of terms, and prove (to as many as agree with me in my premises) that the notion, God, involves the notion, Trinity. I now pass out of the Schools, and enter into discourse with some friend or neighbour, unversed in the formal sciences, unused to the process of abstraction, neither logician nor metaphysician) but sensible and single-minded, *an Israelite indeed, trusting in the Lord God of his fathers, even the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob*. If I speak of God to him, what will he understand me to be speaking of? What does he mean, and suppose me to mean, by the word? An accident or

Or (I may add) any idea which does not either identify the Creator with the creation; or else represent the Supreme Being as a mere impersonal law or *ordo ordinans*, differing from the law of gravitation only by its universality. product of the reasoning faculty, or an abstraction which the human mind forms by reflecting on its own thoughts and forms of thinking? No. By God he understands me to mean an existing and self-subsisting reality,
a

**I have elsewhere remarked on the assistance which those that labor after distinct conceptions would receive from the re-introduction of the terms *objective* and *subjective*, *objective* and *subjective reality* and the like, as substitutes for *real* and *national*, and to the exclusion of the false antithesis between real and ideal. For the student in that noblest of the sciences, the *scire teipsum*, the advantage would be especially great. The few sentences that follow, in illustration of the terms here advocated, will not, I trust, be a waste of the reader's time.

The celebrated Euler having demonstrated certain properties of arches, adds: "All experience is in contradiction to this; but this is no reason for doubting its truth." The words sound paradoxical; but mean no more than this--that the mathematical properties of figure and space are not less certainly the properties of figure and space because they can never be perfectly realized in wood, stone, or iron. Now this assertion of Euler's might be expressed at once, briefly and simply, by saying, that the properties in question were subjectively true, though not objectively--or that the mathematical arch possessed a subjective reality though incapable of being realized objectively.

In like manner if I had to express my conviction that space was not itself a thing, but a mode or form of perceiving, or the inward ground and condition in the percipient, in consequence of which things are seen as outward and co-existing, I convey this at once by the words, Space is subjective, or space is real in and for the subject alone.

If I am asked, Why not say, in and for the mind, which every one would understand? I reply: we know indeed, that all minds are subjects; but are by no means certain that all subjects are minds. For a mind is a subject that knows itself, or a subject that is its own object. The inward principle of growth and individual form in every seed and plant is a subject, and without any exertion of poetic privilege poets may speak of the soul of the flower. But the man would be a dreamer, who otherwise than poetically should speak of roses and lilies as self-conscious subjects. Lastly, by the assistance of the terms, object and subject, thus used as correspondent opposites, or as negative and positive in physics (for example, negative and positive electricity) we may arrive at the distinct import and proper use of the strangely misused word, Idea. And as the forms of logic are all borrowed from geometry, (*ratiocinatio discursiva formas suas sive canonas recipit ab intuitu*) I real and personal Being--even the person, the I am, who sent Moses to his forefathers in Egypt. Of the actual existence of this divine Being he has the same historical assurance as of theirs; confirmed indeed by the book
 may be permitted to elucidate my present meaning. Every line may be, and by the ancient Geometricians was, considered as a point produced, the two extremes being its poles, while the point itself remains in, or is at least represented by, the midpoint, the indifference of the two poles or correlative opposites. Logically applied, the two extremes or poles are named *thesis* and *antithesis*: thus in the line,

I

T-----A

We have T = *thesis*, A = *antithesis*, and I = *punctum indifferens sive amphotericum*, which latter is to be conceived as both in as far as it may be either of the two former. Observe: not both at the same time in the same relation: for this would be the identity of T and A, not the indifference;--but so, that relatively to A, I is equal to T, and relatively to T, it becomes = A. For the purposes of the universal Noetic, in which we terms of most comprehension and least specific import, might not the Noetic Pentad be,--

- 1 *Prothesis.*
- 2 *Thesis.*
- 3 *Antithesis.*
- 4 *Mesothesis.*
- 5 *Synthesis.*



Prothesis. Sum. Thesis. Mesothesis. Antithesis. Res. Agere. Ago, Patior. Synthesis. Agens.

- 1 Verb substantive = *Prothesis*, as expressing the identity or co-inherence of act and being.
- 2 Substantive + *Thesis*, expressing being. 3. Verb = *Antithesis*, expressing act. 4. Infinitive *Mesothesis*, as being either substantive or verb, or both at once, only in different relations; 5. Participle = *Synthesis*. Thus, in chemistry, sulphuretted hydrogen is an acid relatively to the more powerful alkalis, and an alkali relatively to a powerful acid. Yet one other remark, and I pass to the question. In order to render the constructions of pure mathematics applicable to philosophy, the Pythagoreans, I imagine, represented the line as generated, or, as it were, radiated, by a point not contained in the line but independent, and (in the language of that School) transcendant to all production, which it

[continue]of Nature, as soon and as far as that stronger and better light has taught him to read and construe it--confirmed by it, I say, but not derived from it. Now by what right can I require this man (and of such men the great majority of serious believers consisted previously to the light of the Gospel) to receive a notion of mine, wholly alien from his habits of thinking, because it may be

caused but did not partake in. *Facit, non patitur*. This was the *punctum invisible et presuppositum* and in this way the Pythagoreans guarded against the error of Pantheism, into which the later Schools fell. The assumption of this point I call the logical *prothesis*. We have now therefore four relations of thought expressed: 1. *Prothesis*, or the identity of T and A, which is neither, because in it, as the transcendant of both, both are contained and exist as one. Taken absolutely, this finds its application in the Supreme Being alone, the Pythagorean *Tetractys*; the ineffable name, to which no image can be attached; the point, which has no (real) opposite or counter-point. But relatively taken and inadequately, the germinal power of every seed might be generalized under the relation of Identity. 2. *Thesist* or position. 3. *Antithesis*, or opposition. 4. Indifference. To which when we add the Synthesis or composition, in its several forms of *equilibrium*, as in quiescent electricity; of neutralization, as of oxygen and hydrogen in water; and of predominance, as of hydrogen and carbon with hydrogen, predominant, in pure alcohol; or of carbon and hydrogen, with the comparative predominance of the carbon, in oil; we complete the five most general forms or preconceptions of constructive logic.

And now for the answer to the question, what is an idea, if it mean neither an impression on the senses, nor a definite conception, nor an abstract notion? (And if it does mean either of these, the word is superfluous: and while it remains undetermined which of these is meant by the word, or whether it is not which you please, it is worse than superfluous). But suppos-



ing the word to have a meaning of its own, what does it mean? What is an idea? In answer to this, I commence with the absolutely Real as the *prothesis*; the subjectively Real as the *thesis*; the objectively Real as the *antithesis*; and I affirm, that Idea is the indifference of the two--so namely, that if it be conceived as in the subject, the idea is an object, and possesses objective truth; but if in an object, it is then a subject, and is necessarily thought of as exercising the powers of a subject. Thus an idea conceived as subsisting in an object becomes a law; and a law contemplated subjectively (in a mind) is an idea. logically deduced from another notion, with which he was almost as little acquainted, and not at all concerned? Grant for a moment, that the latter (that is, the notion, with which I first set out) as soon as it is combined with the assurance of a corresponding reality becomes identical with the true and effective Idea of God! Grant, that in thus realizing the notion I am warranted by revelation, the law of conscience, and the interests and necessities of my moral being! Yet by what authority, by what inducement, am I entitled to attach the same reality to a second notion, a notion drawn from a notion. It is evident, that if I have the same right, it must be on the same grounds. Revelation must have assured it, my conscience required it--or in some way or other I must have an interest in this belief. It must concern me, as a moral and responsible being. Now these grounds were first given in the redemption of mankind by Christ the Saviour and Mediator: and by the utter incompatibility of these offices with a mere creature. On the doctrine of redemption depends the faith, the duty, of believing in the divinity of our Lord. And this again is the strongest ground for the reality of that Idea, in which alone this divinity can be received without breach of the faith in the unity of the Godhead. But such is the Idea of the Trinity. Strong as the motives are that induce me to defer the full discussion of this great article of the Christian Creed, I cannot withstand the request of several divines, whose situation and extensive services entitle them to the utmost deference, that I should so far deviate from my first intention as at least to indicate the point on which I stand, and to prevent the misconception of my purpose: as if I held the doctrine of the Trinity for a truth which men could be called on to believe by mere force of reasoning, independently of any positive Revelation. In short, it had been reported in certain circles, that I considered this doctrine as a religion of nature. Now though it might be sufficient to say, that I regard the very phrase "Revealed Religion" as a pleonasm, inasmuch as a religion not revealed is, in my judgment, no religion at all; I have no objection to announce more particularly and distinctly what I do and what I do not maintain on this point: provided that in the following paragraph) with this view inserted, the reader will look for nothing more than a plain statement of my opinions. The grounds on which they rest, and the arguments by which they are to be vindicated, are for another place.

I hold then, it is true, that all the (so called) demonstrations of a God either prove too little, as that from the order and apparent purpose in nature; or too much, namely, that the World is itself God: or they clandestinely involve the conclusion in the premises, passing

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off the mere analysis or explication of an assertion for the proof of it,--a species of logical legerdemain not unlike that of the jugglers at a fair, who putting into their mouths what seems to be a walnut, draw out a score yards of ribbon--as in the postulate of a First Cause. And lastly, in all these demonstrations the demonstrators presuppose the idea or conception of a God without being able to authenticate it, that is, to give an account whence they obtained it. For it is clear, that the proof first mentioned and the most natural and convincing of all (the cosmological I mean, or that from the order in nature) presupposes the ontological--that is, the proof of a God from the necessity and necessary objectivity of the Idea. If the latter can assure us of a God as an existing reality, the former will go far to prove his power, wisdom, and benevolence. All this I hold. But

I also hold, that this truth, the hardest to demonstrate, is the one which of all others least needs to be demonstrated; that though there may be no conclusive demonstrations of a good, wise, living, and personal God, there are so many convincing reasons for it, within and without--a grain of sand sufficing, and a whole universe at hand to echo the decision!--that for every mind not devoid of all reason, and desperately conscience-proof, the truth which it is the least possible to prove, it is little less than impossible not to believe! only indeed just so much short of impossible, as to leave some room for the will and the moral election, and thereby to keep it a truth of religion, and the possible subject of a commandment.**

On this account I do not demand of a Deist, that he should adopt the doctrine of the Trinity. For he might very well be justified in replying, that he rejected the doctrine, not because it could not be *demonstrated*, not yet on the score of any incomprehensibilities and seeming contradictions that might be objected to it, as knowing

**In a letter to a friend on the mathematical Atheists of the French Revolution, La Lande and others, or rather on a young man of distinguished abilities, but an avowed and proselyting partisan of their tenets, I concluded with these words: "The man who will believe nothing but by force of demonstrative evidence (even though it is strictly demonstrable that the demonstrability required would countervene all the purposes of the truth in question, all that render the belief of the same desirable or obligatory) is not in a state of mind to be reasoned with on any subject. But if he further denies the fact of the law of conscience, and the essential difference between right and wrong, I confess he puzzles me. I cannot without gross inconsistency appeal to his conscience and moral sense, or I should admonish him that, as an honest man, he ought to advertise himself, with a *Cavete omnes! Scelus sum*. And as an honest man myself, I dare not advise him on prudential grounds to keep his opinions secret, lest I should make myself his accomplice, and be helping him on with a wrap-rascal." that these might be, and in fact had been, urged with equal force against a personal God under any form capable of love and veneration; but because he had not the same theoretical necessity, the same interests and instincts of reason for the one hypothesis as for the other.

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It is not enough, the Deist might justly say, that there is no cogent reason why I should *not* believe the Trinity; you must show me some cogent reason why I should.

But the case is quite different with a Christian, who accepts the Scriptures as the word of God, yet refuses his assent to the plainest declarations of these Scriptures, and explains away the most express texts into metaphor and hyperbole, because the literal and obvious interpretation is (according to his notions) absurd and contrary to reason. He is bound to show, that it is so in any sense, not equally applicable to the texts asserting the being, infinity, and personality of God the Father, the Eternal and Omnipresent One, who created the heaven and the earth. And the more is he bound to do this, and the greater is my right to demand it of him, because the doctrine of Redemption from sin supplies the Christian with motives and reasons for the divinity of the Redeemer far more concerning and coercive subjectively, that is, in the economy of his own soul, than are all the inducements that can influence the Deist objectively, that is, in the interpretation of nature.

Do I then utterly exclude the speculative reason from theology? No! It is its office and rightful privilege to determine on the negative truth of whatever we are required to believe. The doctrine must not contradict any universal principle: for this would be a doctrine that contradicted itself. Or philosophy? No. It may be and has been the servant and pioneer of faith by convincing the mind that a doctrine is cogitable, that the soul can present the idea to itself; and that if we determine to contemplate, or think of, the subject at all, so and in no other form can this be effected. So far are both logic and philosophy to be received and trusted. But the duty, and in some cases and for some persons even the right, of thinking on subjects beyond the bounds of sensible experience; the grounds of the real truth; the life, the substance, the hope, the love, in one word, the faith;--these are derivatives from the practical, moral, and spiritual nature and being of man.



APHORISM III.

Burnet and Coleridge.

That religion is designed to improve the nature and faculties of man, in order to the right governing of our actions, to the securing the peace and progress, external and internal, of individuals and of communities, and lastly, to the rendering us capable of a more perfect state, entitled the kingdom of God, to which the present life is probationary--this is a truth, which all who have truth only in view, will receive on its own evidence. If such then be the main end of religion altogether (the improvement namely of our nature and faculties), it is plain, that every part of religion is to be judged by its relation to this main end. And since the Christian scheme is religion in its most perfect and effective form, a revealed religion, and, therefore, in a special sense proceeding from that Being who made us and knows what we are, of course therefore adapted to the needs and capabilities of human nature; nothing can be a part of this holy Faith that is not duly proportioned to this end.



COMMENT.

This aphorism should be borne in mind, whenever a theological resolve is proposed to us as an article of faith. Take, for instance, the determinations passed at the Synod of Dort, concerning the absolute decrees of God in connection with his omniscience and foreknowledge. Or take the decision in the Council of Trent on the difference between the two kinds of Transubstantiation, the one in which both the substance and the accidents are changed, the same matter remaining--as in the conversion of water to wine at Cana: the other, in which the matter and the substance are changed, the accidents remaining unaltered, as in the Eucharist--this latter being Transubstantiation *par eminentie!* Or rather take the still more tremendous dogma, that it is indispensable to a saving faith carefully to distinguish the one kind from the other, and to believe both, and to believe the necessity of believing both in order to salvation! For each or either of these extra-Scriptural articles of faith the preceding aphorism supplies a safe criterion. Will the belief tend to the improvement of any of my moral or intellectual faculties? But before I can be convinced that a faculty will be improved, I must be assured that it exists. On all these dark sayings, therefore, of Dort or Trent, it is quite sufficient to ask, by what faculty, organ, or inlet of knowledge, we are to assure ourselves that the words mean any thing, or correspond to any object out of our own mind or even in it: unless indeed the mere craving and striving to think on, after all the materials for thinking have been exhausted, can be called an object. When a number of trust-worthy persons assure me, that a portion of fluid which they saw to be water, by some change in the fluid itself or in their senses, suddenly acquired the colour, taste, smell, and exhilarating property of wine, I perfectly understand what they tell me, and likewise by what faculties they might have come to the knowledge of the fact. But if any one of the number not satisfied with my acquiescence in the fact, should insist on my believing, that the matter remained the same, the substance and the accidents having been removed in order to make way for a different substance with different accidents, I must entreat his permission to wait till I can discover in myself any faculty, by which there can be presented to me a matter distinguishable from accidents, and a substance that is different from both. It is true, I have a faculty of articulation; but I do not see that it can be improved by my using it for the formation of words without meaning, or at best, for the utterance of thoughts, that mean only the act of so thinking, or of trying so to think. But the end of religion is the improvement of our nature and faculties. *Ergo, &c.* I sum up the whole in one great practical maxim. The object of religious contemplation, and of a truly spiritual faith, is "the ways of God to man." Of the workings of the Godhead, God himself has told us, *My ways are not as your ways, nor my thoughts as your thoughts.*



APHORISM IV.

The characteristic difference between the discipline of the ancient philosophers and the dispensation of the Gospel.

By undeceiving, enlarging, and informing the intellect, philosophy sought to purify and to elevate the moral character. Of course, those alone could receive the latter and incomparably greater benefit, who by natural capacity and favorable contingencies of fortune were fit recipients of the former. How small the number, we scarcely need the evidence of history to assure us. Across the night of Paganism, philosophy flitted on, like the lantern-fly of the Tropics, a light to itself, and an ornament, but alas! no more than an ornament, of the surrounding darkness.

Christianity reversed the order. By means accessible to all, by inducements operative on all, and by convictions, the grounds and materials of which all men might find in themselves, her first step was to cleanse the heart. But the benefit did not stop here. In preventing the rank vapours that steam up from the corrupt heart, Christianity restores the intellect likewise to its natural clearness. By relieving the mind from the distractions and importunities of the unruly passions, she improves the quality of the understanding: while at the same time she presents for its contemplations objects so great and so bright as cannot but enlarge the organ, by which they are contemplated. The fears, the hopes, the remembrances, the anticipations, the inward and outward experience, the belief and the faith, of a Christian, form of themselves a philosophy and a sum of knowledge, which a life spent in the Grove of Academus, or the "painted Porch," could not have attained or collected. The result is contained in the fact of a wide and still widening Christendom.

Yet I dare not say, that the effects have been proportionate to the divine wisdom of the scheme. Too soon did the Doctors of the Church forget that the heart, the moral nature, was the beginning and the end; and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion. This was the true and first apostacy--when in council and synod the divine humanities of the Gospel gave way to speculative systems, and religion became a science of shadows under the name of theology, or at best a bare skeleton of truth, without life or interest, alike inaccessible and unintelligible to the majority of Christians. For these therefore there remained only rites and ceremonies and spectacles, shows and semblances. Thus among the learned *the substance of things hoped for* (Heb. xi, 1,) passed off into notions; and for the unlearned the surfaces of things became** substance. The Christian world was for centuries divided into the many, that did not think at all, and the few who did nothing but think--both alike unreflecting, the one from defect of the act, the other from the absence of an object.



APHORISM V.

There is small chance of truth at the goal where there is not a child-like humility at the starting-post.

COMMENT.

Humility is the safest ground of docility, and docility the surest promise of docibility. Where there is no working of self-love in the heart that secures a leaning beforehand; where the great magnet of the planet is not overwhelmed or obscured by partial masses of iron in close neighbourhood to the compass of the judgment, though hidden or unnoticed; there will this great desideratum be found of a child-like humility. Do I then say, that I am to be influenced by no interest? Far from it! There is an interest of truth; or how could there be a love of truth? And that a love of truth for its own sake, and merely as truth, is possible, my soul bears

*** Virium et proprietatum, qua non nisi de substantibus predicari possunt, formis superstantibus attributio, est Superstitio.* witness to itself in its inmost recesses. But there are other interests--those of goodness, of beauty, of utility. It would be a sorry proof of the humility I am extolling, were I to ask for angel's wings to overfly my own human nature. I exclude none of these. It is enough if the *lene clinamen*, the gentle bias, be given by no interest that concerns myself other than as I am a man, and included in the great family of mankind; but which does therefore especially concern me, because being a common interest of all men it must needs concern the very essentials of my being, and because these essentials, as existing in me, are especially entrusted to my particular charge.

Widely different from this social and truth-attracted bias, different both in its nature and its effects, is the interest connected with the desire of distinguishing yourself from other men, in order to be distinguished by them. *Hoc revera est inter te et veritatem.* This interest does indeed stand between thee and truth. I might add between thee and thy own soul. It is scarcely more at variance with the love of truth than it is unfriendly to the attainment that deserves that name. By your own act you have appointed the many as your judges and appraisers: for the anxiety to be admired is a loveless passion, ever strongest with regard to those by whom we are least known and least cared for, loud on the hustings, gay in the ball-room, mute and sullen at the family fireside. What you have acquired by patient thought and cautious discrimination, demands a portion of the same effort in those who are to receive it from you. But applause and preference are things of barter; and if you trade in them, experience will soon teach you that there are easier and less unsuitable ways to win golden judgments than by at once taxing the patience and humiliating the self-opinion of your judges. To obtain your end, your words must be as indefinite as their thoughts: and how vague and genera these are even on objects of sense, the few who at a mature age have seriously set about the discipline of their faculties; and have honestly *taken stock*, best know by recollection of their own state. To be admired you must make your auditors believe at least that they understand what you say; which be assured, they never will, under such circumstances, if it be worth understanding, or if you understand your own soul. But while your

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prevailing motive is to be compared and appreciated, is it credible, is it possible, that you should in earnest seek for a knowledge which is and must remain a hidden light, a secret treasure? Have you children, or have you lived among children, and do you not know, that in all things, in food, in medicine, in all their doings and abstainings they must believe in order to acquire a reason for their belief? But so is it with religious truths for all men. These we must all learn as children. The ground of the prevailing error on this point is the ignorance, that in spiritual concernments to believe and to understand are not diverse things, but the same thing in different periods of its growth. Belief is the seed, received into the will, of which the understanding or knowledge is the flower, and the thing believed is the fruit. Unless ye believe ye cannot understand: and unless ye be humble as children, ye not only will not, but ye cannot believe. Of such therefore is the Kingdom of Heaven. Yea, blessed is the calamity that makes us humble; though so repugnant thereto is our nature, in our present state, that after a while, it is to be feared, a second and sharper calamity would be wanted to cure us of our pride in having become so humble.

Lastly, there are among us, though fewer and less in fashion than among our ancestors, persons who, like Shaftesbury, do not belong to "the herd of Epicurus," yet prefer a philosophic paganism to the morality of the Gospel. Now it would conduce, methinks, to the child like humility we have been discoursing of, if the use of the term, virtue, in that high, comprehensive, and notional sense in which it was used by the ancient Stoics, were abandoned, as a relic of Paganism, to these modern Pagans: and if Christians restoring the word to its original import, namely, manhood or manliness, used it exclusively to express the quality of fortitude; strength of character in relation to the resistance opposed by nature and the irrational passions to the dictates of reason; energy of will in preserving the line of rectitude tense and firm against the warping forces and treacheries of temptation. Surely, it were far less unseemly, value ourselves on this moral strength than on strength of body, or even strength of intellect. But we will rather value it for ourselves: and bearing in mind the old adage, *Quis custodiet ipsum custodem?* we will value it the more, yea, then only will we allow it true spiritual worth, when we possess it as a gift of grace, a boon of mercy undeserved, a fulfilment of a free promise (1 Cor. X, 13). What more is meant in this last paragraph, let the venerable Hooker say for me in the following.



Aphorism VI.

Hooker.

What is virtue but a medicine, and vice but a wound? Yea, we have so often deeply wounded ourselves with medicine, that God hath been fain to make wounds medicinable; to secure by vice where virtue hath stricken; to suffer the just man to fall, that being raised he may be taught what power it was which upheld him standing. I am not afraid to affirm it boldly with St. Augustine, that men puffed up through a proud opinion of their own sanctity and holiness received a benefit at the hands of God, and are assisted with his grace when with his grace they are *not* assisted, but permitted (and that grievously) to transgress. Whereby, as they were through over great liking of themselves supplanted (*tripped up*), so the dislike of that which did supplant them may establish them afterwards the surer. Ask the very soul of Peter, and it shall undoubtedly itself make you this answer: My eager protestations made in the glory of my spiritual strength I am ashamed of. But my shame and die tears, with which my presumption and my weakness were bewailed, recur in the songs of my thanksgiving. My strength had been my ruin, my fall hath proved my stay.



APHORISM VII.

The being and providence of One Living God, holy, gracious, merciful, the Creator and Preserver of all things, and a Father of the righteous; the Moral Law in its¹ utmost height, breadth and purity; a state of retribution after death; the² resurrection of the dead; and a day of Judgment--all these were known and received by the Jewish people, as established articles of the national Faith, at or before the proclaiming of Christ by the Baptist. They are the ground-work of Christianity, and essentials in the Christian Faith, but not its characteristic and peculiar doctrines: except indeed as they are confirmed, enlivened, realized and brought home to the whole being of man, head, heart, and spirit, by the truths and influences of the Gospel.

Peculiar to Christianity are:

I. The belief that a Mean of Salvation has been effected and provided for the human race by the incarnation of the Son of God in the person of Jesus Christ; and that his life on earth, his sufferings, death, and resurrection, are not only proofs and manifestations, but likewise essential and effective parts of the great redemptive act, whereby also the obstacle from the corruption of our nature is rendered no longer insurmountable.

II. The belief in the possible appropriation of this benefit by repentance and faith, including the aids that render an effective faith and repentance themselves possible.

III. The belief in the reception (by as many as *shall be heirs of salvation*) of a living and spiritual principle, a seed of life capable of surviving this natural life, and of existing in a divine and immortal state.

IV. The belief in the awakening of the spirit in them that truly believe, and in the communion of the spirit, thus awakened, with the Holy Spirit.

V. The belief in the accompanying and consequent gifts, graces, comforts, and privileges of the Spirit, which acting primarily on the heart and will, cannot but manifest themselves in suitable works of love and obedience, that is, in right acts with right affections, from right principles.

VI. Further, as Christians we are taught, that these Works are the appointed signs and evidences of our Faith; and that, under limitation of the power, the means, and the opportunities afforded us individually, they are the rule and measure, by which we are bound and enabled to judge, of *what spirit we are*.

VII. All these, together with the doctrine of the Fathers re-proclaimed in the everlasting Gospel, we receive in the full assurance, that God beholds and will finally judge us with a merciful consideration of our infirmities, a gracious acceptance of our sincere though imperfect strivings, a forgiveness of our defects, through the mediation, and a completion of our deficiencies by the perfect righteousness of the Man Christ Jesus, even the Word that



was in the beginning with God, and who, being God, became man for the redemption of mankind.

COMMENT.

I earnestly entreat the Reader to pause awhile, and to join with me in reflecting on the preceding Aphorism. It has been my aim throughout this work to enforce two points: 1. That Morality arising out of the reason and conscience of men, and Prudence, which in like manner flows out of the understanding and the natural wants and desires of the individual, are two distinct things. 2. That morality with prudence as its instrument has, considered abstractedly, not only a value but a worth in itself. Now the question is (and it is a question which every man must answer for himself) "From what you know of yourself; of your own heart and strength; and from what history and personal experience have led you to conclude of mankind generally; dare you *trust* to it? Dare *you* trust to it? To *it*, and to it alone? If so, well! It is at your own risk. I judge you not. Before Him, who cannot be mocked, you stand or fall. But if not, if you have had too good reason to know, that your heart is deceitful and your strength weakness: if you are disposed to exclaim with Paul--the Law indeed is holy, just, good, spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin: for that which I do, I allow not; and what I would, that I do not!--in this case, there is a Voice that says, *Come unto me; and I will give you rest*. This is the voice of Christ: and the conditions, under which the promise was given by him, are that you believe in him, and believe his words. And he has further assured you, that if you do so, you will obey him. You are, in short, to embrace the Christian Faith as your religion--those truths which St. Paul believed after his conversion, and not those only which he believed no less undoubtingly while he was persecuting Christ, and an enemy of the Christian Religion. With what consistency could I offer you this volume as aids to reflection, if I did not call on you to ascertain in the first instance what these truths are? But these I could not lay before you without first enumerating certain other points of belief, which though truths, indispensable truths, and truths comprehended or rather presupposed in the Christian scheme, are yet not these truths. (John i, 17).

While doing this, I was aware that the positions, in the first paragraph of the preceding aphorism, to which the numerical marks are affixed, will startle some of my readers. Let the following sentences serve for the notes corresponding to the marks:

¹ *Be you holy: even as God is holy.--What more does he require of thee, O man! than to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with the Lord thy God?* To these summary passages from Moses and the Prophets (the first exhibiting the closed, the second the expanded, hand of the Moral Law) I might add the authorities of Grotius and other more orthodox and not less learned divines, for the opinion that the Lord's Prayer was a selection, and the famous passage [*The hour is coming, &c.* John v. 28, 29], a citation by our Lord from the Liturgy of the Jewish Church. But it will be sufficient to remind the reader, that the apparent difference between the prominent moral truths of the Old and those of the New Testament results



from the latter having been written in Greek; while the conversations recorded by the Evangelists took place in Syro-Chaldaic or Aramaic. Hence it happened that where our Lord cited the original text, his biographers substituted the Septuagint Version, while our English Version is in both instances immediate and literal--in the Old Testament from the Hebrew Original, in the New Testament from the freer Greek translation. The text, *I give you a new commandment*, has no connection with the present subject.

² There is a current mistake on this point likewise, though this article of the Jewish belief is not only asserted by St. Paul, but is elsewhere spoken of as common to the Twelve Tribes. The mistake consists in supposing the Pharisees to have been a distinct sect, and in strangely over-rating the number of the Sadducees. The former were distinguished not by holding, as matters of religious belief, articles different from the Jewish Church at large; but by their pretences to a more rigid orthodoxy, a more scrupulous performance. They were, in short (if I may dare use a phrase which I dislike as profane and denounce as uncharitable), the Evangelicals and strict professors of the day. The latter, the Sadducees, whose opinions much more nearly resembled those of the Stoics than the Epicureans (a remark that will appear paradoxical to those only who have abstracted their notions of the Stoic philosophy from Epictetus, Mark Antonine, and certain brilliant inconsistencies of Seneca), were a handful of rich men, Romanized Jews, not more numerous than Infidels among us, and holden by the people at large in at least equal abhorrence. Their great argument was: that the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments injured or destroyed the purity of the Moral Law for the more enlightened classes, and weakened the influence of the laws of the land for the people, the vulgar multitude.

I will now suppose the reader to have thoughtfully reperused the paragraph containing the tenets peculiar to Christianity, and if he have his religious principles yet to form, I should expect to overhear a troubled murmur: How can I comprehend this? How is this to be proved? To the first question I should answer: Christianity is not a theory, or a speculation; but a life;--not a philosophy of life, but a life and a living process. To the second: Try it. It has been eighteen hundred years in existence: and has one individual left a record, like the following? "I tried it; and it did not answer. I made the experiment faithfully according to the directions; and the result has been, a conviction of my own credulity." Have you, in your own experience, met with any one in whose words you could place full confidence, and who has seriously affirmed:--"I have given Christianity a fair trial. I was aware, that its promises were made only conditionally. But my heart bears me witness, that I have to the utmost of my power complied with these conditions. Both outwardly and in the discipline of my inward acts and affections, I have performed the duties which it enjoins, and I have used the means which it prescribes. Yet my assurance of its truth has received no increase. Its promises have not been fulfilled: and I repent me of my delusion!" If neither your own experience nor the history of almost two thousand years has presented a single testimony to this purport; and

if you have read and heard of many who have lived and died bearing witness to the contrary: and if you have yourself met with someone, in whom on any other point you would place unqualified trust, who has on his own experience made report to you, that he is faithful who promised, and what he promised he has proved himself able to perform: is it bigotry, if I fear that the unbelief, which prejudices and prevents the experiment, has its source elsewhere than in the uncorrupted judgment; that not the strong free mind, but the enslaved will, is the true original infidel in this instance? It would not be the first time, that a treacherous bosomsin had suborned the understandings of men to bear false witness against its avowed enemy, the right though unreceived owner of the house, who had long warned it out, and waited only for its ejection to enter and take possession of the same. I have elsewhere in the present work explained the difference between the understanding and the reason, by reason meaning exclusively the speculative or scientific power so called, the

or *mens* of the ancients. And wider still is the distinction between the understanding and the spiritual mind. But no gift of God does or can contradict any other gift, except by misuse or misdirection. Most readily therefore do I admit, that there can be no contrariety between revelation and the understanding; unless you call the fact, that the skin though sensible of the warmth of the sun, can convey no notion of its figure or its joyous light, or of the colors which it impresses on the clouds, a contrariety between the skin and the eye; or infer that the cutaneous and the optic nerves contradict each other.

But we have grounds to believe, that there are yet other rays or effluences from the sun, which neither feeling nor sight can apprehend, but which are to be inferred from the effects. And were it even so with regard to the spiritual sun how would this contradict the understanding or the reason? It is a sufficient proof of the contrary, that the mysteries in question are not in the direction of the understanding or the (speculative) reason. They do not move on the same line or plane with them, and therefore cannot contradict them. But besides this, in the mystery that most immediately concerns the believer, that of the birth into a new and spiritual life, the common sense and experience of mankind come in aid of their faith. The analogous facts, which we know to be true, not only facilitate the apprehension of the facts promised to us, and expressed by the same words in conjunction with a distinctive epithet; but being confessedly not less incomprehensible, the certain knowledge of the one disposes us to the belief of the other. It removes at least all objections to the truth of the doctrine derived from the mysteriousness of its subject. The life, we seek after, is a mystery; but so both in itself and in its origin is the life we have. In order to meet this question, however, with minds duly prepared, there are two preliminary inquiries to be decided; the first respecting the purport, the second respecting the language, of the Gospel.

First then of the purport, namely, what the Gospel does not, and what it does, profess to be. The Gospel is not a system of theology, nor a *syntagma* of theoretical propositions and conclusions for the enlargement of speculative knowledge, ethical or metaphysical. But

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it is a history, a series of facts and events related or announced. These do indeed involve, or rather I should say they at the same time are, most important doctrinal truths; but still facts and declaration of facts.

Secondly of the language. This is a wide subject. But the point, to which I chiefly advert, is the necessity of thoroughly understanding the distinction between analogous and metaphorical language. Analogies are used in aid of conviction: metaphors, as means of illustration. The language is analogous, wherever a thing, power, or principle in a higher dignity is expressed by the same thing, power, or principle in a lower but more known form. Such, for instance, is the language of *John iii, 6. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit.* The latter half of the verse contains the fact asserted; the former half the analogous fact, by which it is rendered intelligible. If any man choose to call this metaphorical or figurative, I ask him whether with Hobbes and Bolingbroke he applies the same rule to the moral attributes of the Deity? Whether he regards the divine justice, for instance, as a metaphorical term, a mere figure of speech? If he disclaims this, then I answer, neither do I regard the words, *born again*, or spiritual life, as figures or metaphors. I have only to add, that these analogies are the material, or (to speak chemically) the base, of symbols and symbolical expressions; the nature of which is always tautegorical, that is, expressing the same subject but with a difference, in contra-distinction from metaphors and similitudes, which are always allegorical, that is, expressing a different subject but with a resemblance.**

Of metaphorical language, on the other hand, let the following be taken as instance and illustration. I am speaking, we will suppose, of an act, which in its own nature, and as a producing and efficient cause, is transcendant; but which produces sundry effects, each of which is the same in kind with an effect produced by a cause well known and of ordinary occurrence. Now when I characterize or designate this transcendant act,

**See the Statesman's Manual, p. 230, 2nd edit. *Ed.* in exclusive reference to these its effects, by a succession of names borrowed from their ordinary causes; not for the purpose of rendering the act itself, or the manner of the agency, conceivable, but in order to show the nature and magnitude of the benefits received from it, and thus to excite the due admiration, gratitude, and love in the receivers; in this case I should be rightly described as speaking metaphorically. And in this case to confound the similarity, in respect of the effects relatively to the recipients, with an identity in respects of the causes or mode? of causation relatively to the transcendant act or the Divine Agent, is a confusion of metaphor with analogy, and of figurative with literal; and has been and continues to be a fruitful source of superstition or enthusiasm in believers, and of objections and prejudices to infidels and sceptics. But each of these points is worthy of a separate consideration: and apt occasions will be found of reverting to them severally in the following aphorisms, or the comments thereto attached.

APHORISM VIII.

Leighton.

Faith elevates the soul not only above sense and sensible things, but above reason itself. As reason corrects the errors which sense might occasion, so supernatural faith corrects the errors of natural reason judging according to sense.

COMMENT.

My remarks on this aphorism from Leighton cannot be better introduced, or their purport more distinctly announced, than by the following sentence from Harrington, with no other change than is necessary to make the words express, without aid of the context, what from the context it is evident was the writer's meaning. "The definition and proper character of man--that, namely, which should contra-distinguish him from the animals--is to be taken from his reason rather than from his understanding in regard that in other creatures there may be something of understanding, but there is nothing of reason."

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Sir Thomas Brown, in his *Religio Medici*, complains that there are not impossibilities enough in religion for his active faith; and adopts by choice and in free preference such interpretations of certain texts and declarations of Holy Writ, as place them in irreconcilable contradiction to the demonstrations of science and the experience of mankind, because (says he) "I love to lose myself in a mystery, and 'tis my solitary recreation to pose my apprehension with those involved enigmas and riddles of the Trinity and Incarnation:"--and because he delights (as thinking it no vulgar part of faith) to believe a thing not only above but contrary to reason, and against the evidence of our proper senses. For the worthy knight could answer all the objections of the Devil and reason "with the old resolution he had learnt of Tertullian: *Certum est quia impossibile est*. It is certainly true because it is quite impossible!" Now this I call Ultra-fidianism.*

*There is this advantage in the occasional use of a newly minted term or title, expressing the doctrinal schemes of particular sects or parties, that it avoids the inconvenience that presses on either side, whether we adopt the name which the party itself has taken up by which to express its peculiar tenets, or that by which the same party is designated by its opponents. If we take the latter, it most often happens that either the persons are invidiously aimed at in the designation of the principles, or that the name implies some consequence or occasional accompaniment of the principles denied by the parties themselves, as applicable to them

Again, there is a scheme constructed on the principle of retaining the social sympathies, that attend on the name of believer, at the least possible expenditure of belief; a scheme of picking and choosing Scripture texts.

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collectively. On the other hand, convinced as I am, that current appellations are never wholly indifferent or inert: and that, when employed to express the characteristic relief or object of a religions confederacy, they exert on the many a great and constant, though insensible, influence; I cannot but fear that in adopting the former I may be sacrificing the interests of truth beyond what the duties of courtesy can demand or justify. I have elsewhere stated my objections to the word Unitarians, as a name which in its proper sense can belong only to the maintainers of the truth impugned by the persons, who have chosen it as their

designation. "For unity or unition, and indistinguishable *unicity* or sameness, are incompatible terms. We never speak of the unity of attraction, or the unity of repulsion; but of the unity of attraction and repulsion in each corpuscle. Indeed, the essential diversity of the conceptions, unity and sameness, was among the elementary principles of the old logicians; and Leibnitz, in his critique on Wissowatius, has ably exposed the sophisms grounded on the confusion of the two terms. But in the exclusive sense, in which the name, Unitarian, is appropriated by the Sect, and in which they mean it to be understood, it is a presumptuous boast and an uncharitable calumny. No one of the Churches to which they on this article of the Christian faith stand opposed, Greek or Latin, ever adopted the term, Trini--or Triuni-tarians as their ordinary and proper name: and had it been otherwise, yet unity is assuredly no logical opposite to Tri-unity, which expressly includes it. The triple alliance is *a fortiori* an afliance. The true designation of their characteristic tenet, and which would simply and inoffensively express a fact admitted on all sides, is Psilanthropism, or the assertion of the mere humanity of Christ."**

I dare not hesitate to avow my regret that any scheme of doctrines or tenets should be the subject of penal law: though I can easily conceive that any scheme, however excellent in itself, may be propagated, and however false or injurious, may be assailed in a manner and by means that would make the advocate or assailant justly punishable. But then it is the manner, the means, that constitute the crime. The merit or demerit of the opinions themselves depends on their originating and determining causes, which may differ in every different believer, and are

**"Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters." p. 367, 2nd edit. *Ed.* for the support of doctrines, that had been learned beforehand from the higher oracle of common senses which, as applied to the truths of religion, means the popular part of the philosophy in fashion. Of course, the

certainly known to Him alone, who commanded us, *Judge not, lest ye be judged.* At all events, in the present state of the law, I do not see where we can begin, or where we can stop, without inconsistency and consequent hardship. Judging by all that we can pretend to know or are entitled to infer, who among us will take on himself to deny that the late Dr. Priestley was a good and benevolent man, as sincere in his love as he was intrepid and indefatigable in his pursuit, Of truth? Now let us construct three parallel tables, the first containing the articles of belief, moral and theological, maintained by the venerable Hooker, as the representative of the Established Church, each article being distinctly lined and numbered; the second the tenets and persuasions of Lord Herbert, as the representative of the Platonizing Deists; and the third, those of Dr. Priestley. Let the points, in which the second and third agree with or differ from the first, be considered as to the comparative number modified by the comparative weight and importance of the several points--and let any competent and upright man be appointed the arbiter, to decide according to his best



judgment, without any reference to the truth of the opinions, which of the two differed from the first more widely. I say this, well aware that it would be abundantly more prudent to leave it unsaid. But I say it in the conviction, that the liberality in the adoption of admitted misnomers in the naming of doctrinal systems, if only they have been negatively legalized, is but an equivocal proof of liberality towards the persons who dissent from us. On the contrary, I more than suspect that the former liberality does in too many men arise from a latent predisposition to transfer their reprobation and intolerance from the doctrines to the doctors, from the belief to the believers. Indecency, abuse, scoffing on subjects dear and awful to a multitude of our fellow citizens, appeals to the vanity, appetites, and malignant passions of ignorant and incompetent judges--these are flagrant overt acts, condemned by the law written in the heart of every honest man, Jew, Turk, and Christian. These are points respecting which the humblest honest man feels it his duty to hold himself infallible, and dares not hesitate in giving utterance to the verdict of his conscience in the jury-box as fearlessly as by his fireside. It is far otherwise with respect to matters of faith and inward conviction: and with respect to these I say--"Tolerate no belief that you judge false and of injurious tendency: and arraign no believer. The man is more and other than his belief: and God only knows scheme differs at different times and in different individuals in the number of articles excluded; but, it may always be recognized by this permanent character, that its object is to draw religion down to the believer's intellect,

how small or how large a part of him the belief in question may be, for good or for evil. Resist every false doctrine; and call no man heretic. The false doctrine does not necessarily make the man a heretic; but an evil heart can make any doctrine heretical."

Actuated by these principles, I have objected to a false and deceptive designation in the case of one system. Persuaded that the doctrines, enumerated in p. 145-6, are not only essential to the Christian religion, but those which contra-distinguish the religion as Christian, I merely repeat this persuasion in another form, when I assert, that (in my sense of the word, Christian) Unitarianism is not Christianity. But do I say, that those who call themselves Unitarians, are not Christians? God forbid! I would not think, much less promulgate, a judgment at once so presumptuous and so uncharitable. Let a friendly antagonist retort on my scheme of faith in the like manner: I shall respect him all the more for his consistency as a reasoner, and not confide the less in his kindness towards me as his neighbour and fellow Christian. This latter and most endearing name I scarcely know how to withhold even from my friend, Hyman Hurwitz, as often as I read what every reverer of Holy Writ and of the English Bible ought to read, his admirable *Vindiciae Hebraicae!* It has trembled on the verge, as it were, of my lips, every time I have conversed with that pious, learned, strong-minded, and single-hearted Jew, an Israelite indeed, and without guile--



*Cujus cura sequi naturam, legibus uti,
 Et mentem vitiis, ora negare dolis; Virtutes opibus, verum praeponere
 falso,
 Nil vacuum sensu dicere, nil facere.
 Post obitum vivam** secum, secum requiestam,
 Nec fiat melior sors mea sorte sua!
 From a poem of Hildebert on his Master, the
 the persecuted Berengarius.*

Under the same feelings I conclude this aid to reflection by applying the principle to another misnomer not less inappropriate and far more influential. Of those, whom have found most reason to respect and

**I do not answer for the corrupt Latin. instead of raising his intellect up to religion. And this extreme I call Minimi-fidianism.

Now if there be one preventive of both these extremes more efficacious than another, and preliminary to all the

value, many have been members of the Church of Rome: and certainly I did not honor those the least, who scrupled even in common parlance to call our Church a reformed Church. A similar scruple would not, methinks, disgrace a Protestant as to the use of the words, Catholic or Roman Catholic; and if (tacitly at least, and in thought) he remembered that the Romish anti-Catholic Church would more truly express the fact. *Romish*, to mark that the corruptions in discipline, doctrine and practice do, for the larger part, owe both their origin and perpetuation to the Romish Court, and the local tribunals of the City of Rome; and neither are or ever have been Catholic, that is, universal, throughout the Roman Empire, or even in the Whole Latin or Western Church--and anti-Catholic, because no other Church acts on so narrow and excommunicative a principle, or is characterised by such a jealous spirit of monopoly. Instead of a Catholic (universal) spirit, it may be truly described as a spirit of particularism counterfeiting Catholicity by a negative totality, and heretical self-circumscription--in the first instances cutting off, and since then cutting herself off from, all the other members of Christ's body. For the rest, I think as that man of true catholic spirit and apostolic zeal, Richard Baxter, thought; and my readers will thank me for conveying my reflections in his own words, in the following golden passage from his Life, "faithfully published from his own original MSS. by Matthew Silvester, 1696."

"My censures of the Papists do much differ from what they were at first. I then thought that their errors in the doctrines of faith were their most dangerous mistakes. But now I am assured that their misexpressions and misunderstanding us, with our mistakings of them and inconvenient expressing of our own opinions, have made the difference in most points appear much greater than it is; and that in some it is next to none at all. But the great and unreconcilable differences lie in their Church tyranny; in the usurpations of their hierarchy,

and priesthood, under the name of spiritual authority exercising a temporal lordship; in their corruptions and abasement of God's worship; but above all, in their corruptions be-friending of ignorance and vice.

"At first I thought that Mr. Perkins well proved that a Papist cannot go beyond a reprob-ate; but now I doubt not that God hath many sanctified ones among them, who have received the true doctrine of Christianity so practically that their contradictory errors prevail not against rest, it is the being made fully aware of the diversity of reason and the understanding. And this is the more expedient, because though there is no want of authorities ancient and modern for the distinction of the faculties, and the distinct appropriation of the terms, yet our best writers too often confound the one with the other. Even Lord Bacon himself, who in his *Novum Organum* has so incomparably set forth the nature of the difference, and the unfitness of the latter faculty for the objects of the former, does nevertheless in sundry places use the term reason where he means the understanding, and sometimes, though less frequently, understanding for reason. In consequence of thus confounding the two terms, or rather of wasting both words for the expression of one and the same faculty, he left himself no appropriate term for the other and higher gift of reason, and was thus under the necessity of adopting fantastical and mystical phrases, for example, the dry light (*lumen siccum*,) the lucific vision, and the like, meaning thereby nothing more than reason in contra-distinction from the understanding. Thus, too, in the preceding aphorism, by reason Leighton means the human understanding, the explanation annexed to it being (by a noticeable coincidence,) word for word, the very definition which the

them, to hinder their love of God and their salvation; but that their errors are like a conquerable dose of poison, which a healthful nature doth overcome. *And I can never believe that a man may not be saved by that religion, which doth but bring him to the true love of God and to a heavenly mind and life: nor that God will ever cast a soul into hell that truly loveth him.* Also at first it would disgrace any doctrine with me, if I did but hear it called Popery and anti-Christian; but I have long learned to be more impartial, and to know that Satan can use even the names of Popery and Antichrist, to bring a truth into suspicion and discredit."--Baxter's *Life*, Part I. p. 131. founder of the Critical Philosophy gives of the un-derstanding--namely, "the faculty judging according to sense."

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ON THE DIFFERENCE IN KIND OF REASON AND THE

UNDERSTANDING.

SCHEME OF THE ARGUMENT.

On the contrary, reason is the power of universal and necessary convictions, the source and substance of truths above sense, and having their evidence in themselves. Its presence is always marked by the necessity of the position affirmed: this necessity being conditional, when a truth of reason is applied to facts of experience, or to the rules and maxims of the understanding; but absolute, when the subject matter is itself the growth or offspring of reason. Hence arises a distinction in reason itself, derived from the different mode of applying it, and from the objects to which it is directed: accordingly as we consider one and the same gift, now as the ground of formal principles, and now as the origin of ideas. Contemplated distinctively in reference to formal (or abstract) truth, it is the speculative reason; but in reference to actual (or moral) truth, as the fountain of ideas and the light of the conscience, we name it the practical reason. Whenever by self-subjection to this universal light, the will of the individual, the particular will, has become a will of reason, the man is regenerate: and reason is then the spirit of the regenerated man, whereby the person is capable of a quickening intercommunion with the Divine Spirit. And herein consists the mystery of Redemption, that this has been rendered possible for us. *And so it is written; the first man Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam a quickening Spirit: (1 Cor. XV, 45).* We need only compare the passages in the writings of the Apostles Paul and John, concerning the Spirit and spiritual gifts, with those in the Proverbs and in the Wisdom of Solomon respecting reason, to be convinced that the terms are synonymous.** In this at once most comprehensive and most appropriate acceptation of the word, reason is pre-eminently spiritual, and a spirit, even our spirit, through an effluence of the same grace by which we are privileged to say Our Father?

On the other hand, the judgments of the understanding are binding only in relation to the objects of our senses, which we reflect under the forms of the understanding. It is, as Leighton, rightly defines it, "the faculty judging according to sense." Hence we add the epithet human without tautology: and speak of the human understanding in disjunction from that of beings higher or lower than man. But there is, in this sense, no human reason. There neither is nor can be but one reason, one and the same; even the light that lighteth every man's individual understanding (*discursus*), and thus maketh it a reasonable understanding, discourse of reason--*one only, yet manifold; it goeth through all understanding, and remaining in itself regenerateth all other powers.* The same writer calls it likewise *an influence from the Glory of the Almighty*, this being one of the names of the Messiah, as the *Logos*, or co-eternal Filial Word. And most noticeable for its coincidence is a fragment of Heraclitus, as I have indeed already noticed elsewhere;--"To discourse rationally it behoves us to derive strength from that which is common to all men: for all human understandings are nourished by the one Divine Word."



Beasts, we have said, partake of understanding. If

** See *Wisd. of Sol.* c. vii, 22-23, 27. Ed.* any man deny this, there is a ready way of settling the question. Let him give a careful perusal to Huber's two small volumes on bees and ants, (especially the latter,) and to Kirby and Spence's *Introduction to Entomology*; and one or other of two things must follow. He will either change his opinion as irreconcilable with the facts; or he must deny the facts, which yet I cannot suppose, inasmuch as the denial would be tantamount to the no less extravagant than uncharitable assertion, that Huber, and the several eminent naturalists, French and English, Swiss, German and Italian, by whom Huber's observations and experiments have been repeated and confirmed, had all conspired to impose a series of falsehoods and fairy-tales on the world. I see no way, at least, by which he can get out of this dilemma, but by overleaping the admitted rules and fences of all legitimate discussion, and either transferring to the word, understanding, the definition already appropriated to reason, or defining understanding in *genere* by the specific and accessional perfections which the human understanding derives from its co-existence with reason and free-will in the same individual person; in plainer words, from its being exercised by a self-conscious and responsible creature. And, after all, the supporter of Harrington's position would have a right to ask him, by what other name he would designate the faculty in the instances referred to? If it be not understanding, what is it?

In no former part of this volume has the author felt the same anxiety to obtain a patient attention. For he does not hesitate to avow, that on his success in establishing the validity and importance of the distinction between reason and the understanding, he rests his hopes of carrying the reader along with him through all that is to follow. Let the student but clearly see and comprehend the diversity in the things themselves, the expediency of a correspondent distinction and appropriation of the words will follow of itself. Turn bade for a moment to the aphorism, and having reperused the first paragraph of this comment thereon, regard the two following narratives as the illustration. I do not say proof: for I take these from a multitude of facts equally striking for the one only purpose of placing my meaning out of all doubt.

I. Huber put a dozen humble-bees under a bell-glass along with a comb of about ten silken cocoons so unequal in height as not to be capable of standing steadily. To remedy this two or three of the humble-bees got upon the comb, stretched themselves over its edge, and with their heads downwards fixed their forefeet on the table on which the comb stood, and so with their hind feet kept the comb from falling. When these were weary, others took their places. In this constrained and painful posture, fresh bees relieving their comrades at intervals, and each working in its turn, did these affectionate little insects support the comb for nearly three days: at the end of which they had prepared sufficient wax to build pillars with. But these pillars having accidentally got displaced, the bees had recourse again to the same manoeuvre, till Huber pitying their hard case, &c.

II. "I shall at present describe the operations of a single ant that I observed sufficiently long to satisfy my curiosity.

"One rainy day, I observed a laborer digging the ground near the aperture which gave entrance to the ant-hill. It placed in a heap the several fragments it had scraped up, and formed them into small pellets, which it deposited here and there upon the nest. It returned constantly to the same place, and appeared to have a marked design, for it labored with ardor and perseverance. I remarked a slight furrow, excavated in the ground in a straight line, representing the plan of a path or gallery. The laborer, the whole of whose movements fell under my immediate observation, gave it greater depth and breadth, and cleared out its borders: and I saw at length, in which I could not be deceived, that it had the intention of establishing an avenue which was to lead from one of the stories to the under-ground chambers. This path, which was about two or three inches in length, and formed by a single ant, was opened above and bordered on each side by a buttress of earth; its concavity *en forme de gouttiere* was of the most perfect regularity, for the architect had not left an atom too much. The work of this ant was so well followed and understood, that I could almost to a certainty guess its next proceeding, and the very fragment it was about to remove. At the side of the opening where this path terminated, was a second opening to which it was necessary to arrive by some road. The same ant engaged in and executed alone this undertaking. It furrowed out and opened another path, parallel to the first, leaving between each a little wall of three or four lines in height. Those ants who lay the foundation of a wall, chamber, or gallery, from working separately occasion, now and then, a want of coincidence in the parts of the same or different objects. Such examples are of no unfrequent occurrence, but they by no means embarrass them. What follows proves that the workman, on discovering his error, knew how to rectify it. A wall had been erected with the view of sustaining a vaulted ceiling, still incomplete, that had been projected from the wall of the opposite chamber. The workman who began constructing it, had given it too little elevation to meet the opposite partition upon which it was to rest. Had it been continued on the original plan, it must infallibly have met the wall at about one half of its height, and this it was necessary to avoid. This state of things very forcibly claimed my attention, when one of the ants arriving at the place, and visiting the works, appeared to be struck by the difficulty which presented itself; but this it as soon obviated, by taking down the veiling and raising the wall upon which it reposed. It then, in my presence, constructed a new ceiling with the fragments of the former one."--*Huber's Natural History of Ants*, p. 38-41.

Now I assert, that the faculty manifested in the acts here narrated does not differ *in kind* from understanding, and that it does so differ from reason. What I conceive the former to be, physiologically considered, will be shown hereafter. In this place I take the understanding as it exists in men, and in exclusive reference to its *intelligential* functions; and it is in this sense of the word that I am to prove the necessity of contra-distinguishing it from reason.

Premising then, that two or more subjects having the same essential characters are said to fall under the same general definition, I lay it down, as a self-evident truth,--(it is, in fact, an identical proposition)--that whatever subjects fall under one and the same general definition are of one and the same kind: consequently, that which does not fall under this definition, must differ in kind from each and all of those that *do*. Difference in degree does indeed suppose sameness in kind; and difference in kind precludes distinction from difference of degree. *Heterogenea non comparari, ergo nec distingui, possunt*. The inattention to this rule gives rise to the numerous sophisms comprised by Aristotle under the head of that is, transition into a new kind, or the falsely applying to X what had been truly asserted of A, and might have been true of X, had it differed from A in its degree only. The sophistry consists in the omission to notice what not being noticed will be supposed not to exist; and where the silence respecting the difference in kind is tantamount to an assertion that the difference is merely in degree. But the fraud is especially gross, where the heterogeneous subject, thus clandestinely slipt in, is in its own nature unsusceptible of degree: such as, for instance, certainty or circularity, contrasted with strength, or magnitude.

To apply these remarks for our present purpose, we have only to describe Understanding and Reason, each by its characteristic qualities. The comparison will show the difference.



UNDERSTANDING.

- 1 Understanding is discursive.
- 2 The understanding in all its judgments refers to some other faculty as its ultimate authority.
- 3 Understanding is the faculty of reflection.

REASON.

- 1 Reason is fixed.
- 2 The reason in all its decisions appeals to itself as the ground and substance of their truth.--(*Heb.* vi, 13).
- 3 Reason of contemplation. Reason indeed is much nearer to Sense than to Understanding: for Reason (says our great Hooker) is a direct aspect of truth, an inward beholding, having a similar relation to the intelligible or spiritual, as sense has to the material or phenomenal.

The result is: that neither falls under the definition of the other. They differ *in kind*: and had my object been confined to the establishment of this fact, the preceding columns would have superseded all further disquisition. But I have ever in view the especial interest of my youthful readers, whose reflective power is to be cultivated; as well as their particular reflections to be called forth and guided. Now the main chance of their reflecting on religious subjects aright, and of their attaining to the contemplation of spiritual truths at all rests on their insight into the nature of this disparity still more than on their conviction of its existence. I now, therefore, proceed to a brief analysis of the understanding, in elucidation of the definitions already given.

The understanding then, (considered exclusively as an organ of human intelligence,) is the faculty by which we reflect and generalize. Take, for instance, any objects consisting of many parts, a house, or a group of houses: and if it be contemplated, as a whole, that is, as many constituting a one, it forms what, in the technical language of psychology, is called a total impression. Among the various component parts of this, we direct our attention especially to such as we recollect to have noticed in other total impressions. Then, by a voluntary act, we withhold our attention from all the rest to reflect exclusively on these; and these we henceforward use as common characters, by virtue of which the several objects are referred to one and the same sort.**

**Accordingly as we attend more or less to the differences, the sort becomes, of course, more or less comprehensive. Hence there arises for the systematic naturalist the necessity of subdividing the sorts into orders, classes, families, &c.: all which, however, resolve themselves for the mere logician into the conception of *genus* and *species*, that is, the comprehending and the comprehended.

Thus, the whole process may be reduced to three acts, all depending on and supposing a previous impression on the senses; first, the appropriation of our attention; 2. (and in order to the continuance of the first) abstraction, or the voluntary withholding of the attention; and 3. generalization. And these are the proper functions of the understanding: and the



power of so doing, is what we mean, when we say we possess understanding, or are created with the faculty of understanding.

[It is obvious, that the third function includes the act of comparing one object with another. In a note (for, not to interrupt the argument, I avail myself of this most useful contrivance), I have shown, that the act of comparing supposes in the comparing faculty, certain inherent forms, that is, modes of reflecting not referable to the objects reflected on, but predetermined by the constitution and (as it were) mechanism of the understanding itself. And under some one or other of these forms,**

- Were it not so, how could the first comparison have been possible ^ It would, involve the absurdity of measuring a thing by itself. But if we think on some one thing, the length of our own foot, or of our hand and arm from the elbow joint, it is evident that in order to do this, we must have the conception of measure. Now these antecedent and most general conceptions are what is meant by the constituent forms of the under^ standing : we call them constituent because they are not acquired by the understanding, but are implied in its constitution. As rationally might a circle be said to acquire a centre and circumference, as the understanding to acquire these, its inherent forms, or ways of conceiving. This is what Leibnitz meant, when to the old adage of the Peripatetics, Nihil in inteUectu quod non prius in sensUf (There is nothing in the understanding not derived from the senses, or— There is nothing conceived that was not previously perceived ;) he replied— jw«/er intdUctum ipsum (except the understanding itself.)

And here let me remark for once and all : whoever would reflect to any purpose — ^whoever is in earnest in his pursuit of selfknowledge, and

the resemblances and differences must be subsumed in order to be conceivable and a *fortiori* therefore in order to be comparable. The senses do not compare, but merely furnish the materials for comparison. But this

of one of the principal means to this, an insight into the meaning of the words he uses, and the different meanings properly or improperly conveyed by one and the same word, accordingly as it is used in the schools or the market, accordingly as the *kind* or a high *degree* is intended (for example, heat, weight, and the like, as employed scientifically, compared with the same word used popularly)--whoever, I say, seriously, proposes this as his object, must so far overcome his dislike of pedantry, and his dread of being sneered at as a pedant, as not to quarrel with an uncouth word or phrase, till he is quite sure that some other and more familiar one would not only have expressed the precise meaning with equal clearness, but have been as likely to draw attention to this meaning exclusively. The ordinary language of a philosopher in conversation or popular writings, compared with the language he uses in strict reasoning, is as his watch compared with the chronometer in his observatory. He



sets the former by the town-clock, or even perhaps by the Dutch clock in his kitchen, not because he believes it right, but because his neighbours and his cook go by it. To afford the reader an opportunity for exercising the forbearance here recommended, I turn back to the phrase, "most general conceptions," and observe, that in strict and severe propriety of language I should have said *generalific* or *generific* rather than general, and concipiences or conceptive acts rather than conceptions.

It is an old complaint, that a man of genius no sooner appears, but the host of dunces are up in arms to repel the invading alien. This observation would have made more converts to its truth, I suspect, had it been worded more dispassionately and with a less contemptuous antithesis. For "dunces," let us substitute "the many," or the

"*this world*) of the Apostle, and we shall perhaps find no great difficulty in accounting for the fact. To arrive at the root, indeed, and last ground of the problem, it would be necessary to investigate the nature and effects of the sense of difference on the human mind where it is not holden in check by reason and reflection. We need not go to the savage tribes of North America, or the yet ruder natives of the Indian Isles, to learn how slight a degree of difference will, in uncultivated minds, call tip a sense of diversity, and inward perplexity and contradiction, as if the strangers were, and yet were not, of the same kind with themselves. Who has not had occasion to observe the effect which the gesticulations and nasal tones of a Frenchman produce on our own vulgar? Here we the reader will find explained in the note, and will now cast his eye back to the sentence immediately preceding this parenthesis.]

Now when a person speaking to us of any particular

may see the origin and primary import of our unkindness. It is a sense of unkind, and not the mere negation but the positive opposite of the sense of kind. Alienation, aggravated now by fear, now by contempt, and not seldom by a mixture of both, aversion, hatred, enmity, are so many successive shapes of its growth and *metamorphosis*. In application to the present case, it is sufficient to say, that Pindar's remark on sweet music holds equally true of genius: as many as are not delighted by it are disturbed, perplexed, irritated. The beholder either recognizes it as a projected form of his own being, that moves before him with a glory round its head, or recoils from it as from a spectre. But this speculation would lead me too far; I must be content with having referred to it as the ultimate ground of the fact, and pass to the more obvious and proximate causes. And as the first, I would rank the person's not understanding what yet he expects to understand, and if he had a right to do so. An original mathematical work, or any other that require! peculiar and (so to say) technical marks and symbols, will excite no uneasy feelings--not in the mind of a competent reader, for he understands it; and not with others, because they neither expect nor are expected to understand it. The second place we may assign to the misunderstanding, which is almost sure to follow in cases where the incompetent person, finding no outward marks

(diagrams, arbitrary signs, and the like) to inform him at first sight, that the subject is one which he does not pretend to understand, and to be ignorant of which does not detract from his estimation as a man of abilities generally, will attach some meaning to what he hears or reads; and as he is out of humour with the author, it will most often be such a meaning as he can quarrel with and exhibit in a ridiculous or offensive point of view.

But above all, the whole world almost of minds, as far as we regard intellectual efforts, may be divided into two classes of the busy-indolent and lazy-indolent. To both alike all thinking is painful, and all attempts to rouse them to think, whether in the re-examination of their existing convictions, or for the reception of new light, are irritating. "It may all be very deep and clever; but really one ought to be quite sure of it before one wrenches one's brain to find out what it is. I take up a book as a companion, with whom I can have an easy cheerful chit-chat on what we both know beforehand, or else matters of fact. In our leisure hours we have a right to relaxation and amusement." object or appearance refers it by means of some common character to a known class (which he does in giving it a name,) we say, that we understand him; that is, we understand his words. The name of a thing, in the

Well! but in their *studious* hours, when their bow is to be bent, when they are *apud Musas*, or amidst the Muses? Alas! it is just the same! The same craving for *amusement*, that is, to be away from the Muses! for relaxation, that is, the unbending of a bow which in fact had never been strung! There are two ways of obtaining their applause. The first is: Enable them to reconcile in one and the same occupation the love of sloth and the hatred of vacancy! Gratify indolence, and yet save them from *ennui*--in plain English, from themselves! For, spite of their antipathy to dry reading, the keeping company with themselves is, after all, the insufferable annoyance: and the true secret of their dislike to a work of thought and inquiry lies in its tendency to make them acquainted with their own permanent being. The other road to their favour is, to introduce to them their own thoughts and predilections, tricked out in the fine language, in which it would gratify their vanity to express them in their own conversation, and with which they can imagine themselves showing off: and this (as has been elsewhere remarked) is the characteristic difference between the second-rate writers of the last two or three generations, and the same class under Elizabeth and the Stuarts. In the latter we find the most far-fetched and singular thoughts in the simplest and most native language; in the former, the most obvious and common-place thoughts in the most far-fetched and motley language. But lastly, and as the *sine qua non* of their patronage, a sufficient arc must be left for the reader's mind to oscillate in--freedom of choice.

To make the shifting cloud be what you please,

save only where the attraction of curiosity determines the line of motion. The attention must not be fastened down: and this every work of genius, not simply narrative, must do before it can be justly appreciated.



In former times a popular work meant one that adapted the results of studious meditation or scientific research to the capacity of the people, presenting in the concrete, by instances and examples, what had been ascertained in the abstract and by discovery of the law. Now, on the other hand, that is a popular work which gives back to the people their own errors and prejudices, and flatters the many by creating them under the title of the public, into a supreme and inappellable tribunal of intellectual excellence.

P. S. In a continuous work the frequent insertion and length of notes original sense of the word name, (*nomen, intelligible, id quod intelligitur*) expresses that which is understood in an appearance, that which we place (or make to stand) under it, as the condition of its real existence, and in proof that it is not an accident of the senses, or affection of the individual, not a phantom or apparition, that is, an appearance which is *only* an appearance. (See Gen. ii, 19, 20, and in Psalm xx, 1, and in many other places of the Bible, the identity of *nomen* with *numen*, that is, invisible power and presence, the *nomen substantivum* of all real objects, and the ground of their reality, independently of the affections of sense in the percipient). In like manner, in a connected succession of names, as the speaker passes from one to the other, we say that we understand his *discourse* (*discursio intellectus, discursus*, his passing rapidly from one thing to another). Thus, in all instances, it is words, names, or, if images, yet images used as words or names, that are the only and exclusive subjects of understanding. In no instance do we understand a thing in itself; but only the name to which it is referred. Sometimes indeed, when several classes are recalled conjointly, we identify the words with the object---though by courtesy of idiom rather than in strict propriety of language. Thus we may say that we understand a rainbow, when recalling successively the several names for the several sorts of colours, we know that they are to be applied to one and the same *phaenomenon*, at once distinctly and simultaneously; but even in common speech we should not say this of a single colour. No one would say he

would need an apology: in a book like this, of aphorisms and detached comments none is necessary, it being understood beforehand that the sauce and the garnish are to occupy the greater part of the dish. understands red or blue. He *sees* the colour, and had seen it before in a vast number and variety of objects; and he understands the *word* red, as referring his fancy or memory to this his collective experience.

If this be so, and so it most assuredly is--if the proper functions of the understanding be that of generalizing the notices received from the senses in order to the construction of names: of referring particular notices (that is, impressions or sensations) to their proper names; and *vice versa*, names to their correspondent class or kind of notices--then it follows of necessity, that the understanding is truly and accurately defined in the words of Leighton and Kant, a faculty judging according to sense.

Now whether in defining the speculative reason (that is, the reason considered abstractedly as a intellective power) we call it "the source of necessary and universal principles, ac-

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ording to which the notices of the senses are either affirmed or denied;" or describe it as "the power by which we are enabled to draw from particular and contingent appearances universal and necessary conclusions:"** it is equally evident that the two

**Take a familiar illustration. My sight and touch convey to me a certain impression, to which my understanding applies its pre-conceptions (*conceptus antecedentes et generalissimi*) of quantity and relation, and thus refers it to the class and name of three-cornered bodies--we will suppose it the iron of a turf-spade. It compares the sides, and finds that any two measured as one are greater than the third; and according to a law of the imagination, there arises a presumption that in all other bodies of the same figure (that is, three-cornered and equilateral) the same proportion exists. After this, the senses have been directed successively to a number of three-cornered bodies of unequal sides--and in these too the same proportion has been found without exception, till at length it becomes a fact of experience, that in all triangles hitherto seen, the two sides together are greater than the third: and there will exist definitions differ in their essential characters, and consequently the subjects differ in *kind*.

The dependence of the understanding on the representations of the senses, and its consequent posteriority

no ground or analogy for anticipating an exception to a rule, generalized from so vast a number of particular instances. So far and no farther could the understanding carry us: and as far as this "the faculty, judging according to sense," conducts many of the inferior animals, if not in the same, yet in instances analogous and fully equivalent.

The reason supersedes the whole process, and on the first conception presented by the understanding in consequence of the first sight of a triangular figure, of whatever sort it might chance to be, it affirms with an assurance incapable of future increase, with a perfect certainty, that in all possible triangles any two of the inclosing lines will and must be greater than the third. In short, understanding in its highest form of experience remains commensurate with the experimental notices of the senses from which it is generalised. Reason, on the other hand, either predetermines experience, or avails itself of a past experience to supersede its necessity in all future time; and affirms truths which no sense could perceive, nor experiment verify, nor experience confirm.

Yea, this is the test and character of a truth so affirmed, that in its own proper form it is inconceivable. For to conceive is a function of the understanding, which can be exercised only on subjects subordinate thereto. And yet to the forms of the understanding all truth must be reduced, that is to be fixed as an object of reflection, and to be rendered expressible. And here we have a second test and sign of a truth so affirmed that it can come forth out of the moulds of the understanding only in the disguise of two contradictory conceptions, each of which is partially true, and the conjunction of both conceptions becomes the representative or expression (the exponent) of a truth beyond conception and inexpressible. Examples:



Before Abraham *was*, I *am*.--God is a circle, the centre of which is every where, and circumference no where. The soul is all in every part.

If this appear extravagant, it is an extravagance which no man can indeed learn from another, but which, (were this possible,) I might have learnt from Plato, Kepler, and Bacon; from Luther, Hooker, Pascal, Leibnitz, and Fenelon. But in this last paragraph I have, I see, unwittingly overstepped my purpose, according to which we were to take reason as a simply intellectual power. Yet even as such, and with all the disadvantage of a technical and arbitrary abstraction, it has been made evident:--1. that there is an intuition or immediate beholding, thereto, as contrasted with the independence and antecedency of reason, are strikingly exemplified in the Ptolemaic System (that truly wonderful product and highest boast of the faculty, judging according to the

accompanied by a conviction of the necessity and universality of the truth so beholden not derived from the senses, which intuition, when it is construed by pure sense, gives birth to the science of mathematics, and when applied to objects supersensuous or spiritual is the organ of theology and philosophy:--and 2. that there is likewise a reflective and discursive faculty, or mediate apprehension which, taken by itself and uninfluenced by the former, depends on the senses for the materials on which it is exercised, and is contained within the sphere of the senses. And this faculty it is, which in generalizing the notices of the senses constitutes sensible experience, and gives rise to maxims or rules which may become more and more general, but can never be raised into universal verities, or beget a consciousness of absolute certainty; though they may be sufficient to extinguish all doubt. (Putting revelation out of view, take our first progenitor in the 60th or 100th year of his existence. His experience would probably have freed him from all doubt, as the sun sank in the horizon, that it would re-appear the next morning. But compare this state of assurance with that which the same man would have had of the 37th proposition of Euclid, supposing him like Pythagoras to have discovered the demonstration). Now is it expedient, I ask, or conformable to the laws and purposes of language, to call two so altogether desperate subjects by one and the same name? Or, having two names in our language, should we call each of the two diverse subjects by both--that is, by either name, as caprice might dictate? If not, then as we have two words, reason and understanding (as indeed what language of cultivated man has not?)--what should prevent us from appropriating the former to the power distinctive of humanity? We need only place the derivatives from the two terms in opposition (for example, "A and B are both rational beings; but there is no comparison between them in point of intelligence," or "She always concludes rationally, though not a woman of much understanding") to see that we cannot reverse the order--*i. e.*, call the higher gift understanding, and the lower reason. What should prevent us? I asked. Alas! that which has prevented us--the cause of this confusion in the terms— is only too obvious; namely, inattention to the momentous distinction in the things, and (generally) to the duty and habit recommended in the fifth



introductory aphorism of this volume, (*see p. 2*). But the cause of this, and of all its lamentable effects and subcauses, *false doctrine, blindness of heart, and senses!*) compared with the Newtonian, as the offspring of a yet higher power, arranging, correcting, and annulling the representations of the senses according to its own inherent laws and constitutive ideas.



APHORISM IV.

In wonder all philosophy began; in wonder it ends; and admiration fills up the interspace. But the first wonder is the offspring of ignorance: the last is the parent of adoration. The first is the birth-throe of our knowledge; the last is its euthanasy and *apotheosis*.

SEQUELAE: OR THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE PRECEDING APHORISM.

As in respect of the first wonder we are all on the same level, how comes it that the philosophic mind should, in all ages, be the privilege of a few? The most obvious reason is this. The wonder takes place before the period of reflection, and (with the great mass of mankind) long before the individual is capable of directing his attention freely and consciously to the feeling, or even to its exciting causes. Surprise (the form and dress which the wonder of ignorance usually puts on) is worn away, if not precluded, by custom and familiarity. So is it with the objects of the senses, and the ways and fashions of the world around us; even as with the

contempt of the word, is best declared by the philosophic Apostle: *they did not like to retain God in their knowledge*, (Rom. i, 28), and though they could not extinguish *the light that lighteth every man*, and which *shone in the darkness*; yet because the darkness could not comprehend the light, they refused to bear witness of it and worshipped, instead, the shaping mist, which the light had drawn upward from the ground (that is, from the mere animal nature and instinct,) and which that light alone had made visible, that is, by superinducing on the animal instinct the principle of self-consciousness. beat of our own hearts, which we notice only in moments of fear and perturbation. But with regard to the concerns of our inward being, there is yet another cause that acts in concert with the power in custom to prevent a fair and equal exertion of reflective thought. The great fundamental truths and doctrines of religion, the existence and attributes of God and the life after death, are in Christian countries taught so early, under such circumstances, and in such close and vital association with whatever makes or marks reality for our infant minds, that the words ever after represent sensations, feelings, vital assurances, sense of reality--rather than thoughts, or any distinct conception. Associated, I had almost said identified, with the parental voice, look, touch, with the living warmth and pressure of the mother, on whose lap the child is first made to kneel, within whose palms its little hands are folded, and the motion of whose eyes *its eyes follow and imitate*--(yea, what the blue sky is to the mother, the mother's upraised eyes and brow are to the child, the type and symbol of an invisible heaven!)--from within and without these great first truths, these good and gracious tidings, these holy and humanizing spells, in the preconformity to which our very humanity may be said to consist, are so infused that it were but a tame and inadequate expression to say, we all take them for granted. At a later period, in youth or early manhood, most of us, indeed, (in the higher and middle classes at least) read or hear certain proofs of these truths--which we commonly listen to, when we listen at all, with much the same feelings as a popular prince on his coronation day, in the centre of a fond and rejoicing nation, may be supposed to hear the champion's

challenge to all the non-existents, that deny or dispute his rights and royalty. In fact, the order of proof is most often reversed or transposed. As far at least as I dare judge from the goings on in my own mind, when with keen delight I first read the works of Derham, Nieuwentiet, and Lyonet, I should say that the full and life-like conviction of a gracious Creator is the proof (at all events, performs the office and answers all the purpose of a proof) of the wisdom and benevolence in the construction of the creature.

Do I blame this? Do I wish it to be otherwise? God forbid! It is only one of its accidental, but too frequent, consequences, of which I complain, and against which I protest. I regret nothing that tends to make the light become the life of men, even as the life in the eternal Word is their only and single true light. But I do regret, that in after years--when by occasion of some new dispute on some old heresy, or any other accident, the attention has for the first time been distinctly attracted to the superstructure raised on these fundamental truths, or to truths of later revelation supplemental of these and not less important--all the doubts and difficulties, that cannot but arise where the understanding, *the mind of the flesh*, is made the measure of spiritual things; all the sense of strangeness and seeming contradiction in terms; all the marvel and the mystery, that belong equally to both, are first thought of and applied in objection exclusively to the latter. I would disturb no man's faith in the great articles of the (falsely so called) religion of nature. But before the man rejects, and calls on other men to reject, the revelations of the Gospel and the religion of all Christendom, I would have him place himself in the state and under all the privations of a Simonides, when in the fortieth day of his meditation the sage and philosophic poet abandoned the problem in despair. Ever and anon he seemed to have hold of the truth; but when he asked himself what he meant by it, it escaped from him, or resolved itself into meanings, that destroyed each other. I would have the sceptic, while yet a sceptic only, seriously consider whether a doctrine, of the truth of which a Socrates could obtain no other assurance than what he derived from his strong wish that it should be true; and which Plato found a mystery hard to discover, and when discovered, communicable only to the fewest of men; can, consonantly with history or common sense, be classed among the articles, the belief of which is insured to all men by their mere common sense? Whether, without gross outrage to fact, they can be said to constitute a religion of nature, or a natural theology antecedent to revelation, or superseding its necessity? Yes! in prevention (for there is little chance, I fear, of a cure) of the pugnacious dogmatism of partial reflection, I would prescribe to every man who feels a commencing alienation from the Catholic faith, and whose studios and attainments authorize him to argue on the subject at all, a patient and thoughtful perusal of the arguments and representations which Bayle supposes to have passed through the mind of Simonides. Or I should be fully satisfied if I could induce these eschewers of mystery to give a patient, manly, and impartial perusal to the single treatise of Pomponatius, *De Fato*.**

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When they have fairly and satisfactorily overthrown the objection and cleared away the difficulties urged

**The philosopher, whom the Inquisition would have burnt alive as an atheist, had not Leo X, and Cardinal Bembo decided that the work might be formidable to those semi-pagan Christians who regarded revelation as a mere make-weight to their boasted religion of nature; but contained nothing dangerous to the Catholic Church or offensive to a true believer. (He was born in 1462, and died in 1525. *Ed.*). by this sharp-witted Italian against the doctrines which they profess to retain, then let them commence their attack on those which they reject. As far as the supposed irrationality of the latter is the ground of argument, I am much deceived if, on reviewing their forces, they would not find the ranks woefully thinned by the success of their own fire in the preceding engagement--unless, indeed, by pure heat of controversy, and to storm the lines of their antagonists, they can bring to life again the arguments which they had themselves killed off in the defence of their own positions. In vain shall we seek for any other mode of meeting the broad facts of the scientific Epicurean, or the requisitions and queries of the all analysing Pyrrhonist, than by challenging the tribunal to which they appeal, as incompetent to try the question. In order to non-suit the infidel plaintiff, we must remove the cause from the faculty, that judges according to sense, and whose judgments, therefore, are valid only on objects of sense, to the superior courts of conscience and intuitive reason! *The words I speak unto you, are Spirit*, such only are life, that is, have an inward and actual power abiding in them.

But the same truth is at once shield and bow. The shaft of Atheism glances aside from it to strike and pierce the breast-plate of the heretic. Well for the latter, if, plucking the weapon from the wound, he recognizes an arrow from his own quiver, and abandons a cause that connects him with such confederates! Without further rhetoric, the sum and substance of the argument is this;— an insight into the proper functions and subaltern rank of the understanding may not, indeed, disarm the Psilanthropist of his metaphorical glosses, or of his versions fresh from the forge, with no other stamp than the private mark of the individual manufacturer; but it will deprive him of the only rational pretext for having recourse to tools so liable to abuse, and of such perilous example.

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COMMENT.

Since the preceding pages were composed, and during an interim of depression and disqualification, I heard with a delight and an interest, that I might without hyperbole call medicinal, that the contradistinction of understanding from reason,--for which during twenty years I have been contending, *casting my bread upon the waters* with a perseverance which, in the existing slate of the public taste, nothing but the deepest conviction of its importance could have inspired--has been lately adopted and sanctioned by the present distinguished Professor of Anatomy, in the course of lectures given by him at the Royal College of Surgeons, on the zoological part of natural history; and, if I am rightly informed, in one of the eloquent and impressive introductory discourses. In explaining the nature of instinct, as deduced from the actions and tendencies of animals successively presented to the observation of the comparative physiologist in the ascending scale of organic life--or rather, I should have said, in an attempt to determine that precise import of the term, which is required by the facts*--the Professor explained the nature

*The word, instinct, brings together a number of facts into one class by the assertion of a common ground, the nature of which ground it determines negatively only--that is, the word does not explain what this common ground is; but simply indicates that there is such a ground, and that it is different in kind from that in which the responsible and consciously voluntary actions of men originate. Thus, in its true and primary import, instinct stands in antithesis to reason; and the perplexity and contradictory statements into which so many meritorious naturalists, and popular writers on natural history (Priscilla Wakefield, Kirby, Spence, Huber, and even Reimarus) have fallen on this subject, arise wholly of what I have elsewhere called the adaptive power, that is, the faculty of adapting means to proximate ends. [N. B. I mean here a relative end--that which relatively to one thing is an end, though relatively to some other it is in itself a mean. It is to be regretted that we have no single word to express those ends, that are not the end: for the distinction between those and an end in the proper sense of the term is an important one.] The Professor, I say, not only explained, first, the nature of the adaptive power *in genere*, and, secondly, the distinct character of the same power as it exists specifically and exclusively in the human being, and acquires the name of understanding; but he did it in a way which gave the whole sum and substance of my convictions, of all I had so long wished, and so often, but with such imperfect success, attempted to convey, free from all semblance of paradox, and from all occasion of offence--*omnem offendiculi * ansam praecidens*. It is,

from their taking the word in opposition to understanding. I notice this, because I would not lose any opportunity of impressing on the mind of my youthful readers the important truth that language (as the embodied and articulated spirit of the race, as the growth and emanation of a people, and not the work of any individual wit or will) is often inadequate,

sometimes deficient, but never false or delusive. We have only to master the true origin and original import of any native and abiding word, to find in it, if not the solution of the facts expressed by it, yet a fingermark pointing to the road on which this solution is to be sought.* (Erasmi Epist. ad Dorpium). At all events, the paragraph passing through the medium of my own prepossessions, if any fault be found with it, the fault probably, and the blame certainly, belongs to the reporter. indeed for the fragmentary reader only that I have any scruple. In those who have had the patience to accompany me so far on the up-hill road to manly principles, I can have no reason to guard against that disposition to hasty offence from anticipation of consequences--that faithless and loveless spirit of fear which plunged Galileo into a prison**--a spirit most unworthy of an educated man, who ought to have learnt that the mistakes of scientific men have never injured Christianity, while every new truth discovered by them has either added to its evidence, or prepared the mind for its reception.



ON INSTINCT IN CONNEXION WITH THE UNDERSTANDING.

It is evident, that the definition of a *genus* or class is an adequate definition only of the lowest *species* of that *genus*: for each higher species is distinguished from the lower by some additional character, while the general

**And which (I may add) in a more enlightened age, and in a Protestant country, impelled more than one German University to anathematize Fr. Hodman's discovery of carbonic acid gas, and of its effects on animal life, as hostile to religion and tending to atheism! Three of four students at the University of Jena, in the attempt to raise a spirit for the discovery of a supposed hidden treasure, were strangled or poisoned by the fumes of the charcoal they had been burning in a close garden-house of a vineyard near Jena, while employed in their magic fumigations and charms. One only was restored to life: and from his account of the noises and spectres (in his ears and eyes) as he was losing his senses, it was taken for granted that the bad spirit had destroyed them. Frederic Hoffman admitted that it was a very bad spirit that had tempted them, the spirit of avarice and folly; and that a very noxious spirit (gas, or *Geist*) was the immediate cause of their death. But he contended that this latter spirit was the spirit of charcoal, which would have produced the same effect, had the young men been chaunting psalms instead of incantations: and acquitted the Devil of all direct concern in the business. The theological faculty took the alarm: even physicians pretended to be horror-stricken at Hoffman's audacity. The controversy and appendages embittered several years of this great and good man's life. definition includes only the characters common to all the species. Consequently it describes the lowest only. Now I distinguish a *genus* or kind of powers under the name of adaptive power, and give as its generic definition--the power of selecting and adapting means to proximate ends; and as an instance of the lowest *species* of this *genus*, I take the stomach of a caterpillar. I ask myself, under what words I can generalize the action of this organ; and I see, that it selects and adapts the appropriate means (that is, the assimilable part of the vegetable *congesta*) to the proximate end, that is, the growth or reproduction of the insect's body. This we call Vital Power, or *vita propria* of the stomach; and this being the lowest *species*, its definition is the same with the definition of the kind.

Well! from the power of the stomach, I pass to the power exerted by the whole animal. I trace it wandering from spot to spot, and plant to plant, till it finds the appropriate vegetable; and again on this chosen vegetable, I mark it seeking out and fixing on the part of the plant, bark, leaf, or petals suited to its nourishment: or (should the animal have assumed the butterfly form), to the deposition of its eggs, and the sustentation of the future *larva*. Here I see a power of selecting and adapting means to proximate ends according to circumstances: and this higher species of adaptive power we call Instinct.

Lastly, I reflect on the facts narrated and described in the preceding extracts from Huber, and see a power of selecting and adapting the proper means to the proximate ends, according to varying circumstances. And what shall we call this yet higher species? We name the former, instinct: we must call this Instinctive Intelligence.

Here then we have three powers of the same kind; life, instinct, and instinctive intelligence: the essential characters that define the *genus* existing equally in all three. But in addition to these, I find one other character common to the highest and lowest: namely, that the purposes are all manifestly predetermined by the peculiar organization of the animals; and though it may not be possible to discover any such immediate dependency in all the actions, yet the actions being determined by the purposes, the result is equivalent: and both the actions and the purposes are all in a necessitated reference to the preservation and continuance of the particular animal or the progeny. There is selection, but not choice; volition rather than will. The possible knowledge of a thing, or the desire to have that thing representable by a distinct correspondent thought, does not, in the animal, suffice to render the thing an object, or the ground of a purpose. I select and adapt the proper means to the separation of a stone from a rock, which I neither can, nor desire to use for food, shelter, or ornament: because, perhaps, I wish to measure the angles of its primary crystals, or, perhaps, for no better reason than the apparent difficulty of loosening the stone--*sit pro ratione voluntas*--and thus make a motive out of the absence of all motive, and a reason out of the arbitrary will to act without any reason.

Now what is the conclusion from these premises? Evidently this: that if I suppose the adaptive power in its highest *species* or form of instinctive intelligence, to co-exist with reason, free will, and self-consciousness, it instantly becomes Understanding: in other words, that understanding differs indeed from the noblest form of instinct, but not in itself or in its own essential proper ties, but in consequence of its co-existence with far higher powers of a diverse kind in one and the same subject. Instinct in a rational, responsible, and self-conscious animal, is Understanding.

Such I apprehend to have been the Professor's view and exposition of instinct--and in confirmation of its truth, I would merely request my readers, from the numerous well-authenticated instances on record, to recall some one of the extraordinary actions of dogs for the preservation of their masters' lives, and even for the avenging of their deaths. In these instances we have the third *species* of the adaptive power in connexion with an apparently moral end--with an end in the proper sense of the word. Here the adaptive power co-exists with a purpose apparently voluntary, and the action seems neither pre-determined by the organization of the animal, nor in any direct reference to his own preservation, nor to the continuance of his race. It is united with an imposing semblance of gratitude, fidelity, and disinterested love. We not only value the faithful brute; we attribute worth to him. This, I admit, is a problem, of which I have no solution to offer. One of the wisest of uninspired

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men has not hesitated to declare the dog a great mystery, on account of this dawning of a moral nature unaccompanied by any the least evidence of reason, in whichever of the two senses we interpret the word---whether as the practical reason, that is, the power of proposing an ultimate end, the determinability of the will by ideas; or as the sciential reason, that is, the faculty of concluding universal and necessary truths from particular and contingent appearances. But in a question respecting the possession of reason, the absence of all truth is tantamount to a proof of the contrary. It is, however, by no means equally clear to me, that the dog may not possess an *analogon* of words, which I have elsewhere shown to be the proper objects of the "faculty, judging according to sense."

But to return to my purpose: I entreat the reader to reflect on any one fact of this kind, whether occurring in his own experience, or selected from the numerous anecdotes of the dog preserved in the writings of zoologists. I will then confidently appeal to him, whether it is in his power not to consider the faculty displayed in these actions as the same in kind with the understanding however inferior in degree. Or should he even in these instances prefer calling it instinct, and this in *contradistinction* from understanding, I call on him to point out the boundary between the two, the chasm or partition-wall that divides or separates the one from the other. If he can, he will have done what none before him have been able to do, though many and eminent men have tried hard for it: and my recantation shall be among the first trophies of his success. If he cannot, I must infer that he is controlled by his dread of the consequences, by an apprehension of some injury resulting to religion or morality from this opinion; and I shall console myself with the hope, that in the sequel of this work he will find proofs of the directly contrary tendency. Not only is this view of the understanding, as differing in degree from instinct, and in kind from reason, innocent in its possible influences on the religious character, but it is an indispensable preliminary to the removal of the most formidable obstacles to an intelligent belief of the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, of the characteristic articles of the Christian Faith, with which the advocates of the truth in Christ have to contend;--the evil heart of unbelief alone excepted.

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REFLECTIONS INTRODUCTORY TO APHORISM X.

The most momentous question a man can ask is, Have I a Saviour? And yet as far as the individual querist is concerned, it is premature and to no purpose, unless another question has been previously put and answered, (alas! too generally put after the wounded conscience has already given the answer!) namely, Have I any need of a Saviour? For him who needs none, (O bitter irony of the evil Spirit, whose whispers the proud soul takes for its own thoughts, and knows not how the temper is scoffing the while!) there is none, as long as he feels no need. On the other hand, it is scarcely possible to have answered this question in the affirmative, and not ask--first, in what the necessity consists? secondly, whence it proceeded? and, thirdly, how far the answer to this second question is or is not contained in the answer to the first? I entreat the intelligent reader, who has taken me as his temporary guide on the straight, but yet, from the number of cross roads, difficult way of religious inquiry, to halt a moment, and consider the main points that, in this last division of my work, have been already offered for his reflection. I have attempted, then, to fix the proper meaning of the words, nature and spirit, the one being the *antithesis* to the other: so that the most general and negative definition of nature is, whatever is not spirit; and *vice versa* of spirit, that which is not comprehended in nature; or in the language of our elder divines, that which transcends nature. But nature is the term in which we comprehend all things that are representable in the forms of time and space, and subjected to the relations of cause and effect: and the cause of the existence of which, therefore, is to be sought for perpetually in something antecedent. The word itself expresses this in the strongest manner possible: *Natus*, that which is about to be born, that which is always *becoming*. It follows, therefore, that whatever originates its own acts, or in any sense contains in itself the cause of its own state, must be spiritual, and consequently supernatural: yet not on that account necessarily miraculous. And such must the responsible will in us be, if it be at all.

A prior step has been to remove all misconceptions from the subject; to show the reasonableness of a belief in the reality and real influence of a universal and divine spirit; the compatibility and possible communion of such a spirit with the spiritual in principle; and the analogy offered by the most undeniable truths of natural philosophy.**

These views of the spirit, and of the will as spiritual, form the ground-work of my scheme. Among the numerous corollaries or appendents, the first that presented itself respects the question;--whether there is any faculty in man by which a knowledge of spiritual truths,

**It has in its consequences proved no trifling evil to the Christian world, that Aristotle's definitions of nature are all grounded on the petty and rather rhetorical than philosophical *antithesis* of nature to art--a conception inadequate to the demands even of his philosophy. Hence in the progress of his reasoning, he confounds the *natura naturata* (that is, the sum total of the facts and phenomena of the senses) with an hypothetical *natura naturata* a

Goddess Nature, that has no better claim to a place in any sober system of natural philosophy than the *Goddess Multitudo*; yet to which Aristotle not rarely gives the name and attributes of the Supreme Being. The result was, that the idea of God thus identified with this hypothetical nature becomes itself but an *hypothesis*, or at best but a precarious inference from incommensurate premisses and on disputable principles: while in other passages, God is confounded with (and every where, in Aristotle's genuine works, included in) the universe: which most grievous error it is the great and characteristic merit of Plato to have avoided and denounced. or of any truths not abstracted from nature, is rendered possible;--and an answer is attempted in the comment on Aphorism VIII. And here I beg leave to remark, that in this comment the only novelty, and if there be merit, the only merit is--that there being two very different meanings, and two different words, I have here and in former works appropriated one meaning to one of the words, and the other to the other--instead of using the words indifferently and by hap-hazard: a confusion, the ill effects of which in this instance are so great and of such frequent occurrence in the works of our ablest philosophers and divines, that I should select it before all others in proof of Hobbes' maxim:--that it is a short downhill passage from errors in words to errors in things. The difference of the reason from the understanding, and the imperfection and limited sphere of the latter, have been asserted by many both before and since Lord Bacon;** but still the habit of using reason and understanding as synonymes acted as a disturbing force. Some it led into mysticism, others it set on explaining away a clear difference in kind into a mere superiority in degree: and it partially eclipsed the truth for all.

In close connexion with this, and therefore forming the comment on the Aphorism next following, is the subject of the legitimate exercise of the understanding, and its limitation to objects of sense; with the errors

**Take one passage among many from the Posthumous Tracts (1660) of John Smith, not the least star in that bright constellation of Cambridge men, the contemporaries of Jeremy Taylor. "While we reflect on our own idea of reason, we know that our souls are not it, but only partake of it: and that we have it and not

Neither can it be called a faculty, but far rather a light, which we enjoy, but the source of which is not in ourselves, nor rightly by any individual to be denominated *mine*." This pure intelligence he then proceeds to contrast with the discursive faculty, that is, the understanding. both of unbelief and of misbelief, which result from its extension beyond the sphere of possible experience. Wherever the forms of reasoning appropriate only to the natural world are applied to spiritual realities, it may be truly said, that the more strictly logical the reasoning is in all its parts, the more irrational it is as a whole.

To the reader thus armed and prepared, I now venture to present the so-called mysteries of Faith, that is, the peculiar tenets and especial constituents of Christianity, or religion in spirit and in truth. In right order I must here commence with the articles of the Trinity



and the Apostacy, including the question respecting the origin of Evil, and the Incarnation of the Word. And could I have followed this order, some difficulties that now press on me would have been obviated. But (as has already been explained) the limits of the present volume rendered it alike impracticable and inexpedient; for the necessity of my argument would have called forth certain hard though most true sayings, respecting the hollowness and tricky sophistry of the so-called "natural theology," "religion of nature," "light of nature," and the like, which a brief exposition could not save from innocent misconceptions, much less protect against plausible misinterpretation. And yet both reason and experience have convinced me, that in the greater number of our Alogi, who feed on the husks of Christianity, the disbelief of the Trinity, the divinity of Christ included, has its origin and support in the assumed self-evidence of this natural theology, and in their ignorance of the insurmountable, difficulties which (on the same mode of reasoning) press upon the fundamental articles of their own remnant of a creed. But arguments, which would prove the falsehood of a known truth, must themselves be false, and can prove the falsehood of no other position in *eodem genere*.

This hint I have thrown out as a spark that may perhaps fall where it will kindle. And worthily might the wisest of men make inquisition into the three momentous points here spoken of, for the purposes of speculative insight, and for the formation of enlarged and systematic views of the destination of man, and the dispensation of God, But the practical inquirer (I speak not of those who inquire for the gratification of curiosity, and still less of those who labour as students only to shine as disputants; but of one, who seeks the truth, because he feels the want of it), the practical inquirer, I say, hath already placed his foot on the rock, if he have satisfied himself that whoever needs not a Redeemer is more than human. Remove from him the difficulties and objections that oppose or perplex his belief of a crucified Saviour; convince him of the reality of sin, which is impossible without a knowledge of its true nature and inevitable consequences; and then satisfy him as to the fact historically, and as to the truth spiritually, of a redemption therefrom by Christ; do this for him, and there is little fear that he will permit either logical quirks or metaphysical puzzles to contravene the plain dictate of his common sense, that the sinless One that redeemed mankind from sin, must have been more than man; and that He who brought light and immortality into the world, could not in his own nature have been an inheritor of death and darkness. It is morally impossible that a man with these convictions should suffer the objection of incomprehensibility (and this on a subject of faith) to overbalance the manifest absurdity and contradiction in the notion of a Mediator between God and the human race, at the same infinite distance from God as the race for whom he mediates.

The origin of evil, meanwhile, is a question interesting only to the metaphysician, and in a system of moral and religious philosophy. The man of sober mind, who seeks for truths that possess a moral and practical interest, is content to be certain, first, that evil must have



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had a beginning, since otherwise it must either be God, or a co-eternal and co-equal rival of God; both impious notions, and the latter foolish to boot:--secondly, that it could not originate in God; for if so, it would be at once evil and not evil, or God would be at once God (that is, infinite goodness) and not God--both alike impossible positions. Instead therefore of troubling himself with this barren controversy, he more profitably turns his inquiries to that evil which most concerns himself, and of which he may find the origin.

The entire scheme of necessary Faith! maybe reduced to two heads;--first, the object and occasion, and secondly, the fact and effect,--of our redemption by Christ: and to this view does the order of the following Comments correspond. I have begun with Original Sin, and proceeded in the following Aphorism to the doctrine of Redemption. The Comments on the remaining Aphorisms are all subsidiary to these, or written in the hope of making the minor tenets of general belief be believed in a spirit worthy of these. They are, in short, intended to supply a febrifuge against aguish scruples and horrors, the hectic of the soul;--and "for servile and thrall-like fear, to substitute that adoptive and cheerful boldness, which our new alliance with God requires of us as Christians." (*Milton*). Not the origin of evil, not the chronology of sin, or the chronicles of the original sinner; but sin originant, underived from without, and no passive link in the adamantine chain of effects, each of which is in its turn an instrument of causation, but no one of them a cause;--not with sin inflicted, which would be a calamity;--not with sin (that



APHORISM X.

ON ORIGINAL SIN.

JEREMY TAYLOR

Is there any such thing? That is not the question. For it is a fact acknowledged on all hands almost: and

or carnal mind) becomes the sophistic principle, the wily tempter to evil by counterfeit good; the pander and advocate of the passions and appetites: ever in league with, and always first applying to, the desire, as the inferior nature in man, the woman in our humanity; and through the desire prevailing on the will (the manhood, *virtus*) against the command of the universal reason, and against the light of reason in the will itself. This essential inherence of an intelligential principle

in the will

or rather the will itself thus considered, the Greeks expressed by an appropriate word,

This but little differing from Origen's interpretation or hypothesis, is supported and confirmed by the very old tradition of the *homo androgynus*, that is, that the original man, the individual first created, was bi-sexual: a chimera, of which, and of many other mythological traditions, the most probable explanation is, that they were originally symbolical glyphs or sculptures, and afterwards translated into words, yet literally, that is into the common names of the several figures and images composing the symbol; while the symbolic meaning was left to be decyphered as before, and sacred to the initiate. As to the abstruseness and subtlety of the conceptions, this is so far from being an objection to this oldest gloss on this venerable relic of Semetic, not impossibly ante-diluvian, philosophy, that to those who have carried their researches farthest back into Greek, Egyptian, Persian, and Indian antiquity, it will seem a strong confirmation. Or, if I chose to address the Sceptic in the language of the day, I might remind him, that as alchemy went before chemistry, and astrology before astronomy, so in all countries of civilized man have metaphysics outrun common sense. Fortunately for us that they have so! For from all we know of the unmetaphysical tribes of New Holland and elsewhere, a common sense not preceded by metaphysics is no very enviable possession. O be not cheated, my youthful reader, by this shallow prate! The creed of true common sense is composed of the results of scientific meditation, observation, and experiment, as far as they are generally intelligible. It differs therefore in different countries, and in every different age of the same country. The common sense of a people is the moveable *index* of its average judgment and information. Without metaphysics even those who will not confess it in words, confess it in their complaints. For my part I cannot but confess that to be, which I feel and groan under, and by which all the world is miserable.

science could have had no language, and common sense materials.

But to return to my subject. It cannot be denied, that the Mosaic narrative thus interpreted gives a just and faithful exposition of the birth and parentage and successive moments of phenomenal sin (*peccatum phaenomenon; crimen primarium et commune*), that is, of sin

as it Reveals itself in time, and is an immediate object of consciousness. And in this sense most truly does the Apostle assert, that in Adam we all fell. The first human sinner is the adequate representative of all his successors. And with no less truth may it be said, that it is the same Adam that falls ill every man, and from the same reluctance to abandon the too dear and undivorceable Eve: and the same Eve tempted by the same serpentine and perverted understanding, which, framed originally to be the interpreter of the reason and the ministering angel of the spirit, is henceforth sentenced and bound over to the service of the animal nature, its needs and its cravings, dependent on the senses for all its materials, with the world of sense for its appointed sphere: *Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life*. I have shown elsewhere, that as the Instinct of the mere intelligence differs in degree not in kind, and circumstantially, not essentially, from the *vis vitae*, or vital power in this assimilative and digestive functions of the stomach and other organs of nutrition, even so the understanding in itself, and distinct from the reason and conscience, differs in degree only from the instinct in the animal. It is still but a *beast of the field*, though more subtle than any beast of the field, and therefore in its corruption and perversion *cursed above any*--a pregnant word! of which, if the reader wants an exposition or paraphrase, he may find one more than two thousand years old among the fragments of the poet Menander. (See Cumberland's Observer, No. CL, vol. iii, p. 289, 290). This is the understanding which in its *every thought* is to be brought *under obedience to faith*; which it can scarcely fail to be, if only it be first subjected to the reason, of which spiritual faith is even the blossoming and the fructifying process. For it is indifferent whether I say that faith is the interpenetration of the reason and the will, or that it is at once the assurance and the commencement of the approaching union between the reason and the intelligible realities, the living and substantial truths, that are even in life its most proper objects.

Adam turned his back on the sun, and dwelt in the dark and the shadow. He sinned, and brought evil into his supernatural endowments, and lost the sacrament and instrument of immortality, the tree of life in the

I have thus put the reader in possession of my own opinions respecting the narrative in *Gen. ii*, and *iii*.

Or I might ask with Augustine, Why not both! Why not at once symbol and history! Or rather how should it be otherwise! Must not of necessity the first man be a symbol of mankind in the fullest force of the word symbol, rightly defined;--a sign included in the idea which it represents;--that is, an actual part chosen to represent the whole, as a lip with a chin prominent is a symbol of man; or a lower form or species of a higher in the same kind: thus magnetism is the symbol of vegetation, and of the vegetative and reproductive power in animals; the instinct of the ant tribe or the bee is a symbol of the human understanding. And this definition of the word is of great practical importance, inasmuch as the symbolical is hereby distinguished *toto genere* from the allegoric and metaphorical. But,



perhaps, parables, allegories, and allegorical or typical applications, are incompatible with inspired Scripture! The writings of St. Paul are sufficient proof of the contrary. Yet I readily acknowledge that allegorical applications are one thing, and allegorical interpretations another: and that where there is no ground for supposing such a sense to have entered into the intent and purpose of the sacker penman, they are not to be commended. So far indeed am I from entertaining any predilection for them, or any favourable opinion of the Rabbinical commentators and traditionists, from whom the fashion was derived, that in carrying it as far as our own Church has carried it, I follow her judgment, not my own. But in the first place, I know but one other part of the Scriptures not universally held to be parabolical, which, not without the sanction of great authorities, I am disposed to regard as an apologue or parable, namely, the book of Jonah; the reasons for believing the Jewish Nation collectively to be therein impersonated seeming to me unanswerable. Secondly, as to the chapters now in question--that such interpretation is at least tolerated by our Church, I have the word of one of her most zealous champions. And lastly, it is my deliberate and conscientious conviction, that the proofs of such having been the intention of the inspired writer or compiler of the book of Genesis lie on the face of the narrative itself. centre of the garden.** He then fell under the evils of a sickly body, and a passionate and ignorant soul. His sin made him sickly, his sickness made him peevish: his sin left him ignorant, his ignorance made him foolish and unreasonable. His sin left him to his nature: and by nature, whoever was to be born at all, was to be born a child, and to do before he could understand, and to be bred under laws to which he was always bound, but which could not always be exacted; and he was to choose when he could not reason, and had passions most strong when he had his understanding most weak; and the more need he had of a curb, the less strength he had to use it! And this being the case of all the world, what was every man's evil, became all men's greater evil; and though alone it was very bad, yet when they came together it was made much worse. Like ships in a storm, every one alone hath enough to do to outride it; but when they meet, besides the evils of the storm, they find the intolerable calamity of their mutual concussion; and every ship that is ready to be oppressed with the tempest, is a worse tempest to every vessel against which it is violently dashed. So it is in mankind. Every man hath evil enough of his own, and it is hard for a man to live up to the rule of his own reason and conscience. But when he hath parents and children, friends and enemies, buyers and sellers, lawyers and clients, a family and a neighbourhood--then it is that every man dashes against another, and one relation requires what another denies; and when one speaks another will contradict him; and that which is well



** Rom. v, 14.--Who were they who *had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression*; and over whom notwithstanding, *death reigned*? spoken is sometimes innocently mistaken; and that upon a good cause produces an evil effect; and by these, and ten thousand other concurrent causes, man is made more than most miserable.



COMMENT.

The first question we should put to ourselves, when we have to read a passage that perplexes us in a work of authority, is; What does the writer mean by all this? And the second question should be, What does he intend by all this? In the passage before us, Taylor's meaning is not quite clear. A sin is an evil which has its ground or origin in the agent, and not in the compulsion of circumstances. Circumstances are compulsory from the absence of a power to resist or control them: and if this absence likewise be the effect of circumstance (that is, if it have been neither directly nor indirectly caused by the agent himself), the evil derives from the circumstances; and therefore (in the Apostle's sense of the word, sin, when he speaks of the exceeding sinfulness of sin) such evil is not sin; and the person who suffers it, or who is the compelled instrument of its infliction on others, may feel regret, but cannot feel remorse. So likewise of the word origin, original, or originant. The reader cannot too early be warned that it is not applicable, and, without abuse of language, can never be applied, to a mere link in a chain of effects, where each, indeed, stands in the relation of a cause to those that follow, but is at the same time the effect of all that precede. For in these cases a cause amounts to little more than an antecedent. At the utmost it means only a conductor of the causative influence; and the old axiom, *causa causae causa causati*, applies with a never-ending regress to each several link, up the whole chain of nature. But this is nature: and no natural thing or act can be called originant, or be truly said to have an origin** in any other. The moment we assume an origin in nature, a true beginning, an actual first--that moment we rise above nature,

**This sense of the word is implied even in its metaphorical or figurative use. Thus we may say of a river that it originates in such or such a fountain; the water of a canal is derived from such or such a river. The power which we call nature, may be thus defined: A power subject to the law of continuity *lex continui; nam in natura non datur saltus*) which law the human understanding, by a necessity arising out of its own constitution, can conceive only under the form of cause and effect. That this form or law, of cause and effect is (relatively to the world without, or to things as they subsist independently of our perceptions) only a form or mode of thinking; that it is a law inherent in the understanding itself (just as the symmetry of the miscellaneous objects seen by the kaleidoscope inheres in, or results from, the mechanism of the kaleidoscope itself)--this becomes evident as soon as we attempt to apply the preconception directly to any operation of nature. For in this case we are forced to represent the cause as being at the same instant the effect, and *vice versa* the effect as being the cause--a relation which we seek to express by the terms action and re-action; but for which the term reciprocal action or the law of reciprocity (*Wechselwirkung*) would be both more accurate and more expressive.



These are truths which can scarcely be too frequently impressed on the mind that is in earnest in the wish to reflect aright. Nature is a line in constant and continuous evolution. Its beginning is lost in the super natural: and for our understanding therefore it must appear as a continuous line without beginning or end. But where there is no discontinuity there can be no origination, and every appearance of origination in nature is but a shadow of our own casting. It is a reflection from our own will or spirit. Herein, indeed, the will consists. This is the essential character by which will is opposed to nature, as spirit, and raised above nature, as self-determining spirit--this namely, that it is a power of originating an act or state.

A young friend, or, as he was pleased to describe himself, a pupil of mine, who is beginning to learn to think, asked me to explain by an instance what is meant by "originating an act or state." My answer was--This morning I awoke with a dull pain, which I knew from experience the getting up would remove: and yet by adding to the drowsiness and by weakening or depressing the volition (*volutas sensorialis seu mechanica*) the very pain seemed to hold me back, to fix me, as it were, to and are compelled to assume a supernatural power (Gen. i, 1).

It will be an equal convenience to myself and to my readers, to let it be agreed between us, that we will

the bed. After a peevish ineffectual quarrel with this painful disinclination, I said to myself: Let me count twenty, and the moment I come to nineteen I will leap out of bed. So said, and so done. Now should you ever find yourself in the same or in a similar state, and should attend to the goings-on within you, you will learn what I mean by originating an act. At the same time you will see that it belongs exclusively to the will (*arbitrium*); that there is nothing analogous to it in outward experiences; and that I had, therefore, no way of explaining it but by referring you to an act of your own, and to the peculiar self-consciousness preceding and accompanying it. As we know what life is by being, so we know what will is by acting. That in willing (replied my young friend) we appear to ourselves to constitute an actual beginning, and that this seems unique, and without any example in our sensible experience, or in the *phaenomena* of nature, is an undeniable fact. But may it not be an illusion arising from our ignorance of the antecedent causes? You may suppose this (I rejoined):--that the soul of every man should impose a lie on itself; and that this lie, and the acting on the faith of its being the most important of all truths, and the most real of all realities, should form the main contra-distinctive character of humanity, and the only basis of that distinction between things and persons on which our whole moral and criminal law is grounded;--you may suppose this;--I cannot, as I could in the case of an arithmetical or geometrical proposition, render it impossible for you to suppose it. Whether you can reconcile such a supposition with the belief of an all-wise Creator is another question. But, taken singly, it is doubtless in your power to suppose this. Were it not, the belief of the contrary would be no subject

of a command, no part of a moral or religious duty. You would not, however, suppose it without a reason. But all the pretexts that ever have been or ever can be offered for this supposition, are built on certain notions of the understanding that have been generalized from conceptions; which conceptions, again, are themselves generalized or abstracted from objects of sense. Neither the one nor the other, therefore, have any force except in application to objects of sense, and within the sphere of sensible experience. What but absurdity can follow, if you decide on spirit by the laws of matter;--if you judge that, which if it be at all must be super-sensual, by that faculty of your mind, the very definition of which is "the faculty judging according to sense?" These then are unworthy generalize the word circumstance, so as to understand by it, as often as it occurs in this Comment, all and every thing not connected with the will, past or present, of a free agent. Even though it were the blood in the chambers of his hearty or his own inmost sensations, we will regard them as circumstantial, extrinsic, or from without.

In this sense of the word, original, and in the sense before given of sin, it is evident that the phrase, original sin, is a pleonasm, the epithet not adding to the thought, but only enforcing it. For if it be sin, it must be original; and a state or act, that has not its origin in the will; may be calamity, deformity, disease, or mischief; but a

the name of reasons: they are only pretexts. But without reason to contradict your own consciousness in defiance of your own conscience, is contrary to reason. Such and such writers, you say, have made a great sensation. If so, I am sorry for it; but the fact I take to be this. From a variety of causes the more austere sciences have fallen into discredit, and impostors have taken advantage of the general ignorance to give a sort of mysterious and terrific importance to a parcel of trashy sophistry, the authors of which would not have employed themselves more irrationally in submitting the works of Raphael or Titian to canons of Criticism deduced from the sense of smell. Nay, less so. For here the objects and the organs are only disparate: while in the other case they are absolutely diverse. I conclude this note by reminding the reader, that my first object is to make myself understood. When he is in full possession of my meaning, then let him consider whether it deserves to be received as the truth. Had it been my immediate purpose to make him believe me as well as understand me, I should have thought it necessary to warn him that a finite will does indeed originate an act, and may originate a state of being; but yet only in and for the agent himself. A finite will constitutes a true beginning; but with regard to the series of motions and changes by which the free act is manifested and made effectual, the finite will gives a beginning only by coincidence with that Absolute Will, which is at the same time Infinite Power! Such is the language of religion, and of philosophy too in the last instance. But I express the same truth in ordinary language when I say, that a finite will, or the will of a finite free-agent, acts



outwardly by confluence with the laws of nature. sin it cannot be. It is not enough that the act appears voluntary, or that it is intentional; or that it has the most hateful passions or debasing appetite for its proximate cause and accompaniment. All these may be found in a mad-house, where neither law nor humanity permit us to condemn the actor of sin. The reason of law declares the maniac not a free-agent; and the verdict follows of course--Not guilty. Now mania, as distinguished from idiocy, frenzy, delirium, hypochondria, and derangement (the last term used specifically to express a suspension or disordered state of the understanding or adaptive power), is the occultation or eclipse of reason, as the power of ultimate ends. The maniac, it is well known, is often found clever and inventive in the selection and adaptation of means to his ends; but his ends are madness. He has lost his reason. For though reason, in finite beings, is not the will--or how could the will be opposed to the reason?--yet it is the condition, the *sine qua non* of a free-will.

We will now return to the extract from Jeremy Taylor on a theme of deep interest in itself, and trebly important from its bearings. For without just and distinct views respecting the Article of Original Sin, it is impossible to understand aright any one of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. Now my first complaint is, that the eloquent Bishop, while he admits the fact as established beyond controversy by universal experience, yet leaves us wholly in the dark as to the main point, supplies us with no answer to the principal question--why he names it Original Sin. It cannot be said. We know what the Bishop means, and what matters the name? for the nature of the fact, and in what light it should be regarded by us, depends--on the nature of our answer to the question, whether Original Sin is or is not the right and proper designation. I can imagine the same *quantum* of sufferings, and yet if I had reason to regard them as symptoms of a commencing change, as pains of growth, the temporary deformity and misproportions of immaturity, or (as in the final sloughing of the caterpillar) the throes and struggles of the waxing or evolving Psyche, I should think it no Stoical flight to doubt, how far I was authorized to declare the circumstance an evil at all. Most assuredly I would not express or describe the fact as an evil having an origin in the sufferers themselves, or as sin.

Let us, however, waive this objection. Let it be supposed that the Bishop uses the word in a different and more comprehensive sense, and that by sin he understands evil of all kind connected with or resulting from actions--though I do not see how we can represent the properties even of inanimate bodies (of poisonous substances for instance) except as acts resulting from the constitution of such bodies. Or if this sense, though not unknown to the mystic divines, should be, too comprehensive and remote, I will suppose the Bishop to comprise under the term sin, the evil accompanying or consequent on human actions and purposes--though here, too, I have a right to be informed, for what reason and on what grounds sin is thus limited to human agency? And truly, I should be at no loss to assign the reason. But then this reason would instantly bring me back to my first definition; and any

other reason, than that the human agent is endowed with reason, and with a will which can place itself either in subjection or in opposition to his reason--in other words, that man is alone of all known animals a responsible creature--I neither know nor can imagine.

Thus, then; the sense which Taylor--and with him the antagonists generally of this Article as propounded by the first Reformers--attaches to the words, Original Sin, needs only be carried on into its next consequence, and it will be found to imply the sense which I have given--namely, that sin is evil having an origin. But inasmuch as it is evil, in God it cannot originate: and yet in some Spirit (that is, in some supernatural power) it must. For in nature there is no origin. Sin therefore is spiritual evil: but the spiritual in man is the will. Now when we do not refer to any particular sins, but to that state and constitution of the will, which is the ground, condition, and common cause of all sins; and when we would further express the truth, that this corrupt nature of the will must in some sense or other be considered as its own act, that the corruption must have been self-originated;--in this case and for this purpose we may, with no less propriety than force, entitle this dire spiritual evil and source of all evil, which is absolutely such, Original Sin. I have said, the corrupt nature of the will. I might add, that the admission of a nature into a spiritual essence by its own act is a corruption.

Such, I repeat, would be the inevitable conclusion, if Taylor's sense of the term were carried on into its immediate consequences. But the whole of his most eloquent Treatise makes it certain that Taylor did not carry it on: and consequently Original Sin, according to his conception, is a calamity which being common to all men must be supposed to result from their common nature;--in other words, the universal calamity of human nature.

Can we wonder, then, that a mind, a heart, like Taylor's should reject, that he should strain his faculties to explain away, the belief that this calamity, so dire in itself should appear to the All-merciful God a rightful cause and motive for inflicting on the wretched sufferers a calamity infinitely more tremendous;--nay, that it should be incompatible with Divine Justice not to punish it by everlasting torment? Or need we be surprised if he found nothing that could reconcile his mind to such a belief, in the circumstance that the acts now consequent on this calamity, and either directly or indirectly effects of the same, were, five or six thousand years ago, in the instance of a certain individual and his accomplice, anterior to the calamity, and the cause or occasion of the same;--that what in all other men is disease, in these two persons was guilt;--that what in us is hereditary, and consequently nature, in them was original, and consequently sin? Lastly, might it not be presumed, that so enlightened, and at the same time so affectionate, a divine would even fervently disclaim and reject the pretended justifications of God grounded on flimsy analogies drawn from the imperfections of human ordinances and human justice-courts--some of very doubtful character even as human institutes, and all of them just only as far as they are necessary, and rendered necessary chiefly by the weakness and wickedness, the limited powers and

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corrupt passions, of mankind? The more confidently might this be presumed of so acute and practised a logician, as Taylor, in addition to his other extraordinary gifts, is known to have been, when it is demonstrable that the most current of these justifications rests on a palpable equivocation: namely, the gross misuse of the word right.* An instance will explain my

*It may conduce to the readier comprehension of this point if I say, that the equivoque consists in confounding the almost technical sense of the noun substantive, right, (a sense must often determined by the genitive case following, as the right of property, the right of husbands to chastise their wives, and so forth) with the popular sense of the adjective, meaning. In as far as, from the known frequency of dishonest or mischievous persons, it may have been found necessary, in so far as the law justifiable in giving landowners the right of proceeding against a neighbour or fellow-citizen for even a slight trespass on that which the law has made their property:--nay, of preceeding in sundry instances criminally and even capitally. But surely, either there is no religion in the world, and nothing obligatory in the precepts of the Gospel, or there are occasions in which it would be very wrong in

right: though this likewise has, if not a double sense, yet a double application;--the first, when it is used to express the fitness of a mean to a relative end; for example, "the right way to obtain the right distance at which a "picture should be examined," and the like; and the other, when it expresses a perfect conformity and commensurateness with the immutable idea of equity, or perfect rectitude. Hence the close connection between the words righteousness and godliness, that is, godlikeness.

I should be tempted to subjoin a few words on a predominating doctrine closely connected with the present argument--the Paleyan principle of general consequences; but the inadequacy of this principle as a criterion of right and wrong, and above all its utter unfitness as a moral guide, have been elsewhere so fully stated (*Friend*, vol. ii, essay xi), that even in again referring to the subject, I must shelter myself under Seneca's rule, that what we cannot too frequently think of, we cannot too often be made to recollect. It is, however, of immediate importance to the point in discussion, that the reader should be made to see how altogether incompatible the principle of judging by general consequences is with the idea of an Eternal, Omnipresent, and Omniscient Being;--that he should be made aware of the absurdity of attributing any form of generalization to the All-perfect Mind. To generalize is a faculty and function of the human understanding, and from the imperfection and limitation of the understanding are the use and the necessity of generalizing derived. Generalization is a substitute for intuition, for the power of intuitive, that is, immediate knowledge. As a substitute, it is a gift of inestimable value to a finite intelligence, such as man in his present state is endowed with and capable of exercising; but yet a substitute only, and an imperfect one to boot. To attribute it to God is the grossest anthropomorphism: and grosser instances of anthropomorphism than are to be found in the controversial writings on original sin and



vicarious satisfaction, the records of superstition do not supply. the proprietor to exercise the right, which yet it may be highly expedient that he should possess. On this ground it is, that religion is the sustaining opposite of law.

That Taylor, therefore, should have striven fervently against the Article so interpreted and so vindicated, is (for me at least) a subject neither of surprise nor of complaint. It is the doctrine which he substitutes; it is the weakness and inconsistency betrayed in the defence of this substitute; it is the unfairness with which he blackens the established Article--for to give it, as it had been caricatured by a few Ultra-Calvinists during the fever of the (so called) Quinquarticular controversy, was in effect to blacken it--and then imposes another scheme, to which the same objections apply with even increased force, a scheme which seems to differ from the former only by adding fraud and mockery to injustice;--these are the things that excite my wonder; it is of these that I complain. For what does the Bishop's scheme amount to? God, he tells us, required of Adam a perfect obedience, and made it possible by endowing him "with perfect rectitudes and supernatural heights of grace" proportionate to the obedience which he required. As a consequence of his disobedience, Adam lost this rectitude, this perfect sanity and proportionateness of his intellectual, moral and corporeal state, powers and impulses; and as the penalty of his crime, he was deprived of all supernatural aids and graces. The death, with whatever is comprised in the Scriptural sense of the word, death, began from that moment to work in him, and this consequence he conveyed to his offspring, and through them to all his posterity, that is, to all mankind. They were born diseased in mind, body and will. For what less than disease can we call a necessity of error and a predisposition to sin and sickness? Taylor, indeed, asserts, that though perfect obedience became incomparably more difficult, it was not, however, absolutely impossible. Yet he himself admits that the contrary was universal; that of the countless millions of Adam's posterity, not a single individual ever realized, or approached to the realization of, this possibility; and (if my memory* does not deceive me) Taylor himself has elsewhere exposed--and if he has not, yet common sense will do it for him--the sophistry in asserting of a whole what may be true of the whole, but is in fact true only of each of its component parts. Any one may snap a horse-hair: therefore, any one may perform the same feat with the horse's tail. On a level floor (on the hardened sand, for instance, of a sea-beach) I chalk two parallel straight lines, with a width of eight inches. It is possible for a man, with a bandage over his eyes, to keep within the path for two or three paces: therefore, it is possible for him to walk blindfold for two or three leagues without a single deviation! And this possibility would suffice to acquit me of injustice, though I had placed man-traps within an inch of one line, and knew that there were pit-falls and deep wells beside the other! This assertion, therefore, without adverting to its discordance with, if not direct contradiction to, the tenth and thirteenth Articles of our Church, I shall not, I trust, be thought to rate

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below its true value, if I treat it as an infinitesimal possibility that may be safely dropped in the calculation: and so proceed with the argument.

*I have, since this page was written, met with several passages in the Treatise on Repentance, the Holy Living and Dying, and the Worthy Communicant, in which the Bishop asserts without scruple the impossibility of total obedience; and on the same grounds as I have given.

The consequence then of Adam's crime was, by a natural necessity, inherited by persons who could not (the Bishop affirms) in any sense have been accomplices in the crime or partakers in the guilt: and yet consistently with the divine holiness, it was not possible that the same perfect obedience should not be required of them. Now what would the idea of equity, what would the law inscribed by the Creator on the heart of man, seem to dictate in this case? Surely, that the supplementary aids, the supernatural graces correspondent to a law above nature, should be increased in proportion to the diminished strength of the agents, and the increased resistance to be overcome by them. But no! not only the consequence of Adam's act, but the penalty due to his crime, was perpetuated. His descendants were despoiled or left destitute of these aids and graces, while the obligation to perfect obedience was continued; an obligation, too, the non-fulfilment of which brought with it death and the unutterable woe that cleaves to an immortal soul for ever alienated from its Creator.

Observe that all these results of Adam's fall enter into Bishop Taylor's scheme of Original Sin equally as into that of the first Reformers. In this respect the Bishop's doctrine is the same with that laid down in the Articles and Homilies of the English Church. The only difference that has hitherto appeared, consists in the aforesaid mathematical possibility of fulfilling the whole law, which in the Bishop's scheme is affirmed to remain still in human nature, or (as it is elsewhere expressed) in the nature of the human will.* But though it were possible

*Availing himself of the equivocal sense, and (I most readily admit) the injudicious use, of the word "free" in the--even on this account--faulty phrase, "free only to sin," Taylor treats the notion of a power in to grant this existence of a power in all men, Which in no man was ever exemplified, and where the non-actualization of such power is, *a priori*, so certain, that the belief or imagination of the contrary in any individual is expressly given us by the Holy Spirit as a test, whereby it may be known that *the truth is not in him*, as an infallible sign of imposture or self-delusion!--though it were possible to grant this, which, consistently with Scripture and the principles of reasoning which we apply in all other cases, it is not possible to grant;--and though it were possible likewise to overlook the glaring sophistry of concluding in relation to a series of indeterminate length, that whoever can do any one, can therefore do all; a conclusion, the futility of which must force itself on the common-sense of every man who understands the proposition;--still the question will arise--

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the will of determining itself to evil without an equal power of determining itself to good, as a "foolery." I would this had been the only instance in his *Deus Justificatus* of that inconsiderate contempt so frequent in the polemic treatises of minor divines, who will have ideas of reason, spiritual truths that can only be spiritually discerned, translated for them into adequate conceptions of the understanding. The great articles of Corruption and Redemption are propounded to us as spiritual mysteries; and every interpretation that pretends to explain them into comprehensible notions, does by its very success furnish presumptive proof of its failure. The acuteness and logical dexterity, with which Taylor has brought out the falsehood, or semblance of falsehood, in the Calvinistic scheme, are truly admirable. Had he next concentrated his thoughts in tranquil meditation, and asked himself: what then is the truth?--if a will be at all, what must a will be?--he might, I think, have seen that a nature in a will implies already a corruption of that will; that a nature is as inconsistent with freedom as free choice with an incapacity of choosing aught but evil. And lastly, a free power in a nature to fulfil a law above nature!--I, who who love and honor this good and great man with all the reverence that can dwell "on this side idolatry," dare not retort on this assertion the charge of foolery; but I find it a paradox as startling to my reason as any of the hard sayings of the Dort divines were to his understanding.

Why, and on what principle of equity, were the unoffending sentenced to be born with so fearful a disproportion of their powers to their duties? Why were they subjected to a law, the fulfilment of which was all but impossible, yet the penalty on the failure tremendous? Admit that for those who had never enjoyed a happier lot, it was no punishment to be made to inhabit a ground which the Creator had cursed, and to have been born with a body prone to sickness, and a soul surrounded with temptation, and having the worst temptation within itself in its own temptibility! To have the duties of a spirit with the wants and appetites of an animal! Yet on such imperfect creatures, with means so scanty and impediments so numerous, to impose the same task-work that had been required of a creature with a pure and entire nature, and provided with supernatural aids--if this be not to inflict a penalty;--yet to be placed under a law, the difficulty of obeying which is infinite, and to have momentarily to struggle with this difficulty, and to live momentarily in hazard of these consequences--if this be no punishment;--words have no correspondence with thoughts, and thoughts are but shadows of each other, shadows that own no substance for their antitype!

Of such an outrage on common sense Taylor was incapable. He himself calls it a penalty; he admits that in effect it is a punishment: nor does he seek to suppress the question that so naturally arises out of this admission;--on what principle of equity were the innocent offspring of Adam punished at all? He meets it, and puts in an answer. He states the problem, and gives his solution--namely, that "God on Adam's account was so exasperated with mankind, that being angry he would still continue the punishment!"--"The case" (says the

Bishop) "is this. Jonathan and Michal were Saul's children. It came to pass, that seven of Saul's issue were to be hanged: all equally innocent, equally culpable." [Before I quote farther, I feel myself called on to remind the reader, that these last two words were added by Taylor, without the least grounds in Scripture, according to which (2 Sam. xxi) no crime was laid to their charge, no blame imputed to them. Without any pretence of culpable conduct on their part, they were arraigned as children of Saul, and sacrificed to a point of state-expedience. In recommending the quotation, therefore, the reader ought to let the sentence conclude with the words--] "all equally innocent. David took the five sons of Michal, for she had left him unhandsomely. Jonathan was his friend: and therefore he spared his son, Mephibosheth. Now here it was indifferent as to the guilt of the persons (*bear in mind, reader, that no guilt was attached to either of them!*) whether David should take the sons of Michal, or Jonathan's; but it is likely that as upon the kindness that David had to Jonathan, he spared his son; so upon the just provocation of Michal, he made that evil fall upon them, which, it may be, they should not have suffered, if their mother had been kind. Adam was to God, as Michal to David."*

This answer, this solution, proceeding too from a divine so pre-eminently gifted, and occurring (with other passages not less startling) in a vehement refutation of the received doctrine, on the express ground of its opposition to the clearest conceptions and best feelings of mankind--this it is that surprises me. It is of this that I complain. The Almighty Father exasperated with

*Vol. IX, p. 5-6. Heb. edit. those, whom the Bishop has himself in the same treatise described as "innocent and most unfortunate"--the two things best fitted to conciliate love and pity! Or though they did not remain innocent, yet those whose abandonment to a mere nature, while they were left amenable to a law above nature, he affirms to be the irresistible cause, that they one and all did sin! And this decree illustrated and justified by its analogy to one of the worst actions of an imperfect mortal! From such of my readers as will give a thoughtful perusal to these works of Taylor, I dare anticipate a concurrence with the judgment which I here transcribe from the blank space at the end of the *Deus Justificatus* in my own copy; and which, though twenty years have elapsed since it was written, I have never seen reason to recant or modify. "This most eloquent Treatise may be compared to a statue of Janus, with the one face, which we must suppose fronting the Calvinistic tenet, entire and fresh, as from the master's hand; beaming with life and force, witty scorn on the lip, and a brow at once bright and weighty with satisfying reason:--the other, looking toward the 'something to be put in its place,' maimed, featureless, and weather-bitten into an almost visionary confusion and indistinctness."

With these expositions I hasten to contrast the Scriptural article respecting original sin, or the corrupt and sinful nature of the human will, and the belief which alone is required of us, as Christians. And here the first thing to be considered, and which will at once remove

a world of error, is; that this is no tenet first introduced or imposed by Christianity, and which, should a man see reason to disclaim the authority of the Gospel, would no longer have any claim on his attention. It is no perplexity that a man may get rid of by ceasing to be a Christian, and which has no existence for a philosophic Deist. It is a fact, affirmed, indeed, in the Christian Scriptures alone with the force and frequency proportioned to its consummate importance; but a fact acknowledged in every religion that retains the least glimmering of the Patriarchal faith in a God infinite, yet personal. A fact assumed or implied as the basis of every religion, of which any relics remain of earlier date than the last and total apostasy of the Pagan world, when the faith in the great I Am, the Creator, was extinguished in the sensual Polytheism, which is inevitably the final result of Pantheism, or the worship of nature; and the only form under which the Pantheistic scheme--that, according to which the world is God, and the material universe itself the one only absolute being can exist for a people, or become the popular creed. Thus in the most ancient books of the Brahmins, the deep sense of this fact, and the doctrines grounded on obscure traditions of the promised remedy, are seen struggling, and now gleaming, now flashing, through the mist of Pantheism, and producing the incongruities and gross contradictions of the Brahmin Mythology: while in the rival sect--in that most strange *phaenomenon*, the religious Atheism of the Buddhists, with whom God is only universal matter considered abstractedly from all particular forms--the fact is placed among the delusions natural to man, which, together with other superstitions grounded on a supposed essential difference between right and wrong, the sage is to decompose and precipitate from the *menstruum* of his more refined apprehensions! Thus in denying the fact, they virtually acknowledge it.

From the remote East, turn to the mythology of the Lesser Asia, to the descendants of Javan, who dwelt in the tents of Shem, and possessed the isles. Here, again, and in the usual form of an historic solution, we find the same fact, and as characteristic of the human race, stated in that earliest and most venerable *mythus* (or symbolic parable) of Prometheus--that truly wonderful fable, in which the characters of the rebellious Spirit and of the Divine Friend of mankind

are united in the same person; and thus in the most striking manner noting the forced amalgamation of the Patriarchal tradition with the incongruous scheme of Pantheism. This and the connected tale of Io, which is but the sequel of the Prometheus, stand alone in the Greek Mythology, in which elsewhere both gods and men are mere powers and products of nature. And most noticeable it is, that soon after the promulgation and spread of the Gospel had awakened the moral sense, and had opened the eyes even of its wiser enemies to the necessity of providing some solution of this great problem of the moral world, the beautiful parable of Cupid and Psyche was brought forward as a rival Fall of Man: and the fact of a moral corruption connatural with the human race was again recognised. In the assertion of original sin the Greek Mythology rose and set.

But not only was the fact acknowledged of a law in the nature of man resisting the law of God; (and whatever is placed in active and direct oppugnancy to the good is, *ipso facto*, positive evil;) it was likewise an acknowledged mystery, and one which by the nature of the subject must ever remain such--a problem, of which any other solution than the statement of the fact itself, was demonstrably impossible. That it "is so, the least reflection will suffice to convince every man, who has previously satisfied himself that he is a responsible being. It follows necessarily from the postulate of a responsible will. Refuse to grant this, and I have not a word to say. Concede this, and you concede all. For this is the essential attribute of a will, and contained in the very idea, that whatever determines the will acquires this, power from a previous determination of the will itself. The will is ultimately self-determined, or it is no longer a will under the law of perfect freedom, but a nature under the mechanism of cause and effect. And if by an act, to which it had determined itself, it has subjected itself to the determination of nature (in the language of St. Paul, to the law of the flesh), it receives a nature into itself, and so far it becomes a nature: and this is a corruption of the will and a corrupt nature. It is also a fall of man, inasmuch as his will is the condition of his personality; the ground and condition of the attribute which constitutes him man. And the groundwork of personal being is a capacity of acknowledging the moral law (the law of the spirit, the law of freedom, the divine will) as that which should, of itself, suffice to determine the will to a free obedience of the law, the law working therein by its own exceeding lawfulness.* This, and this alone, is positive good; good in itself, and independent of all relations. Whatever resists, and, as a positive force, opposes this in the will, is therefore evil. But an evil in the will is an evil will; and as all moral evil (that is all evil that is evil without reference to its contingent physical consequences) is of the will, this evil will must have its source in the will. And thus we might go, back from act to act, from evil to evil, *ad infinitum*, without advancing a step.

*If the law worked on the will, it would be the working of an extrinsic and alien force, and, as St. Paul profoundly argues, would prove the will sinful.

We call an individual a bad man, not because an action is contrary to the law, but because it has led us to conclude from it some principle opposed to the law, some private maxim or by-law in the will contrary to the universal law of right reason in the conscience, as the ground of the action. But this evil principle again must be grounded in some other principle which has been made determinant of the will by the will's own self-determination. For if not, it must have its ground in some necessity of nature, in some instinct or propensity imposed, not acquired, another's work not our own. Consequently neither act nor principle could be imputed; but relatively to the agent, not original, not sin.

Now let the grounds on which the fact of an evil inherent in the will is affirmable in the instance of any one man, be supposed equally applicable in every instance, and concerning all men: so that the fact is asserted of the individual, not because he has committed this or

that crime, or because he has shown himself to be this or that man, but simply because he is a man. Let the evil be supposed such as to imply the impossibility of an individual's referring to any particular time at which it might be conceived to have commenced, or to any period of his existence at which it was not existing. Let it be supposed, in short, that the subject stands in no relation whatever to time, can neither be called in time nor out of time; but that all relations of time are as alien and heterogeneous in this question, as the relations and attributes of space (north or south, round or square, thick or thin) are to our affections and moral feelings. Let the reader suppose this, and he will have before him the precise import of the Scriptural doctrine of original sin; or rather of the fact acknowledged in all ages, and recognised, but not originating, in the Christian Scriptures.

In addition to this it will be well to remind the inquirer, that the steadfast conviction of the existence, personality, and moral attributes of God, is presupposed in the acceptance of the Gospel, or required as its indispensable preliminary. It is taken for granted as a point which the hearer had already decided for himself, a point finally settled and put at rest: not by the removal of all difficulties, or by any such, increase of insight as enabled him to meet every objection of the Epicurean or the Sceptic with a full and precise answer; but because he had convinced himself that it was folly as well as presumption in so imperfect a creature to expect it; and because these difficulties and doubts disappeared at the beam, when tried against the weight and convictive power of the reasons in the other scale. It is, therefore, most unfair to attack Christianity, or any article which the Church has declared a Christian doctrine, by arguments, which, if valid, are valid against all religion. Is there a disputant who scorns a mere postulate, as the basis of any argument in support of the faith; who is too high-minded to beg his ground, and will take it by a strong hand? Let him fight it out with the Atheists, or the Manichean; but not stoop to pick up their arrows, and then run away to discharge them at Christianity or the Church!

The only true way is to state the doctrine, believed as well by Saul of Tarsus, *yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the Church of Christ*, as by Paul the Apostle, *fully preaching the Gospel of Christ*. A moral evil is an evil that has its origin in a will. An evil common to all must have a ground common to all. But the actual existence of moral evil we are bound in conscience to admit; and that there is an evil common to all is a fact; and this evil must therefore have a common ground. Now this evil ground cannot originate in the Divine Will: it must therefore be referred to the will of man. And this evil ground we call original sin. It is a mystery, that is, a fact, which we see, but cannot explain; and the doctrine a truth which we apprehend, but can neither comprehend nor communicate. And such by the quality of the subject (namely, a responsible will) it must be, if it be truth at all.

A sick man, whose complaint was as obscure as his sufferings were severe and notorious, was thus addressed by a humane stranger: "My poor Friend! I find you dangerously ill, and on this account only, and having certain information of your being so, and that you have



not wherewithal to pay for a physician, I hate come to you. Respecting your disease, indeed, I can tell you nothing that you are capable of understanding, more than you know already, or can only be taught by reflection on your own experience. But I have rendered the disease no longer irremediable. I have brought the remedy with me: and I now offer you the means of immediate relief, with the assurance of gradual convalescence, and a final perfect cure; nothing more being required on your part, but your best endeavours to follow the prescriptions I shall leave with you. It is, indeed, too probable, from the nature of your disease, that you will occasionally neglect or transgress them. But even this has been calculated on in the plan of your cure, and the remedies provided, if only you are sincere and in right earnest with yourself, and have your heart in the work. Ask me not how such a disease can be conceived possible. Enough for the present that you know it to be real: and I come to cure the disease, not to explain it."

Now, what if the patient or some of his neighbors should charge this good Samaritan with having given rise to the mischievous notion of an inexplicable disease, involving the honor of the king of the country;--should inveigh against him as the author and first introducer of the notion, though of the numerous medical works composed ages before his arrival, and by physicians of the most venerable authority, it was scarcely possible to open a single volume without finding some description of the disease, or some lamentation of its malignant and epidemic character;--and, lastly, what if certain pretended friends of this good Samaritan, in their zeal to vindicate him against this absurd charge, should assert that he was a perfect stranger to this disease, and boldly deny that he had ever said or done any thing connected with it, or that implied its existence?

In this apologue or imaginary case, reader! you have the true bearings of Christianity on the fact and doctrine of original sin. The doctrine (that is, the confession of a known fact) Christianity has only in common with every religion, and with every philosophy, in which the reality of a responsible will, and the essential difference between good and evil, have been recognised. Peculiar to the Christian religion are the remedy and (for all purposes but those of a merely speculative curiosity) the solution. By the annunciation of the remedy it affords all the solution which our moral interests require; and even in that which remains, and must remain, unfathomable, the Christian finds a new motive to walk humbly with the Lord his God.

Should a professed believer ask you, whether that which is the ground of responsible action in your will could in any way be responsibly present in the will of Adam,--answer him in these words: "You, Sir! can no more demonstrate the negative, than I can conceive the affirmative. The corruption of my will may very warrantably be spoken of as a consequence of Adam's fall, even as my birth of Adam's existence; as a consequence, a link in the historic chain of instances, whereof Adam is the first. But that it is on account of Adam; or that this evil principle was, *a priori*, inserted of infused into my will by the will of another-

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-which is indeed a contradiction in terms, my will in such case being no will;— this is nowhere asserted in Scripture explicitly or by implication." It belongs to the very essence of the doctrine, that in respect of original sin every man is the adequate representative of all men. What wonder, then, that where no inward ground of preference existed, the choice should be determined by outward relations, and that the first in time should be taken as the diagram? Even in the book of Genesis the word Adam, is distinguished from a proper name by an article before it. It is *the* Adam, so as to express the *genus*, not the individual--or rather, perhaps, I should say, as well as the individual. But that the word with its equivalent, the old man, is used symbolically and universally by St. Paul, (1 Cor. xv, 22, 45, Eph. iv, 22, Col. iii, 9, Rom. vi, 6), is too evident to need any proof.

I conclude with this remark. The doctrine of original sin concerns all men. But it concerns Christians in particular no otherwise than by its connexion with the doctrine of Redemption; and with the divinity and divine humanity of the Redeemer, as a corollary or necessary inference from both mysteries. Beware of arguments against Christianity, which cannot stop there, and consequently ought not to have commenced there. Something I might have added to the clearness of the preceding views, if the limits of the work had permitted me to clear away the several delusive and fanciful assertions respecting the state* of our first parents, their wisdom, science and angelic faculties, assertions without the slightest ground in Scripture:--or, if consistently with the warns and preparatory studies of those, for whose use this volume was especially intended, I could have entered into the momentous subject of a spiritual fall or apostasy antecedent to the formation of man--a belief the Scriptural grounds of which are few and of diverse interpretation, but which has been almost universal in the Christian Church. Enough however has been given, I trust, for the reader to see and (as far as the subject is capable of being understood) to understand this long controverted article, in the sense in which alone it is binding on his faith. Supposing him therefore to know the meaning of original sin, and to have decided for himself on the fact of its actual existence, as the antecedent ground and occasion of Christianity, we may now proceed to Christianity itself, as the edifice raised on this ground, that is, to the great constituent article of the faith in Christ, as the remedy of the disease--the doctrine of Redemption.

But before I proceed to this great doctrine, let me briefly remind the young and friendly pupil, to whom I would still be supposed to address myself, that in the following Aphorisms the word science is used in its strict and narrowest sense. By a science I here mean any chain of truths which are either absolutely certain, or necessarily true for the human mind, from the laws

*For a specimen of these Rabbinical dotages, I refer not to the writings of mystics and enthusiasts, but to the shrewd and witty Dr. South, one of whose most elaborate sermons

stands prominent among the many splendid extravaganzas on this subject. and constitution of the mind itself. In neither case is our conviction derived, or capable of receiving any addition, from outward experience, or empirical *data*--that is, matters of fact given to us through the *medium* of the senses--though these *data* may have been the occasion, or may even be an indispensable condition, of our reflecting on the former, and thereby becoming conscious of the same. On the other hand, a connected series of conclusions grounded on empirical *data*, in contra-distinction from science, I beg leave (no better term occurring) in this place and for this purpose to denominate a scheme.



APHORISM XI.

In whatever age and country it is the prevailing mind and character of the nation to regard the present life as subordinate to a life to come, and to mark the present state, the world of their senses, by signs, instruments, and mementos of its connexion with a future state and a spiritual world;--where the mysteries of faith are brought within the hold of the people at large, not by being explained away in the vain hope of accommodating them to the average of their understanding, but by being made the objects of love by their combination with events and epochs of history, with national traditions, with the monuments and dedications of ancestral faith and zeal, with memorial and symbolical observances, with the realizing influences of social devotion, and, above all, by early and habitual association with acts of the will,--there religion is. There, however obscured by the hay and straw of human will-work, the foundation is safe. In that country and under the predominance of such maxims, the National Church is no mere State-institute. It is the State itself in its intensest federal union; yet at the same moment the guardian and representative of all personal individuality. For the Church is the shrine of morality: and in morality alone the citizen asserts and reclaims his personal independence, his integrity. Our outward acts are efficient, and most often possible, only by coalition. As an efficient power, the agent is but a fraction of unity; he becomes an *integer* only in the recognition and performance of the moral law. Nevertheless it is most true (and a truth which cannot with safety be overlooked) that morality, as morality, has no existence for a people. It is either absorbed and lost in the quicksands of prudential *calculus*, or it is taken up and transfigured into the duties and mysteries of religion. And no wonder: since morality (including the personal being, the I am, as its subject) is itself a mystery, and the ground and *suppositum* of all other mysteries, relatively to man.



APHORISM XII.

PALEY NOT A MORALIST.

Schemes of conduct, grounded on calculations of self interest, or on the average consequences of actions, supposed to be general, form a branch of political economy, to which let all due honor be given. Their utility is not here questioned. But however estimable within their own sphere such schemes, or any one of them in particular, may be, they do not belong to moral science, to which, both in kind and purpose, they are in all cases foreign, and, when substituted for it, hostile. Ethics, or the science of morality, does indeed in no wise exclude the consideration of action; but it contemplates the same in its originating spiritual source, without reference to space, or time, or sensible existence. Whatever springs out of *the perfect law of freedom*, which exists only by its unity with the will of God, its inherence in the Word of God, and its communion with the Spirit of God— that (according to the principles of moral science) is good--it is light and righteousness and very truth. Whatever seeks to separate itself from the divine principle, and proceeds from a false centre in the agent's particular will, is evil--a work of darkness and contradiction. It is sin and essential falsehood. Not the outward deed, constructive, destructive, or neutral,--not the deed as a possible object of the senses,--is the object of ethical science. For this is no compost, *collectorium* or inventory of single duties; nor does it seek in the multitudinous sea, in the predetermined wave, and tides and currents of nature, that freedom which is exclusively an attribute of spirit. Like all other pure sciences, whatever it enunciates, and whatever it concludes, it enunciates and concludes absolutely. Strictness is its essential character: and its first proposition is, *Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*. For as the will or spirit, the source and substance of moral good, is one and all in every part; so must it be the totality, the whole articulated series of single acts, taken as unity, that can alone, in the severity of science, be recognised as the proper counterpart and adequate representative of a good will. Is it in this or that limb, or not rather in the whole body, the entire *organismus*, that the law of life reflects itself? Much less, then, can the law of the Spirit work in fragments.



APHORISM XIII.

Wherever there exists a permanent** learned class, having authority, and possessing the respect and confidence of the country; and wherever the science of ethics is acknowledged and taught in this class, as a regular part of a learned education, to its future members generally, but as the special study and indispensable ground work of such as are intended for holy orders; there the article of original sin will be an axiom of faith in all classes. Among the learned an undisputed truth, and with the people a fact, which no man imagines it possible to deny: and the doctrine, thus inwoven in the faith of all, and coeval with the consciousness of each, will, for each and all, possess a reality, subjective indeed, yet virtually equivalent to that which we intuitively give to the objects of our senses.

With the learned this will be the case, because the article is the first--I had almost said spontaneous--product of the application of moral science to history, of which it is the interpreter. A mystery in its own right, and by the necessity and essential character of its subject--(for the win, like the life, in every act and product

**A learned order must be supposed to consist of three classes. First, those who are employed in adding to the existing sum of power and knowledge. Second, and most numerous class, those whose office it is to diffuse through the community at large the practical results of science, and that kind and degree of knowledge and cultivation, which for all is requisite or clearly useful. Third, the formers and instructors of the second--in schools, halls, and universities, or through the *medium* of the press. The second class includes not only the Parochial Clergy, and all others duly ordained to the ministerial office; but likewise all the members of the legal and medical professions, who have received a learned education under accredited and responsible teachers. (*See the Church and State, p. 45, &c., 3d edit. Ed.*) presupposes to itself a past always present, a present that evermore resolves itself into a past)--the doctrine of original sin gives to all the other mysteries of religion a common basis, a connection of dependency, an intelligibility of relation, and a total harmony, which supersede extrinsic proof. There is here that same proof from unity of purpose, that same evidence of symmetry, which in the contemplation of a human skeleton, flashed conviction on the mind of Galen, and kindled meditation into a hymn of praise.

Meanwhile the people, not goaded into doubt by the lessons and examples of their teachers and superiors; not drawn away from the fixed stars of heaven--the form and magnitude of which are the same for the naked eye of the shepherd as for the telescope of the sage--from the immediate truths, I mean, of reason and conscience, to an exercise to which they have not been trained,--of a faculty which has been imperfectly developed,--on a subject not within the sphere of the faculty, nor in any way amenable to its judgment;--the people will need no arguments to receive a doctrine confirmed by their own experience from

within and from without, and intimately blended with the most venerable traditions common to all races, and the traces of which linger in the latest twilight of civilization.

Among the revulsions consequent on the brute bewilderments of a Godless revolution, a great and active zeal for the interests of religion may be one. I dare not trust it, till I have seen what it is that gives religion this interest, till I am satisfied that it is not the interests of this world; necessary and laudable interests, perhaps, but which may, I dare believe, be secured as effectually and more suitably by the prudence of this world, and by this world's powers and motives. At all events, I find nothing in the fashion of the day to deter me from adding, that the reverse of the preceding--that where religion is valued and patronised as a supplement of law, or an aid extraordinary of police; where moral science is exploded as the mystic jargon of dark ages; where a lax system of consequences, by which every iniquity on earth may be (and how many have been!) denounced and defended with equal plausibility, is publicly and authoritatively taught as moral philosophy; where the mysteries of religion, and truths supersensual, are either cut and squared for the comprehension of the understanding, the faculty of judging according to sense, or desperately torn asunder from the reason, nay, fanatically opposed to it; lastly, where private* interpretation

*The Author of the Statesman's Manual must be the most inconsistent of men, if he can be justly suspected of a leaning to the Romish Church; or if it be necessary for him to repeat his fervent Amen to the wish and prayer of our late good old king, that "every adult in the British Empire should be able to read his Bible, and have a Bible to read!" Nevertheless, it may not be superfluous to declare, that in thus protesting against the license of private interpretation, I do not mean to condemn the exercise or deny the right of individual judgment, I condemn only the pretended right of every individual, competent and incompetent, to interpret Scripture in a sense of his own, in opposition to the judgment of the Church, without knowledge of the originals or of the languages, the history, customs, opinions, and controversies of the age and country in which they were written; and where the interpreter judges in ignorance or in contempt of uninterrupted tradition, the unanimous consent of Fathers and Councils, and the universal faith of the Church in all ages. It is not the attempt to form a judgment, which is here called in question; but the grounds, or rather the no-grounds on which the judgment is formed and relied on.

My fixed principle is: that a Christianity without a Church exercising spiritual authority is vanity and dissolution. And my belief is, that when Popery is rushing in on us like an inundation, the nation will find it to be so. I say Popery; for this too I hold for a delusion, that Romanism or Roman Catholicism is separable from Popery. Almost as readily could I suppose a circle without a centre. is every thing, and the Church nothing--there the mystery of original sin will be either rejected, or evaded, or perverted into the monstrous fiction of hereditary sin,--guilt inherited; in the mystery of Redemption metaphors will be obtruded for the reality; and in the mysterious appurtenants and symbols of Redemption (regeneration,

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grace, the Eucharist, and spiritual communion) the realities will be evaporated into metaphors.

APHORISM XIV.

LEIGHTON

As in great maps or pictures you will see the border decorated with meadows, fountains, flowers, and the like, represented in it, but in middle you have the main design I so amongst the works of God is it with the foreordained redemption of man. All his other works in the world, all the beauty of the creatures, the succession of ages, and the things that come to pass in them, are but as the border to this as the mainpiece. But as a foolish unskilful beholder, not discerning the excellency of the principal piece in such maps or pictures, gazes only on the fair border, and goes no farther--thus do the greatest part of us as to this great work of God, the redemption of our personal being, and the re-union of the human with the divine, by and through the divine humanity of the Incarnate Word.

APHORISM XV.

LUTHER

It is a hard matter, yea, an impossible thing for thy human strength, whosoever thou art (without God's assistance), at such a time when Moses setteth on thee with the Law (see Aphorism XII),--when the holy Law written in thy heart accuseth and condemneth thee, forcing thee to a comparison of thy heart therewith, and convicting thee of the incompatibleness of thy will and nature with Heaven and holiness and an immediate God--that then thou shouldst be able to be of such a mind as if no law nor sin had ever been! I say it is in a manner impossible that a human creature, when he feeleth himself assaulted with trials and temptations, and the conscience hath to do with God, and the tempted man knoweth that the root of temptation is within him, should obtain such mastery over his thoughts as then to think no otherwise than that from everlasting nothing hath been but only and alone Christ, altogether grace and deliverance!



COMMENT.

In irrational agents, namely, the brute animals, the will is hidden or absorbed in the law. The law is their nature. In the original purity of a rational agent the uncorrupted will is identical with the law. Nay, inasmuch as a will perfectly identical with the law is one with the divine will, we may say, that in the unfallen rational agent the will constitutes the law.* But it is evident that the holy and spiritual power and light, which by a *prolepsis* or anticipation we have named law, is a grace, an inward perfection, and without the commanding,

*In fewer words thus: For the brute animals, their nature is their law;--for what other third law can be imagined, in addition to the law of nature, and the law of reason? Therefore: in irrational agents the law constitutes the will. In moral and rational agents the will constitutes, or ought to constitute, the law: I speak of moral agents, unfallen. For the personal will comprehends the idea, as a reason, and it gives causative force to the idea, as a practical reason. But idea with the power of realizing the same is a law; or say:--the spirit comprehends the moral idea, by virtue of its rationality, and it gives to the idea causative power, as a will. In every sense, therefore, it constitutes the law, supplying both the elements of which it consists, namely, the idea, and the realizing power. binding and menacing character which belongs to a law, acting as a master or sovereign, distinct from, and existing, as it were, externally for, the agent who is bound to obey it. Now this is St. Paul's sense of the word, and on this he grounds his whole reasoning. And hence too arises the obscurity and apparent paradox of several texts. That the law is a law for you; that it acts on the will not in it; that it exercises an agency from without, by fear and coercion; proves the corruption of your will, and presupposes it. Sin in this sense came by the law: for it has its essence, as sin, in that counter-position of the holy principle to the will, which occasions this principle to be a law. Exactly (as in all other points) consonant with the Pauline doctrine is the assertion of John, when speaking of the re-adoption of the redeemed to be sons of God, and the consequent resumption (I had almost said re-absorption) of the law into the will

James i, 25. He says, *For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.* That by the law St. Paul meant only the ceremonial law, is a notion that could originate only in utter inattention to the whole strain and bent of the Apostle's argument.



APHORISM XVI.

LEIGHTON AND COLERIDGE

Christ's death was both voluntary and violent. There was external violence: and that was the accompaniment, or at most the occasion, of his death. But there was internal willingness, the spiritual will, the will of the Spirit, and this was the proper cause. By this Spirit he was restored from death: neither indeed *was it possible for him to be holden of it. Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit*, says St. Peter.

But he is likewise declared elsewhere to have died by that same Spirit, which here, in opposition to the violence, is said to quicken him. Thus *Heb. ix, 14. Through the Eternal Spirit he offered himself*. And even from Peter's words, and without the epithet eternal, to aid the interpretation, it is evident that *the Spirit*, here opposed to the flesh by body or animal life, is of a higher nature and power than the individual soul, which cannot of itself return to reinhabit or quicken the body.

If these points were niceties, and an over-refining in doctrine, is it to be believed that the Apostles, John, Peter, and Paul, with the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, would have laid so great stress on them? But the true life of Christians is to eye Christ in every step of his life--not only as their rule but as their strength: looking to him as their pattern both in doing and in suffering, and drawing power from him for going through both: being without him able for nothing. Take comfort, then, thou that believest! *It is he that lifts up the soul from the gates of death: and he hath said, I will raise thee up at the last day*. Thou that believest in him, believe him and take comfort. Yea, when thou art most sunk in thy sad apprehensions, and he far off to thy thinking, then is he nearest to raise and comfort thee: as sometimes it grows darkest immediately before day.



APHORISM XVII.

LEIGHTON AND COLERIDGE

Would any of you be cured of that common disease, the fear of death? Yet this is not the right name of the disease, as a mere reference to our armies and navies is sufficient to prove: nor can the fear of death, either as loss of life or pain of dying, be justly held a common disease. But would you be cured of the fear and fearful questionings connected with the approach of death? Look this way, and you shall find more than you seek. Christ, the Word that was from the beginning, and was made flesh and dwelt among men, died. And he, who dying conquered death in his own person, conquered sin, and death, which is the wages of sin, for thee. And of this thou mayest be assured, if only thou believe in him, and love him. I need not add, keep his commandments: since where faith and love are, obedience in its threefold character, as effect, reward, and criterion, follows by that moral necessity which is the highest form of freedom. The grave is thy bed of rest, and no longer the cold bed: for thy Saviour has warmed it, and made it fragrant.

If then it be health and comfort to the faithful that Christ descended into the grave, with especial confidence may we meditate on his return from thence, *quickened by the Spirit*: this being to those who are in him the certain pledge, yea, the effectual cause of that blessed resurrection, for which they themselves hope. There is that union betwixt them and their Redeemer, that they shall rise by the communication and virtue of his rising: not simply by his power--for so the wicked likewise to their grief shall be raised: but *they by his life as their life.*"



COMMENT

ON THE THREE PRECEDING APHORISMS

To the reader, who has consented to submit his mind to my temporary guidance, and who permits me to regard him as my pupil or junior fellow-student, I continue to address myself. Should he exist only in my imagination, let the bread float on the waters! If it be the Bread of Life, it will not have been utterly cast away.

Let us pause a moment and review the road we have passed over since the transit from religious morality to spiritual religion. My first attempt was to satisfy you, that there is a spiritual principle in man, and to expose the sophistry of the arguments in support of the contrary. Our next step was to clear the road of all counterfeits, by showing what is not the Spirit, what is not spiritual religion. And this was followed by an attempt to establish a difference in kind between religious truths and the deductions of speculative science; yet so as to prove, that the former are not only equally rational with the latter, but that they alone appeal to reason in the fulness and living reality of their power. This and the state of mind requisite for the formation of right convictions respecting spiritual truths, afterwards employed our attention. Having then enumerated the Articles of the Christian Faith, peculiar to Christianity, I entered on the great object of the present work: namely, the removal of all valid objections to these articles on grounds of right reason or conscience. But to render this practicable, it was necessary, first, to present each article in its true Scriptural purity, by exposure of the caricatures of misinterpreters; and this, again, could not be satisfactorily done till we were agreed respecting the faculty entitled to sit in judgment on such questions. I early foresaw that my best chance (I will not say, of giving an insight into the surpassing worth and transcendent reasonableness of the Christian scheme; but) of rendering the very question intelligible, depended on my success in determining the true nature and limits of the human understanding, and in evincing its diversity from reason. In pursuing this momentous subject, I was tempted in two or three instances into disquisitions, which if not beyond the comprehension, were yet unsuited to the taste, of the persons for whom the work was principally intended. These, however, I have separated from the running text, and compressed into notes. The reader will at worst, I hope, pass them by as a leaf or two of waste paper, willingly given by him to those for whom it may not be paper wasted. Nevertheless, I cannot conceal that the subject itself supposes, on the part of the reader, a steadiness in self-questioning, a pleasure in referring to his own inward experience for the facts asserted by the author, which can only be expected from a person who has fairly set his heart on arriving at clear and fixed conclusions in matters of faith. But where this interest is felt, nothing more than a common capacity; with the ordinary advantages of education, is required for the complete comprehension both of the argument and the result. Let but one thoughtful hour be devoted to the pages 161-182. In all that follows, the reader will find no difficulty in understanding the author's meaning, whatever he may have in adopting it. The two great moments of the Christian Religion are, Original Sin and Redemption; that the ground, this

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the superstructure of our faith. The former I have exhibited, first, according to the scheme of the Westminster Divines and the Synod of Dort; then, according to the*

*To escape the consequences of this scheme, some Arminian divines have asserted that the penalty inflicted on Adam, and continued in his posterity, was simply the loss of immortality--death as the utter extinction of personal being: immortality being regarded by them (and not, I think, without good reason) as a supernatural attribute, and its loss therefore involved in the forfeiture of supernatural graces. This theory has its golden side: and, as a private opinion, is said to have the countenance of more than one dignitary of our Church, whose general orthodoxy is beyond impeachment. For here the penalty resolves itself into the consequence, and this the natural and naturally inevitable consequence of Adam's crime. For Adam, indeed, it was a positive punishment: scheme of a contemporary Arminian divine; and lastly, in contrast with both schemes, I have placed what I firmly believe to be the Scriptural sense of this article, and vindicated its entire conformity with reason and

a punishment of his guilt, the justice of which who could have dared arraign! While for the offspring of Adam it was simply a not super-adding to their nature the privilege by which the original man was contradistinguished from the brute creation--a mere negation, of which they had no more right to complain than any other species of animals. God in this view appears only in his attribute of mercy, as averting by supernatural interposition a consequence naturally inevitable. This is the golden side of the theory. But if we approach to it from the opposite direction, it first excites a just scruple, from the countenance it seems to give to the doctrine of Materialism. The supporters of this scheme do not, I presume, contend that Adam's offspring would not have been born men, but have formed a new species of beasts! And if not, the notion of a rational and self-conscious soul, perishing utterly with the dissolution of the organized body, seems to require, nay, almost involves, the opinion that the soul is a quality or accident of the body--a mere harmony resulting from organization.

But let this pass unquestioned. Whatever else the descendants of Adam might have been without the intercession of Christ, yet (this intercession having been effectually made) they are now endowed with souls that are not extinguished together with the material body. Now unless these divines teach likewise the Romish figment of Purgatory, and to an extent in which the Church of Rome herself would denounce the doctrine as an impious heresy: unless they hold, that a punishment temporary and remedial is the worst evil that the impenitent have to apprehend in a future state; and that the spiritual death declared and foretold by Christ, *the death eternal where the worm never dies*, is neither death nor eternal, but a certain quantum of suffering in a state of faith, hope, and progressive amendment--unless they go these lengths (and the divines here intended are orthodox Churchmen, men who would not knowingly advance even a step on the road towards them)--then I feel that any advantage their theory might possess over the Calvinistic scheme in the article of Original Sin, would



be dearly purchased by increased difficulties, and an ultra-Calvinistic narrowness in the article of Redemption. I at least find it impossible, with my present human feelings, not to imagine otherwise than that even in heaven it would be a fearful thing to know, that in order to my elevation to a lot infinitely more desirable than by nature it would have been, the lot of so vast a multitude had experience. I now proceed to the other momentous article--from the necessitating occasion of the Christian dispensation to Christianity itself. For Christianity and Redemption are equivalent terms. And here my comment will be comprised in a few sentences: for I confine my views to the one object of clearing this awful mystery from those too current misrepresentations of its nature and import, that have laid it open to scruples and objections, not to such as shoot forth from an unbelieving heart--(against these a sick bed will be a more effectual antidote than all the argument in the world)--but to such scruples as have their birth-place in the reason and moral sense. Not that it is a mystery--not that *it passeth all understanding*;--if the doctrine be more than a hyperbolical phrase, it must do so;--but that it is at variance with the law revealed in the conscience, that it contradicts our moral instincts and intuitions--this is the difficulty, which alone is worthy of an answer. And what better way is there of

been rendered infinitely more calamitous; and that my felicity had been purchased by the everlasting misery of the majority of my fellow-men, who, if no redemption had been provided, after inheriting the pains and pleasures of earthly existence during the numbered hours, and the few and evil--evil yet few--days of the years of their mortal life, would have fallen asleep to wake no more,--would have sunk into the dreamless sleep of the grave, and have been as the murmur and the plaint, and the exulting swell and the sharp scream, which the unequal gust of yesterday snatched from the strings of a wind-harp.

In another place I have ventured to question the spirit and tendency of Taylor's Work on Repentance.* But I ought to have added, that to discover and keep the true medium in expounding and applying the efficacy of Christ's Cross and Passion is beyond comparison the most difficult and delicate point of practical divinity--and that which especially needs a guidance from above.

*See also Literary Remains, vol. 888, pp. 295-325. correcting the misconceptions than by laying open the source and occasion of them? What surer way of removing the scruples and prejudices, to which these misconceptions have given rise, than by propounding the mystery itself--namely the redemptive act, as the transcendent cause of salvation--in the express and definite words in which it was enunciated by the Redeemer himself?

But here, in addition to the three Aphorisms preceding, I interpose a view of redemption as appropriated by faith, coincident with Leighton's, though for the greater part expressed in my own words. This I propose as the right view. Then follow a few sentences transcribed from Field (an excellent divine of the reign of James I, of whose work on the Church,** it would be difficult to speak too highly), containing the questions to be solved, and which is

numbered as an Aphorism, rather to preserve the uniformity of appearance, than as being strictly such. Then follows the comment: as part and commencement of which the reader will consider the two paragraphs of pp. 152-153, written for this purpose, and in the foresight of the present inquiry: and I entreat him therefore to begin the comment by re-perusing these

APHORISM XVIII.

Stedfast by faith. This is absolutely necessary for resistance to the evil principle. There is no standing out without some firm ground to stand on: and this faith alone supplies. By faith in the love of Christ the power of God becomes ours. When the soul is beleaguered

**See Literary Remains, vol. iii, pp. 57-92. *Ed.* by enemies, weakness on the walls, treachery at the gates, and corruption in the citadel, then by faith she says--Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world! Thou art my strength! I look to thee for deliverance! And thus she overcomes. The pollution (*miasma*) of sin is precipitated by his blood, the power of sin is conquered by his Spirit. The Apostle says not--stedfast by your own resolutions and purposes; but--*stedfast by faith*. Nor yet stedfast in your will, but stedfast in the faith. We are not to be looking to, or brooding over ourselves, either for accusation or for confidence, or (by a deep yet too frequent self-delusion) to obtain the latter by making a merit to ourselves of the former. But we are to look to Christ and *him crucified*. The law *that is very nigh to thee, even in thy heart*: the law that condemneth and hath no promise; that stoppeth the guilty past in its swift flight, and maketh it disown its name; the law will accuse thee enough. Linger not in the justice-court listening to thy indictment. Loiter not in waiting to hear the sentence. No, anticipate the verdict. Appeal to Caesar. Haste to the king for a pardon. Struggle thitherward, though in fetters; and cry aloud, and collect the whole remaining strength of thy will in the outcry--*I believe; Lord help my unbelief!* Disclaim all right of property in thy fetters. Say that they belong to the old man, and that thou dost but carry them to the grave, to be buried with their owner! Fix thy thought on what Christ did, what Christ suffered, what Christ is--as if thou wouldst fill the hollowness of thy soul with Christ. If he emptied himself of glory to become sin for thy salvation, must not thou be emptied of thy sinful self to become righteousness in and through his agony and the effective merits of his cross? By what other means, in what other form, is it possible for thee to stand in the presence of the Holy One? With what mind wouldst thou come before God, if not with the mind of Him, in whom

** *God manifested in the flesh* is eternity in the form of time. But eternity in relation to time is as the absolute to the conditional, or the real to the apparent, and redemption must partake of both;--always perfected, for it is a *Fiat of the Eternal*;--continuous, for it is a process in relation to man; the former the alone objectively, and therefore universally, true. That redemption is an *opus perfutum*, a finished work, the claim to which is conferred in Baptism: that a Christian cannot speak or think as if his redemption by the blood, and his justification by the righteousness of Christ alone, were future or contingent events, but must both say and think I have been redeemed, I am justified; lastly, that for as many as are received into his Church by Baptism, Christ has condemned sin in the flesh, has made it dead in law, that is, no longer imputable as guilt, has destroyed the objective reality of sin:--these are

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truths which all the Reformed Churches, Swedish, Danish, Evangelical, (or Lutheran,) the Reformed, (the Calvinistic in mid-Germany, France, and Geneva, so called,) lastly, the Church of England, and the Church of Scotland--nay, the best and; most learned of divines of the Roman Catholic Church have united in upholding as most certain and necessary articles of faith, and the effectual preaching of which Luther declares to be the appropriate criterion, *stantis vel cadentis Ecclesia*. The Church is standing or falling, according as this doctrine is supported, or overlooked, or countervened. Nor has the contrary doctrine, according to which the baptized are each individually, to be called, converted, and chosen, with all the corollaries from this assumption, the watching for signs and sensible assurances, the frames, and the states, and the feelings, and the sudden conversions, the contagious fever-boils of the (most unfitly, so called) Evangelicals, and Arminian Methodists of the day, been in any age taught or countenanced by any known and accredited Christian Church, or by any body and succession of learned divines. On the other hand, it has rarely happened that the Church has not been troubled by Pharisaic and fanatical individuals, who have sought, by working on the fears and feelings of the weak and unsteady, that celebrity which they could not obtain by learning and orthodoxy; and alas! so subtle is the poison, and so malignant in its operation, that it is almost hopeless to attempt the cure of any person, once infected, more particularly when, as most often happens, the patient is a woman. Nor does Luther, in his numerous and admirable discourses on this point, conceal alone God loveth the world? With good advice, perhaps, and a little assistance, thou wouldst rather cleanse and patch up a mind of thy own, and offer it as thy admission-right, thy qualification, to Him who *charged his angels with folly!* Oh! take counsel of thy reason. It will show thee how impossible it is that even a world should merit the love of eternal wisdom and all-sufficing beatitude, otherwise than as it is contained in that all-perfect Idea, in which the supreme Spirit contemplateth itself and the plenitude of its infinity:--the Only-Begotten before all ages, *the beloved Son, in whom the Father is indeed well pleased!*

or palliate the difficulties which the carnal mind, that works under many and different disguises, throws in the way to prevent the laying firm hold of the truth. One most mischievous and very popular misbelief must be cleared away in the first instance--the presumption, I mean, that whatever is not quite simple, and what any plain body can understand at the first hearing, cannot be of necessary belief, or among the fundamental articles or essentials of Christian faith. A docile, childlike mind, a deference to the authority of the Churches, a presumption of the truth of doctrines that have been received and taught as true by the whole Church in all times; reliance on the positive declarations of the Apostles--in short, all the convictions of the truth, of a doctrine that are previous to a perfect insight into its truth, because these convictions, with the affections and dispositions accompanying them, are the very means and conditions of attaining to that insight--and study of, and quiet meditation on, them with a gradual growth of spiritual knowledge and earnest prayer for

its increase; all these, to each and all of which the young Christian is so repeatedly and fervently exhorted by St. Paul, are to be superseded, because, forsooth, truths needful for all men, must be quite simple and easy, and adapted to the capacity of all, even of the plainest and dullest understanding! What cannot be poured all at once on a man, can only be supererogatory drops from the emptied shower-bath of religious instruction! But surely, the more rational inference would be, that the faith, which is to save the whole man, must have its roots and justifying grounds in the very depths of our being. And he who can read the writings of the Apostles, John and Paul, without finding in almost every page a confirmation of this, must have looked at them, as at the sun in an eclipse, through blackened glasses.

And as the mind, so the body with which it is to be clothed; as the indweller, so the house in which it is to be the abiding-place.** There is but one wedding-garment, in which we can sit down at the marriage-feast

**St. Paul blends both forms of expression, and asserts the same doctrine, when speaking of the *celestial body* provided for the new man in the spiritual flesh and blood, (that is, the informing power and vivific life of the incarnate Word: for the blood is the life, and the flesh the power)--when speaking, I say, of this *celestial body*, as a *house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, yet brought down to us, made appropriable by faith, and ours--he adds, *for in this earthly house* (that is, this mortal life, as the inward principle or energy of our tabernacle, or outward and sensible body) *we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.* 2 Cor. v, 1-4.

The four last words of the first verse (eternal in the heavens) compared with the conclusion of v, 2, (which is from heaven) present a coincidence with *John* iii, 13, "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven." [Would not the coincidence be more apparent, if the words of John had been rendered word for word, even to a disregard of the English idiom, and with what would be servile and superstitious fidelity in the translation of a common classic! I can see no reason why the

so frequent in St. John, should not be rendered literally, no one; and there may be a reason why it should. I have some doubt, likewise respecting the omission of the definite articles

and a greater as to the

both in this place and in *John* i, 18, being adequately rendered by our *which is*. What sense some of the Greek Fathers attached to, or inferred from, St. Paul's *in the heavens*, the theological student (and to theologians is this note principally addressed) may find in Waterland's Letters to a Country Clergyman— a divine, whose judgment and strong sound sense are as unquestionable as his learning and orthodoxy. A clergyman, in full orders, who has never read the works of Bull and Waterland, has a duty yet to perform].

Let it not be objected, that, forgetful of my own professed aversion to allegorical interpretations, I have, in this note, fallen into the fond humour of the mystic divines, and allegorizers of Holy Writ. There is, believe me! a wide difference between symbolical and allegorical. If I say that the flesh and blood (*corpus noumenon*) of the Incarnate Word are power and life, I say likewise that this mysterious power and life are of Heaven: and that is the bridegroom's own gift, when he gave himself for us, that we might live in him and he in us. There is but one robe of righteousness, even the spiritual body, formed by the assimilative power of faith, for whoever eateth the flesh of the Son of Man, and drinketh his blood. Did Christ come from Heaven, did the Son of God leave the glory *which he had with his Father before the world began*, only to shew us a way to life, to teach truths, to tell us of a resurrection! Or saith he not, *I am the way--I am the truth--I am the resurrection and the life?*

verily and actually the flesh and blood, of Christ. They are the allegorizers who turn the sixth chapter of the Gospel according to St. John, *the hard saying,--who can hear it?*--after which time many of Christ's disciples, who had been eye-witnesses of his mighty miracles, who had heard the sublime morality of his Sermon on the Mount, had glorified God for the wisdom which they had heard, and had been prepared to acknowledge, *This is indeed the Christ,--*went back and walked no more with him!--the hard sayings, which even the Twelve were not yet competent to understand farther than that they were to be spiritually understood; and which the chief of the Apostles was content to receive with an implicit and anticipative faith!--they, I repeat, are the allegorizers who moralize these hard sayings, these high words of mystery, into a hyperbolic metaphor *per catachresin*, which only means a belief of the doctrine which Paul believed, an obedience to the law, respecting which Paul *was blameless*, before the voice called him on the road to Damascus! What every parent, every humane preceptor, would do when a child had misunderstood a metaphor or apologue in a literal sense, we all know. But the meek and merciful Jesus suffered many of his disciples to fall off from eternal life, when, to retain them, he had only to say,--ye simple ones! why are ye offended! My words, indeed, sound strange; but I mean no more than what you have often and often heard from me before, with delight and entire acquiescence!--*Credat Judaeus! Non ego.* It is sufficient for me to know that I have used the language of Paul and John, as it was understood and interpreted by Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Irenaeus, and (if he does not err) by the whole Christian Church then existing.

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APHORISM XIX.

FIELD

The Romanists teach that sins committed after Baptism (that is, for the immense majority of Christians having Christian parents, all their sins from the cradle to the grave) are not so remitted for Christ's sake, but that we must suffer that extremity of punishment which they deserve: and therefore either we must afflict ourselves in such sort and degree of extremity as may answer the demerit of our sins, or be punished by God, here or in the world to come, in such degree and sort that his justice may be satisfied. [As the encysted venom, or poison-bag, beneath the adder's fang, so does this doctrine lie beneath the tremendous power of the Romish Hierarchy. The demoralizing influence of this dogma, find that it curdled the very life-blood in the veins of Christendom, it was given to Luther, beyond all men since Paul, to see, feel, and promulgate. And yet in his large Treatise on Repentance, how near to the spirit of this doctrine--even to the very walls and gates of Babylon--was Jeremy Taylor driven, in recoiling from the fanatical extremes of the opposite error!] But they that are orthodox, teach that it is injustice to require the paying of one debt twice. * * * It is no less absurd to say, as the Papists do, that our satisfaction is required as a condition, without which Christ's satisfaction is not applicable unto us, than to say, Peter hath paid the debt of John, and he to whom it was due accepteth of the payment on the condition that John pay it himself also. * * * The satisfaction of Christ is communicated and applied unto us without suffering the punishment that sin deserveth, [and essentially involveth], upon the condition of our faith and repentance. [To which I would add; Without faith there is no power of repentance: without a commencing repentance no power to faith: and that it is in the power of the will either to repent or to have faith in the Gospel sense of the words, is itself a consequence of the redemption of mankind, a free gift of the Redeemer: the guilt of its rejection, the refusing to avail ourselves of the power, being all that we can consider as exclusively attributable to our own act].



COMMENT.

(CONTAINING AN APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLES LAID DOWN IN PAGES 152, 153).

Forgiveness of sin, the abolition of guilt, through the redemptive power of Christ's love, and of his perfect obedience during his voluntary assumption of humanity, is expressed, on account of the resemblance of the consequences in both cases, by the payment of a debt for another, which debt the payer had not himself incurred. Now the impropriation of this metaphor--(that is, the taking it literally)--by transferring the sameness from the consequents to the antecedents, or inferring the identity of the causes from a resemblance in the effects--this is the point on which I am at issue: and the view or scheme of redemption grounded on this confusion I believe to be altogether un-Scriptural.

Indeed, I know not in what other instance I could better exemplify the species of sophistry noticed in p. 166, as the Aristotelean

or clandestine passing over into a diverse kind. The purpose of a metaphor is to illustrate a something less known by a partial identification of it by some other thing better understood, or at least more familiar. Now the article of Redemption may be considered in a twofold relation-- in relation to the antecedent, that is, the Redeemer's act, as the efficient cause and condition of redemption; and in relation to the consequent, that is, the effects in and for the redeemed. Now it is the latter relation, in which the subject is treated of, set forth, expanded, and enforced by St. Paul. The mysterious act, the operative cause, is transcendent. *Factum est*: and beyond the information contained in the enunciation of the fact, it can be characterised only by the consequences. It is the consequences of the act of Redemption, which the zealous Apostle would bring home to the minds and affections both of Jews and Gentiles. Now the Apostle's opponents and gainsayers were principally of the former class. They were Jews: not only Jews unconverted, but such as had partially received the Gospel, and who, sheltering their national prejudices under the pretended authority of Christ's original Apostles and the Church in Jerusalem, set themselves up against Paul as followers of Cephas. Add too, that Paul himself was a *Hebrew of the Hebrews*; intimately versed in the *Jews' religion above many his equals in his own nation, and above measure zealous of the traditions of his fathers*. It might, therefore, have been anticipated, that his reasoning would receive its outward forms and language, that it would take its predominant colors, from his own past, and his opponents' present, habits of thinking; and that his figures, images, analogies, and references would be taken preferably from objects, opinions, events, and ritual observances ever uppermost in the imaginations of his own countrymen. And such we find them;--yet so judiciously selected, that the prominent forms, the figures of most frequent recurrence, are drawn from points of belief and practice, forms, laws, rites and customs,



which then prevailed through the whole Roman world, and were common to Jew and Gentile.

Now it would be difficult if not impossible to select points better suited to this purpose, as being equally familiar to all, and yet having a special interest for the Jewish converts, than those are from which the learned Apostle has drawn the four principal metaphors, by which he illustrates the blessed consequences of Christ's redemption of mankind. These are: 1. Sin offerings, sacrificial expiation. 2. Reconciliation, atonement, 3. Ransom from slavery, redemption, the

* This word occurs but once in the New Testament, *Rom.* v, 11, the marginal rendering being *reconciliation*. The personal noun,

is still in use with the modern Greeks for a money-changer, or one who takes the debased currency, so general in countries under a despotic or other dishonest government, in exchange for sterling coin or bullion; the purchaser paying the *catallage*, that is, the difference. In the elder Greek writers, the verb means to exchange for an opposite,

He exchanged within himself enmity for friendship, (that is, he reconciled himself with his party;— or, as we say, made it up with them, an idiom which (with whatever loss of dignity) gives the exact force of the word. He made up the difference. The Hebrew word, of very frequent occurrence in the Pentateuch, which we render by the substantive atonement, has its radical or visual image in *copher*, pitch. *Gen.* vi, 14. *Thou shalt pitch it within and without with pitch;*--hence to unite, to fill up a breach or leak, the word expressing both the act, namely, the bringing together what had been previously separated, and the means, or material, by which the re-union is effected, as in our English verbs, to caulk, to solder, to *poy* or pay (from *poix*, pitch,) and the French, *suiver*. Thence, metaphorically, expiation, the *piacula* having the same root, and being grounded on another property or use of gums and resins, the supposed cleansing powers of their fumigation. *Numb.* viii, 21: *made atonment for the Levites to cleanse them*. Lastly (or if we are to believe the Hebrew Lexicons, properly and most frequently) it means ransom. But if by proper, the interpreter means primary and radical, the assertion does not need a confutation: all radicals belonging to one or other of three classes. 1. Interjections, or sounds expressing sensations or passions. 2. Imitations of sounds, as splash, roar, whiz, &c. 3. And principally, visual buying back again, or being bought back. 4. Satisfaction of a creditor's claims by a payment of the debt. To one or other of these four heads all the numerous forms and exponents of Christ's mediation in St. Paul's writings may be referred. And the very number and variety of the words or *periphrases* used by him to express one and the same thing, furnish the strongest presumptive proof that all alike were used metaphorically. [In the following notation, let the small letters represent the effects or consequences, and the capitals the efficient causes or antecedents. Whether by causes we mean acts or agents, is indifferent. Now let X signify a transcendant, that is, a cause beyond our comprehension, and not within the sphere of sensible experience; and on

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the other hand, let A, B, C, and D represent each some one known and familiar cause, in reference to some single and characteristic effect: namely, A in reference to k, B to l, C to m, and D to n. Then I say X + k l m n is in different places expressed by A+k; B+l; C+m; D+n. And these I should call metaphorical exponents of X].

Now John, the beloved disciple, who leaned on the Lord's bosom, the Evangelist that is, according to the spirit, the inner and substantial truth of the Christian Creed-- John, recording the Redeemer's own words, enunciates the fact itself, to the full extent in which it is enunciable for the human mind, simply and without any metaphor, by identifying it in kind with

images, objects of sight. But as to frequency, all the numerous (fifty, I believe,) instances of the word in the Old Testament, I have not found one in which it can, or at least need, be rendered by ransom though beyond all doubt ransom is used in the Epistle to Timothy, as an equivalent term. a fact of hourly occurrence--expressing it, I say, by a familiar fact the same in kind with that intended, though of a far lower dignity;--by a fact of every man's experience, known to all, yet not better understood than the fact described by it. In the redeemed it is a regeneration, a birth, a spiritual seed impregnated and evolved, the germinal principle of a higher and enduring life, of a spiritual life--that is, a life the actuality of which is not dependent on the material body, or limited by the circumstances and processes indispensable to its organization and subsistence. Briefly, it is the differential of immortality, of which the assimilative power of faith and love is the integrant, and the life in Christ the integration.

But even this would be an imperfect statement, if we omitted the awful truth, that besides that dissolution of our earthly tabernacle which we call death, there is another death, not the mere negation of life, but its positive opposite. And as there is a mystery of life, and an assimilation to the principle of life, even to him who is the Life; so is there a mystery of death, and an assimilation to the principle of evil; a fructifying of the corrupt seed, of which death is the germination. Thus the regeneration to spiritual life is at the same time a redemption from the spiritual death.

Respecting the redemptive act itself, and the divine agent, we know from revelation that *he was made a quickening*

life-making) *Spirit*: and that in order to this it was necessary that God should be *manifested in the flesh*; that the Eternal Word, through whom and by whom the world

the order, beauty, and sustaining law of visible natures) was and is, should be made flesh, assume our humanity personally, fulfil all righteousness, and so suffer and so die for us, as in dying to conquer death for as many as should receive him. More than this, the mode, the possibility, we are not competent to know. It is, as hath been already observed concerning the primal act of apostasy, a mystery by the necessity of the subject--a mystery, which at all events it will be time enough for us to seek and expect to understand, when we



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understand the mystery of our natural life, and its conjunction with mind and will and personal identity. Even the truths that are given to us to know, we can know only through faith in the spirit. They are spiritual things which must be spiritually discerned. Such, however, being the means and the effects of our redemption, well might the fervent Apostle associate it with whatever was eminently dear and precious to erring and afflicted mortals, and (where no expression could be commensurate, no single title be other than imperfect) seek from similitude of effect to describe the superlative boon, by successively transferring to it, as by a superior claim, the name of each several act and ordinance, habitually connected in the minds of all his hearers with feelings of joy, confidence, and gratitude.

Do you rejoice when the atonement made by the priest has removed the civil stain from your name, restored you to your privileges as a son of Abraham, and replaced you in the respect of your brethren?--Here is an atonement which takes away a deeper and worse stain, an eating canker-spot in the very heart of your personal being. This, to as many as receive it, gives the privilege to become sons of God (John i, 12); this will admit you to the society of angels, and insure to you the rights of brotherhood with spirits made perfect. (Heb. xii, 22). Here is a sacrifice, a sin-offering for the whole world: and a High Priest, who is indeed a Mediator; who, not in type or shadow, but in very truth, and in his own right, stands in the place of Man to God, and of God to Man; and who receives as a Judge what he offered as an Advocate.

Would you be grateful to one who had ransomed you from slavery under a bitter foe, or who brought you out of captivity? Here is redemption from a far direr slavery, the slavery of sin unto death; and he who gave himself for the ransom, has taken captivity captive.

Had you by your own fault alienated yourself from your best, your only sure friend;--had you, like a prodigal, cast yourself out of your Father's house;--would you not love the good Samaritan, who should reconcile you to your friend? Would you not prize above all price the intercession, which had brought you back from husks, and the tending of swine, and restored you to your father's arms, and seated you at your father's table?

Had you involved yourself in a heavy debt for certain gewgaws, for high-seasoned meats, and intoxicating drinks, and glistening apparel, and in default of payment had made yourself over as a bondsman to a hard creditor, who, it was foreknown, would enforce the bond of judgment to the last tittle;--with what emotions would you not receive the glad tidings that a stranger, or a friend whom in the days of your wantonness you had neglected and reviled, had paid the debt for you, had made satisfaction to your creditor? But you have incurred a debt of death to the evil nature; you have sold yourself over to sin; and, relatively to you, and to all your means and resources, the seal on the bond is the seal of necessity. Its stamp is the nature of evil. But the stranger has appeared, the forgiving friend has come, even the



Son of God from heaven: and to as many as have faith in his name, I say--the debt is paid for you;--the satisfaction has been made.

Now, to simplify the argument, and at the same time to bring the question to the test, we will confine our attention to the figure last mentioned, namely, the satisfaction of a debt. Passing by our modern *Alogi*, who find nothing but metaphors in either Apostle, let us suppose for a moment, with certain divines, that our Lord's words, recorded by John, and which in all places repeat and assert the same analogy, are to be regarded as metaphorical; and that it is the varied expressions of St. Paul that are to be literally interpreted: for example, that sin is, or involves, an infinite debt, (in the proper and law-court sense of the word, debt)--a debt owing by us to the vindictive justice of God the Father, which can only be liquidated by the everlasting misery of Adam and all his posterity, or by a sum of suffering equal to this. Likewise, that God the Father, by his absolute decree, or (as some, divines teach) through the necessity of his unchangeable justice, had determined to exact the full sum; which must, therefore, be paid either by ourselves or by some other in our name and behalf. But besides the debt which all mankind contracted in and through Adam, as a *homo publicus*, even as a nation is bound by the acts of its head or its plenipotentiary, every man (say these divines) is an insolvent debtor on his own score. In this fearful predicament the Son of God took compassion on mankind, and resolved to pay the debt for us, and to satisfy the divine justice by a perfect equivalent. Accordingly, by a strange yet strict consequence, it has been holden by more than one of these divines, that the agonies suffered by Christ were equal in amount to the sum total of the torments of all mankind here and hereafter, or to the infinite debt, which in an endless succession of instalments we should have been paying to the divine justice, had it not been paid in full by the Son of God incarnate!

It is easy to say--"O but I do not hold this, or we do not make this an article of our belief!" The true question is: "Do you take any part of it; and can you reject the rest without being inconsequent?" Are debt, satisfaction, payment in full, creditor's rights, and the like, *nomina propria*, by which the very nature of Redemption and its occasion is expressed;--or are they, with several others, figures of speech for the purpose of illustrating the nature and extent of the consequences and effects of the redemptive act, and to excite in the receivers a due sense of the magnitude and manifold operation of the boon, and of the love and gratitude due to the Redeemer? If still you reply, the former: then, as your whole theory is grounded on a notion of justice, I ask you--Is this justice a moral attribute? But morality commences with, and begins in, the sacred distinction between thing and person. On this distinction all law, human and divine, is grounded; consequently, the law of justice. If you attach any meaning to the term justice, as applied, to God, it must be the same to which you refer when you affirm or deny it of any other personal agent--save only, that in its attribution to God, you speak of it as unmixed and perfect. For if not, what do you mean? And why do you call it by the same name? I may, therefore, with all right and reason, put the case as

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between man and man. For should it be found irreconcilable with the justice which the light of reason, made law in the conscience, dictates to man, how much more must it be incongruous with the all-perfect justice of God! Whatever case I should imagine would be felt by the reader as below the dignity of the subject, and in some measure jarring with his feelings; and in other respects the more familiar the case, the better suited to the present purpose.

A sum of £1000 is owing from James to Peter, for which James has given a bond. He is insolvent, and the bond is on the point of being put in suit against him, to James' utter ruin. At this moment Matthew steps in, pays Peter the thousand pounds, and discharges the bond. In this case, no man would hesitate to admit, that a complete satisfaction had been made to Peter. Matthew's £1000 is a perfect equivalent for the sum which James was bound to have paid, and which Peter had lent. It is the same thing: and this is altogether a question of things. Now instead James' being indebted to Peter for a sum of money, which (he having become insolvent) Matthew pays for him, let me put the case, that James had been guilty of the basest and most hardhearted ingratitude to a most worthy and affectionate mother, who had not only performed all the duties and tender offices of a mother, but whose whole heart was bound up in this her only child--who had foregone all the pleasures and amusements of life in watching over his sickly childhood, had sacrificed her health and the far greater part of her resources to rescue him from the consequences of his follies and excesses during his youth and early manhood; and to procure for him the means of his present rank and affluence--all which he had repaid by neglect, desertion, and open profligacy. Here the mother, stands in the relation of the creditor: and here too, I will suppose the same generous friend to interfere, and to perform with the greatest tenderness and constancy all those duties of a grateful and affectionate son, which James ought to have performed. Will this satisfy the mother's claims on James, or entitle him to her esteem, approbation, and blessing? Or what if Matthew, the vicarious son, should at length address her in words to this purpose: "Now, I trust, you are appeased, and will be henceforward reconciled to James, I have satisfied all your claims on him. I have paid his debt in full: and you are too just to require the same debt to be paid twice over. You will therefore regard him with the same complacency, and receive him into your presence, with the same love, as if there had been no difference between him and you. For I have made it up." What other reply could the swelling heart of the mother dictate than this: "O misery! and is it possible that you are in league with my unnatural child to insult me? Must not the very necessity of your abandonment of your proper sphere, form an additional evidence of his guilt? Must not the sense of your goodness teach me more fully to comprehend, more vividly to feel, the evil in him? Must not the contrast of your merits magnify his demerit in his mother's eye, and at once recall and embitter the conviction of the canker worm in his soul?"

If indeed by the force of Matthew's example, by persuasion, or by additional and more mysterious influences, or by an inward co-agency, compatible with the existence of a per-

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sonal will, James should be led to repent; if through admiration and love of this great goodness gradually assimilating his mind to the mind of his benefactor, he should in his own person become a grateful and dutiful child--then doubtless the mother would be wholly satisfied! But then the case is no longer a question of things, or a matter of debt payable by another. Nevertheless, the effect,--and the reader will remember, that it is the effects and consequences of Christ's mediation, on which St. Paul is dilating--the effect to James is similar in both cases, that is, in the case of James, the debtor, and of James, the undutiful son. In both cases, James is liberated from a grievous burthen: and in both cases, he has to attribute his liberation to the act and free grace of another. The only difference is, that in the former case (namely, the payment of the debt) the beneficial act is, singly and without requiring any re-action or co-agency on the part of James, the efficient cause of his liberation; while in the latter case (namely, that of Redemption) the beneficial act is the first, the indispensable condition, and then, the co-efficient.

The professional student of theology will, perhaps, understand the different positions asserted in the preceding argument more readily if they are presented synoptically, that is, brought at once within his view, in the form of answers to four questions, comprising the constituent parts of the Scriptural doctrine of Redemption. And I trust that my lay readers of both sexes will not allow themselves to be scared from the perusal of the following short catechism, by half a dozen Latin words, or rather words with Latin endings, that translate themselves into English, when I dare assure them, that they will encounter no other obstacle to their full and easy comprehension of the contents.

Synopsis of the constituent points in the doctrine of Redemption, in four questions, with correspondent answers.

Questions.

Who (or What) is the

- 1 *Agens causator?*
- 2 *Actus causativus?*
- 3 *Effectum causatum?*
- 4 *Consequentia ab effecto?*

Answers.

I. The agent and personal cause of the Redemption of mankind is--the co-eternal Word and only begotten Son of the Living God, incarnate, tempted, agonizing crucified, submitting to death, resurgent, communicant of his Spirit, ascendent, and obtaining for his Church the descent and communion of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

II. The causative act is--a spiritual and transcendent mystery, *that passeth all understanding*.

III. The effect caused is--the being born anew: as before in the flesh to the world, so now born in the spirit to Christ.

IV. The consequences from the effect are--sanctification from sin, and liberation from the inherent and penal consequences of sin in the world to come, with all the means and processes of sanctification by the Word and the Spirit: these consequents being the same for the sinner relatively to God and his own soul, as the satisfaction of a debt for a debtor relatively to his creditor; as the sacrificial atonement made by the priest for the transgressor of the Mosaic Law; as the reconciliation to an alienated parent for a son who had estranged himself from his father's house and presence; and as a redemptive ransom for a slave or captive.

Now I complain, that this metaphorical naming of the transcendent causative act through the medium of its proper effects from actions and causes of familiar occurrence connected with the former by similarity of result, has been mistaken for an intended designation of the essential character of the causative act itself; and that thus divines have interpreted *de omni* what was spoken *de singulo*, and magnified a partial equation into a total identity.

I will merely hint to my more learned readers, and to the professional students of theology, that the origin of this error is to be sought for in the discussions of the Greek Fathers, and (at a later period) of the Schoolmen on the obscure and abysmal subject of the divine A-seity and the distinction between the

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that is, the Absolute Will, as the universal ground of all being, and the election and purpose of God in the Personal Idea, as the Father. And this view would have allowed me to express what I believe to be the true import and Scriptural idea of Redemption in terms much more nearly resembling those used ordinarily by the Calvinistic divines, and with a conciliative show of coincidence. But this motive was outweighed by the reflection, that I could not rationally have expected to be understood by those, to whom I most wish to be intelligible: *et si non vis intelligi, cur vis legi?*

Not to countervene the purpose of a *Synopsis*, I have detached the confirmative or explanatory remarks from the answers to questions II. and III., and place them below as *scholia*. A single glance of the eye will enable the reader to re-connect each sentence it is supposed to follow.



SCHOLIUM TO ANSWER II.

Nevertheless, the factor actual truth having been assured to us by revelation, it is not impossible, by stedfast meditation on the idea and supernatural character of a personal will, for a mind spiritually disciplined to satisfy itself, that the redemptive act supposes (and that our redemption is even negatively conceivable only on the supposition of) an agent who can at once act on the will as an exciting cause, *quasi ab extra*; and in the will, as the condition of its potential, and the ground of its actual, being.



SCHOLIUM TO ANSWER III.

Where two subjects, that stand to each other in the relation of antithesis or contradistinction, are connected by a middle term common to both, the sense of this middle term is indifferently determinable by either; the preferability of the one or the other in any given case being decided by the circumstance of our more frequent experience of, or greater familiarity with, the term in this connexion. Thus, if I put hydrogen and oxygen gas, as opposite poles, the term gas is common to both; and it is a matter of indifference by which of the two bodies I ascertain the sense of the term. But if, for the conjoint purposes of connexion and contrast, I oppose transparent crystallized alumen to opaque derb or uncrystallized alumen;-it may easily happen to be far more convenient for me to shew the sense of the middle term, that is, alumen, by a piece of pipe-clay than by a sapphire or ruby; especially if I should be describing the beauty and preciousness of the latter to a peasant woman, or in a district where a ruby was a rarity which the fewest only had an opportunity of seeing. This is a plain rule of common logic directed in its application by common sense.

Now let us apply this to the case in hand. The two opposites here are flesh and spirit: this in relation to Christ, that in relation to the world; and these two opposites are connected by the middle term, birth, which is of course common to both. But for the same reason, as in the instance last mentioned, the interpretation of the common term is to be ascertained from its known sense, in the more familiar connexion--birth, namely, in relation to our natural life and to the organized body, by which we belong to the present world. Whatever the word signifies in this connexion, the same essentially (in kind though not in dignity and value) must be its signification in the other. How else could it be (what yet in this text it undeniably is,) the *punctum indifferens*, or *nota communis*, of the *thesis*, flesh or the world and the *antithesis* Spirit or Christ? We might therefore, upon the supposition of a writer having been speaking of river-water in distinction from rain-water, as rationally pretend that in the latter phrase the term, water, was to be understood metaphorically, as that the word, birth, is a metaphor, and means only so and so in the Gospel according to St. John.

There is, I am aware, a numerous and powerful party in our Church, so numerous and powerful as not seldom to be entitled *the* Church, who hold and publicly teach, that "Regeneration is only Baptism." Nay, the writer of the article on the lives of Scott and Newton, in our ablest and most respectable review, is but one among many who do not hesitate to brand the contrary opinion as heterodoxy, and schismatical superstition. I trust, that I think as seriously as most men of the evil of schism; but with every disposition to pay the utmost deference to an acknowledged majority, including, it is said, a very large proportion of the present dignitaries of our Church, I cannot but think it a sufficient reply, that if Regeneration means Baptism, Baptism must mean Regeneration; and this too, as Christ himself has declared, a regeneration in the spirit. Now I would ask these divines this simple question: Do they believingly suppose a spiritual regenerative power and agency inhering in or accompa-

nying the sprinkling a few drops of water on an infant's face? They cannot evade the question by saying that Baptism is a type or sign. For this would be to supplant their own assertion, that Regeneration means Baptism, by the contradictory admission, that Regeneration is the *significatum*, of which Baptism is the significant. Unless, indeed, they would incur the absurdity of saying, that Regeneration is a type of Regeneration, and Baptism a type of itself--or that Baptism only means Baptism! And this indeed is the plain consequence to which they might be driven, should they answer the above question in the negative.

But if their answer be, "Yes! we do suppose and believe this efficiency in the Baptismal act"--I have not another word to say. Only, perhaps, I might be permitted to express a hope that, for consistency's sake they would speak less slightly of the insufflation, and extreme unction, used in the Romish Church; notwithstanding the not easily to be answered arguments of our Christian Mercury, the all-eloquent Jeremy Taylor, respecting the latter,--"which, since it is used when the man is above half dead, when he can exercise no act of understanding, it must needs be nothing. For no rational man can think, that any ceremony can make a spiritual change without a spiritual act of him that is to be changed; nor that it can work by way of nature, or by charm, but morally and after the manner of reasonable creatures."**

It is too obvious to require suggestion, that these words here quoted apply with yet greater force and propriety to the point in question; as the babe is an unconscious subject, which the dying man need not be supposed to be. My avowed convictions respecting

Dedicat. to Holy Dying. *Ed.* Regeneration with the spiritual Baptism, as its condition and initiative, (*Luke* iii, 16; *Matt*, i, 7; *Matt*, iii, 11,) and of which the sacramental rite, the Baptism of John, was appointed by Christ to remain as the sign and figure; and still more, perhaps, my belief respecting the mystery of the Eucharist, (concerning which I hold the same opinions as Bucer, Peter Martyr, and presumably Cranmer himself--these convictions and this belief will, I doubt not, be deemed by the orthodox *de more Grotii*, who improve the letter of Arminius with the spirit of Socinus, sufficient *data* to bring me in guilty of irrational and superstitious mysticism. But I abide by a maxim which I learned at an early period of my theological studies, from Benedict Spinoza. Where the alternative lies between the absurd and the incomprehensible, no wise man can be at a loss which of the two to prefer. To be called irrational, is a trifle: to be so, and in matters of religion, is far otherwise: and whether the irrationality consists in men's believing (that is, in having persuaded themselves that they believe) against reason, or without reason, I have been early instructed to consider it as a sad and serious evil, pregnant with mischiefs, political and moral. And by none of my numerous instructors so impressively as by that great and shining light of our Church in the aera of her intellectual splendor. Bishop Jeremy Taylor: from one of whose works, and that of especial authority for the safety as well as for the importance of the principle, inasmuch as it was written expressly *ad populum*, I will now, both for its own in-

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trinsic worth, and to relieve the attention, wearied, perhaps, by the length and argumentative character of the preceding discussion, interpose the following Aphorism.

**Strype--Cranmer, Append. *Ed.*



APHORISM XX.

TAYLOR

Whatever is against right reason, that no faith can oblige us to believe. For though reason is not the positive and affirmative measure of our faith, and our faith ought to be larger than (speculative)** reason, and take something into her heart, that reason can never take into her eye; yet in all our creed there can be nothing against reason. If reason justly contradicts an article, it is not of the household of faith. In this there is no difficulty, but that in practice we take care that we do not call that reason, which is not so.† For although reason is a right judge‡, yet it ought not to pass sentence in an inquiry of faith, until all the information be brought in; all that is within, and all that is without, all that is above, and all that is below; all that concerns it in experience, and all that concerns it in act; whatsoever is of pertinent observation, and whatsoever is revealed. For else reason may argue very well, and yet conclude falsely. It may conclude well in logic, and yet infer a false proposition in theology. But when our judge is fully and truly informed in all that whence she is to make her judgment, we may safely follow her whithersoever she invites us.

*Which it could not be in respect of spiritual truths and objects super-sensuous, if it were the same with, and merely another name for the faculty judging according to sense-- that is, the understanding, or (as Taylor most often calls it in distinction from reason) discourse (*discursus scu discursiva vel discursoria*). The reason, so instructed and so actuated as Taylor requires in the sentences immediately following, is what I have called the spirit.

†See *ante* p. 136. *Ed.*

‡See *ante* pp. 126-7, 174-5. *Ed.*

§See *ante* p. 127. *Ed.*

APHORISM XXI.

TAYLOR

He that speaks against his own reason, speaks against his own conscience: and therefore it is certain, no man serves God with a good conscience, who serves him against his reason.

APHORISM XXII.

TAYLOR

By the eye of reason through the telescope of faith, that is, revelation, we may see what without this telescope we could never have known to exist. But as one that shuts the eye hard, and with violence curls the eyelid, forces a fantastic fire from the crystalline humor, and espies a light that never shines, and sees thousands of little fires that never burn; so is he that blinds the eye of reason, and pretends to see by an eye of faith. He makes little images of notions, and some atoms dance before him; but he is not guided by the light, nor instructed by the proposition, but sees like a man in his sleep. In no case can true reason and a right faith oppose each other.

NOTE PREFATORY TO

APHORISM XXIII.

Less on my own account, than in the hope of forearming my youthful friends, I add one other transcript from Bishop Taylor, as from a writer to whose name no taint or suspicion of Calvinistic or schismatical tenets can attach, and for the purpose of softening the offence which, I cannot but foresee, will be taken at the positions asserted in the first paragraph of Aphorism VII, p. 145, and the documental proofs of the same in pp. 148-149: and this by a formidable party composed of men ostensibly of the most dissimilar creeds, regular Church-divines, voted orthodox by a great majority of suffrages, and the so-called free-thinking Christians, and Unitarian divines. It is the former class alone that I wish to conciliate: so far at least as it may be done by removing the aggravation of novelty from the offensive article. And surely the simple re-assertion of one of "the two great things," which Bishop Taylor could assert as a fact,--which, he took for granted, that no Christian would think of controverting,--should at least be controverted without bitterness to his successors in the Church. That which was perfectly safe and orthodox in 1667, in the judgment of a devoted Royalist and Episcopalian, ought to be at most but a venial heterodoxy in 1825. For the rest, I am prepared to hear in answer--what has already been so often and with such theatrical effect dropped as an extinguisher on my arguments--the famous concluding period of one of the chapters in Paley's Moral and Political Philosophy, declared by Dr. Parr to be the finest prose passage in English literature. Be it so. I bow to so great an authority. But if the learned doctor would impose it on me as the truest as well as the finest, or expect me to admire the logic equally with the rhetoric--

--I start off. As I have been un-English enough to find in Pope's tomb-epigram on Sir Isaac Newton nothing better than a gross and wrongful falsehood, conveyed in an enormous and irreverent hyperbole; so with regard to this passage in question, free as it is from all faults of taste, I have yet the hardihood to confess, that in the sense in which the words "discover" and "prove," are here used and intended, I am not convinced of the truth of the principle, (that he alone discovers who proves) and I question the correctness of the particular case, brought as instance and confirmation. I doubt the validity of the assertion as a general rule; and I deny it, as applied to matters of faith, to the verities of religion, in the belief of which there must always be somewhat of moral election, "an act of the will in it as well as of the understanding, as much love in it as discursive power. True Christian faith must have in it something of in-evidence, something that must be made up by duty and by obedience."--** But most readily do I admit, and most fervently do I contend, that the miracles worked by Christ, both as miracles and as fulfilments of prophecy, both as signs and as wonders, made plain discovery, and gave unquestionable proof, of his divine character and authority; that they were to the whole Jewish nation true and appropriate evidences, that He was indeed come who had promised and declared to their forefathers, *Behold your*

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God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense. He will come and save you. † I receive them as proofs, therefore, of the truth of every word which he taught who was himself The Word; and as sure evidences of the final victory over death and of the life to come, in that they were manifestations of Him, who said: *I am the resurrection and the life!*

The obvious inference from the passage in question, if not its express import, is: *Miracula experimenta crucis esse, quibus solis probandum erat, homines non, pecudum instar, omnino perituros esse.* Now this doctrine I hold to be altogether alien from the spirit, and without authority in the letter, of Scripture. I can recall nothing in the history of human belief that should induce me, I find nothing in my own moral being that

** J. Taylor's Worthy Communicant. *Ed.*

† *Isaiah xxxiv*, compared with *Matt.*, x, 34, and *Luke xii*, 49. *Ed.* enables me, to understand it. I can, however, perfectly well understand, the readiness of those divines in *hoc Paleii dictum ore pleno jurare, qui nihil aliud in toto Evangelio invenire posse, profitentur.* The most unqualified admiration of this superlative passage I find perfectly in character for those, who while Socinianism and Ultra-Socinianism are spreading like the roots of an elm, on and just below the surface, through the whole land, and here and there at least have even dipped under the garden-fence of the Church, and blunted the edge of the labourer's spade in the gayest parterres of our Baalhamon,--who,--while heresies, to which the framers and compilers of our Liturgy, Homilies, and Articles would have refused the very name of Christianity, meet their eyes on the list of religious denominations for every city and large town throughout the kingdom--can yet congratulate themselves with Dr. Paley, in his book on the Evidences,** that the rent has not reached the foundation;--that is, that the corruption of man's will; that the responsibility of man in any sense in which it is not equally predicable of dogs and horses; that the divinity of our Lord, and even his pre-existence; that sin, and redemption through the merits of Christ; and grace; and the especial aids of the Spirit; and the efficacy of prayer; and the subsistency of the Holy Ghost; may all be extruded without breach or rent in the essentials of Christian Faith;--that a man may deny and renounce them all, and remain a fundamental Christian, notwithstanding! But there are many who cannot keep up with Latitudinarians of such a stride; and I trust that the majority of serious believers are in this predicament. Now for all these it would seem more in character to be

** *Conclusion*, Part III, ch. 8. *Ed.* 23 of Bishop Taylor's opinion, that the belief in question is presupposed in a convert to the truth in Christ--but at all events not to circulate in the great whispering gallery of the religious public suspicions and hard thoughts of those who, like myself, are of this opinion; who do not dare decry the religious instincts of humanity as a baseless dream; who hold, that to excavate the ground under the faith of all mankind, is a very questionable method of building up our faith, as Christians; who fear, that instead of adding to, they should detract from, the honour of the Incarnate Word by disparaging

the light of the Word, that was in the beginning, and which lighteth every man; and who, under these convictions, can tranquilly leave it to be disputed, in some new Dialogues in the shades, between the fathers of the Unitarian Church on the one side, and Maimonides, Moses Mendelssohn, and Lessing on the other, whether the famous passage in Paley does or does not contain the three dialectic flaws, *petitio principii*, *argumentum in circulo*, and *argumentum contra rem a premissis rem ipsam includente*.

Yes! fervently do I contend, that to satisfy the understanding that there is a future state, was not the specific object of the Christian Dispensation; and that neither the belief of a future state, nor the rationality of this belief, is the exclusive attribute of the Christian religion. An essential, a fundamental, article of all religion it is, and therefore of the Christian; but otherwise than as in connexion with the salvation of mankind from the terrors of that state, among the essential articles peculiar to the Gospel Creed (those, for instance, by which it is *contra*-distinguished from the creed of a religious Jew) I do not place it. And before sentence is passed against me, as heterodox, on this ground, let not my judges forget who it was that assured us, that if a man did not believe in a state of retribution after death, previously and on other grounds, *neither would he believe, though a man should be raised from the dead*.

Again, I am questioned as to my proofs of a future state by men who are so far, and only so far, professed believers, that they admit a God and the existence of a law from God. I give them: and the questioners turn from me with a scoff or incredulous smile. Now should others of a less scanty creed infer the weakness of the reasons assigned by me from their failure in convincing these men; may I not remind them, who it was, to whom a similar question was proposed by men of the same class? But at all events it will be enough for my own support to remember it; and to know that He held such questioners, who could not find a sufficing proof of this great all-concerning verity in the words, *The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, unworthy of any other answer--men not to be satisfied by any proofs, at least, as are compatible with the ends and purposes of all religious conviction;--by any proofs that would not destroy the faith they were intended to confirm, and reverse the whole character and quality of its effects and influences. But if, notwithstanding all here offered in defence of my opinion, I must still be adjudged heterodox and in error,--what can I say but that *malo cum Platone errare*, and take refuge behind the ample shield of Bishop Jeremy Taylor.



APHORISM XXIII.

TAYLOR.

In order to his own glory, and for the manifestation of his goodness, and that the accidents of this world might not overmuch trouble those good men who suffered evil things, God was pleased to do two great things. The one was: that he sent his Son into the world to take upon him our nature, that every man might submit to a necessity, from which God's own Son was not exempt, when it behoved even Christ to suffer, and so to enter into glory. The other great thing was: that God did not only by revelation and the sermons of the Prophets to his Church, but even to all mankind competently teach, and effectively persuade, that the soul of man does not die; that though things were ill here, yet to the good who usually feel most of the evils of this life, they should end in honour and advantages. And therefore Cicero had reason on his side to conclude, that there is a time and place after this life, wherein the wicked shall be punished, and the virtuous rewarded; when he considered that Orpheus and Socrates, and many others, just men and benefactors of mankind, were either slain or oppressed to death by evil men. *And all these received not the promise.* But when virtue made men poor, and free speaking of brave truths made the wise to lose their liberty: when an excellent life hastened an opprobrious death, and the obeying reason and our conscience lost us our lives, or at least all the means and conditions of enjoying them: it was but time to look about for another state of things where justice should rule, and virtue find her own portion. And therefore men cast out every line, and turned every stone, and tried every argument: and sometimes proved it well, and when they did not, yet they believed strongly; and they were sure of the thing, when they were not sure of the argument.**

**Sermon at the Funeral of Sir George Dalston. *Ed.*



COMMENT.

A fact may be truly stated, and yet the cause or reason assigned for it mistaken, or inadequate, or *pars pro toto*,--one only or few of many that might or should have been adduced. The preceding Aphorism is an instance in point. The *phaenomenon* here brought forward by the Bishop, as the ground and occasion of men's belief of a future state--namely, the frequent, not to say ordinary, disproportion between moral worth and worldly prosperity--must, indeed, at all times and in all countries of the civilized world have led the observant and reflecting few, the men of meditative habits and strong feelings of natural equity, to a nicer consideration of the current belief, whether instinctive or traditional. By forcing the soul in upon herself, this enigma of Saint and Sage from Job, David and Solomon, to Claudian and Boelius,--this perplexing disparity of success and desert,--has, I doubt not, with such men been the occasion of a steadier and more distinct consciousness of a something in man different in kind, and which not merely distinguishes but contra-distinguishes him from brute animals--at the same time that it has brought into closer view an enigma of yet harder solution--the fact, I mean, of a contradiction in the human being, of which no traces are observable elsewhere, in animated or inanimate nature. A struggle of jarring impulses; a mysterious diversity between the injunctions of the mind and the elections of the will; and (last not least) the utter incommensurateness and the unsatisfying qualities of the things around us, that yet are the only objects which our senses discover, or our appetites require us to pursue:--whence for the finer and more contemplative spirits the ever-strengthening suspicion, that the two *phaenomena* must in some way or other stand in close connexion with each other, and that the riddle of fortune and circumstance is but a form or effluence of the riddle of man:--and hence again, the persuasion, that the solution of both problems is to be sought for--hence the presentiment, that this solution will be found--in the contra-distinctive constituent of humanity, in the something of human nature which is exclusively human:--and--as the objects discoverable by the senses, as all the bodies and substances that we can touch, measure, and weigh, are either mere totals, the unity of which results from the parts, and is of course only apparent; or substances, the unity of action of which is owing to the nature or arrangement of the partible bodies which they actuate or set in motion (steam for instance, in a steam-engine);--as on the one hand the conditions and known or conceivable properties of all the objects which perish and utterly cease to be, together with all the properties which we ourselves have in common with these perishable things, differ in kind from the acts and properties peculiar to our humanity, so that the former cannot even be conceived, cannot without a contradiction in terms be predicated, of the proper and immediate subject of the latter--(for who would not smile at an ounce of truth, or a square foot of honour?)--and as, on the other hand, whatever things in visible nature have the character of permanence, and endure amid continual flux unchanged like a rainbow in

a fast-flying shower, (for example, beauty, order, harmony, finality, law,) are all akin to the *peculia* of humanity, are all *congenera* of mind and will, without which indeed they would not only exist in vain, as pictures for moles, but actually not exist at all:--hence, finally, the conclusion that the soul of man, as the subject of mind and will must likewise possess a principle of permanence, and be destined to endure. And were these grounds lighter than they are, yet as a small weight will make a scale descend, where there is nothing in the opposite scale, or painted weights, which have only an illusive relief or prominence; so in the scale of immortality slight reasons are in effect weighty, and sufficient to determine the judgment, there being no counter weight, no reasons against them, and no facts in proof of the contrary, that would not prove equally well the cessation of the eye on the removal or diffraction of the eye-glass, and the dissolution or incapacity of the musician on the fracture of his instrument or its strings.

But though I agree with Taylor so far, as not to doubt that the misallotment of worldly goods and for tunes was one principal occasion, exciting well-disposed and spiritually-awakened natures by reflections and reasonings, such as I have here supposed, to mature the presentiment of immortality into full consciousness, into a principle of action and a well-spring of strength and consolation; I cannot concede to this circumstance any thing like the importance and extent of efficacy which he in this passage attributes to it. I am persuaded, that as the belief of all mankind, of all** tribes, and nations,

**I say, *all*: for the accounts of one or two travelling French philosophers, professed atheists and partisans of infidelity, respecting one or two African hordes, Caffres, and poor outlawed Boschmen, hunted out of their humanity, ought not to be regarded as exceptions. And as to Hearne's assertion respecting the non-existence and rejection of the belief among the Copper-Indians, it is not only hazarded on very weak and insufficient grounds, but he himself, in another part of his work, unconsciously supplies *data*, from whence the contrary may safely be concluded. Hearne, perhaps, put down his friend Motannabbi's Fort-philosophy for and languages, in all ages, and in all states of social union, it must be referred to far deeper grounds, common to man as man; and that its fibres are to be traced to the tap-root of humanity. I have long entertained, and do not hesitate to avow, the conviction that the argument from universality of belief urged by Barrow and others in proof of the first article of the Creed, is neither in point of fact--for two very different objects may be intended, and two or more diverse and even contradictory conceptions may be expressed, by the same name--nor in legitimacy of conclusion as strong and unexceptionable, as the argument from the same ground for the continuance of our personal being after death. The bull calf butts with smooth and unarmed brow. Throughout animated nature, of each characteristic organ and faculty there exists a pre-assurance, an instinctive and practical anticipation; and no pre-assurance common to a whole species does in any instance prove delusive.* All other prophecies of nature have their exact fulfilment--in every other *ingrafted* word of promise,

nature is found true to her word; and is it in her noblest creature, that she tells her first lie?-(The reader will, of course, understand, that I am here speaking in the assumed character of a

the opinion of his tribe; and from his high appreciation of the moral character of this murderous gymnosophist, it might, I fear, be inferred, that Hearne himself was not the very person one would, of all others, have chosen for the purpose of instituting the inquiry.

*See Baron Field's Letters from New South Wales. The poor natives, the lowest in the scale of humanity, evince no symptom of any religion, or the belief of any superior power as the maker of the world; but yet have no doubt that the spirits of their ancestors survive in the form of porpoises, and mindful of their descendants, with imperishable affection, drive the whales ashore for them to feast on. mere naturalist, to whom no light of revelation had been vouchsafed: one, who

-----with gentle heart
Had worshipp'd nature in the hill and valley,
Not knowing what he loved, but loved it all).

Whether, however, the introductory part of the Bishop's argument is to be received with more or less qualification, the fact itself, as stated in the concluding sentence of the Aphorism, remains unaffected, and is beyond exception true.

If other argument and yet higher authority were required, I might refer to St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and to the Epistle to the Hebrews, which whether written by Paul, or, as Luther conjectured, by Apollos, is out of all doubt the work of an Apostolic man filled with the Holy Spirit, and composed while the Temple and the glories of the Temple worship were yet in existence. Several of the Jewish and still Judaizing converts had begun to vacillate in their faith, and to *stumble at the stumbling-stone* of the contrast between the pomp and splendour of the old Law, and the simplicity and humility of the Christian Church. To break this sensual charm, to un fascinate these bedazzled brethren, the writer to the Hebrews institutes a comparison between the two religions, and demonstrates the superior spiritual grandeur, the greater intrinsic worth and dignity of the religion of Christ. On the other hand, at Rome where the Jews formed a numerous, powerful, and privileged class (many of them, too, by their proselyting zeal and frequent disputations with the priests and philosophers trained and exercised polemics) the recently-founded Christian Church was, it appears, in greater danger from the reasonings of the Jewish doctors and even of its own Judaizing members, respecting the use of the new revelation. Thus the object of the Epistle to the Hebrews was to prove the superiority of the Christian religion; the object of the Epistle to the Romans to prove its necessity. Now there was one argument extremely well calculated to stagger a faith newly transplanted and still loose at its roots, and which, if allowed, seemed to preclude the possibility of the Christian religion, as an especial and immediate revelation



from God--on the high grounds, at least, on which the Apostle of the Gentiles placed it, and with the exclusive rights and superseding character, which he claimed for it. "You admit" (said they) "the divine origin and authority of the Law given to Moses, proclaimed with thunders and lightnings and the voice of the Most High heard by all the people from Mount Sinai, and introduced, enforced, and perpetuated by a series of the most stupendous miracles. Our religion, then, was given by God: and can God give a perishable imperfect religion? If not perishable, how can it have a successor? If perfect, how can it need to be superseded? The entire argument is indeed comprised in the latter attribute of our law. We know, from an authority which you yourselves acknowledge for divine, that our religion is perfect. *He is the rock, and his work is perfect.* (Deut. xxxii, 4). If then the religion revealed by God himself to our forefathers is perfect, what need have we of another?"--This objection, both from its importance and from its extreme plausibility, for the persons at least, to whom it was addressed, required an answer in both Epistles. And accordingly, the answer is included in the one (that to the Hebrews) and it is the especial purpose and main subject of the other. And how does the Apostle answer it? Suppose--and the case is not impossible*--a man of sense, who had studied the evidences of Priestley and Paley with Warburton's Divine Legation, but who should be a perfect stranger to the writings of St. Paul; and that I put this question to him:--"What do you think, will St. Paul's answer be?" "Nothing," he would reply,"can be more obvious. It is in vain, the Apostle will urge, that you bring your notions of probability and inferences from the arbitrary interpretation of a word in an absolute rather than a relative sense, to invalidate a known fact. It is a fact, that your religion is (in your sense of the word) not perfect: for it is deficient in one of the two essential constituents of all true religion, the belief of a future state on solid and sufficient grounds. Had the doctrine indeed been revealed, the stupendous miracles, which you most truly affirm to have accompanied and attested the first promulgation of your religion, would have supplied the requisite proof. But the doctrine was not revealed; and your belief of a future state rests on no solid grounds. You believe it (as far as you believe it, and as many of you as profess this belief) without

*The case here supposed actually occurred in my own experience in the person of a Spanish refugee, of English parents, but from his tenth year resident in Spain, and bred in a family of wealthy, but ignorant and bigoted, Roman Catholics. In mature manhood he returned to England, disgusted with the conduct of the priests and monks, which had indeed for some years produced on his mind its so common effect among the better-informed natives of the South of Europe--a tendency to Deism. The results, however, of the infidel system in France, with his opportunities of observing the effects of irreligion on the French officers in Spain, on the one hand; and the undeniable moral and intellectual superiority of Protestant Britain on the other, had not been lost on him: and here he began to think for himself and resolved to study the subject. He had gone through Bishop Warburton's Divine



Legation, and Paley's Evidences; but had never read the New Testament consecutively, and the Epistles not at all. revelation, and without the only proper and sufficient evidence of its truth. Your religion, therefore, though of divine origin, is (if taken in disjunction from the new revelation, which I am commissioned to proclaim) but a *religio dimidiata*; and the main purpose, the proper character, and the paramount object of Christ's mission and miracles, is to supply the missing half by a clear discovery of a future state; and (since 'he alone discovers who proves') by proving the truth of the doctrine, now for the first time declared with the requisite authority, by the requisite, appropriate, and alone satisfactory evidences."

But is this the Apostle's answer to the Jewish oppugners, and the Judaizing false brethren, of the Church of Christ? It is not the answer, it does not resemble the answer, returned by the Apostle. It is neither parallel nor corradial with the line of argument in either of the two Epistles, or with any one line; but it is a chord that traverses them all, and only touches where it cuts across. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the directly contrary position is repeatedly asserted: and in the Epistle to the Romans, it is every where supposed. The death to which the Law sentenced all sinners (and which even the Gentiles without the revealed law had announced to them by their consciences, *the judgment of God having been made known even to them*) must be the same death, from which they were saved by the faith of the Son of God; or the Apostle's reasoning would be senseless, his *antithesis* a mere equivoque, a play on a word, *quod idem sonat, aliud vult*. Christ *redeemed mankind from the curse of the law*: and we all know, that it was not from temporal death, or the penalties and afflictions of the present life, that believers have been redeemed. The Law, of which the inspired sage of Tarsus is speaking, from which no man can plead excuse; the Law miraculously delivered in thunders from Mount Sinai, which was inscribed on tables of stone for the Jews, and written in the hearts of all men (*Rom. xi, 15*)--the law *holy and spiritual*! What was the great point, of which this law, in its own name, offered no solution;--the mystery, which it left behind the veil, or in the cloudy tabernacle of types and figurative sacrifices? Whether there was a judgment to come, and souls to suffer the dread sentence? Or was it not far rather--what are the means of escape; where may grace be found, and redemption? St. Paul says, the latter. The law brings condemnation: but the conscience-sentenced transgressor's question, "What shall I do to be saved? Who will intercede for me?" she dismisses as beyond the jurisdiction of her court, and takes no cognizance thereof, save in prophetic murmurs or mute outshadowings of mystic ordinances and sacrificial types. Not, therefore, that there is a life to come, and a future state; but what each individual soul may hope for itself therein; and on what grounds: and that this state has been rendered an object of aspiration and fervent desire, and a source of thanksgiving and exceeding great joy; and by whom, and through whom, and for whom, and by what means, and under what conditions--these are the peculiar and distinguishing fundamentals of the Christian Faith! These are the revealed lights and obtained privileges of the Christian Dispensation. Not alone the knowledge of the boon,

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but the precious inestimable boon itself, is the *grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ*. I believe Moses, I believe Paul; but I believe in Christ.



APHORISM.

ON BAPTISM.

LEIGHTON.

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching.--It will suffice for our present purpose, if by these* words we direct the attention to the origin, or at least first Scriptural record, of Baptism, and to the combinement of preaching therewith; their aspect each to the other, and their concurrence to one excellent end; the word unfolding the sacrament, and the sacrament sealing the word; the word as a light, informing and clearing the sense of the seal; and this again as a seal, confirming and ratifying the truth of the word; as you see some significant seals, or engraven signets, have a word about them expressing their sense.

But truly the word is a light, and the sacraments have in them of the same light illuminating them. This sacrament of Baptism, the ancients do particularly express by light. Yet are they both nothing but darkness to us, till the same light shine in our hearts; for till then we are nothing but darkness ourselves, and therefore the most luminous things are so to us. Noonday is as midnight to a blind man. And we see these ordinances, the word and the sacrament, without profit or comfort for the most part, because we have not that divine light within us. And we have it not, because we ask it not.

*By certain Biblical philologists of the Teutonic school (men distinguished by learning, but still more characteristically by hardihood in conjecture, and who suppose the Gospels to have undergone several successive revisions and enlargements by, or under the authority of, the sacred historians) these words are contended to have been, in the first delivery, the common commencement of all the Gospels

(that is, according to the flesh,) in distinction from St. John's, or the Gospel

(that is, according to the Spirit).



COMMENT,

Or an aid to reflection in the forming of a sound judgment respecting the purport and purpose of the Baptismal rite and a just appreciation of its value and importance.

A born and bred Baptist, and paternally descended from the old orthodox non-conformists, and both in his own and in his father's right a very dear friend of mine, had married a member of the National Church. In consequence of an anxious wish expressed by his lady for the Baptism of their first child, he solicited me to put him in possession of my views respecting this controversy: though principally as to the degree of importance which I attached to it. For as to the point itself, his natural prepossession in favor of the persuasion in which he was born, had been confirmed by a conscientious examination of the arguments on both sides. As the comment on the preceding Aphorism, or rather as an expansion of its subject-matter, I will give the substance of the conversation: and amply shall I have been remunerated, should it be read with the interest and satisfaction with which it was heard. More particularly, should any of my readers find themselves under the same or similar circumstances.

Our discussion is rendered shorter and more easy by our perfect agreement in certain preliminary points. We both disclaim alike every attempt to explain any thing into Scripture, and every attempt to explain any thing out of Scripture. Or if we regard either with a livelier aversion it is the latter, as being the more fashionable and prevalent. I mean the practice of both high and low Grotian divines to explain away positive assertions of Scripture on the pretext, that the literal sense is not agreeable to reason, that is, their particular reason. And inasmuch as (in the only right sense of the word) there is no such thing as a particular reason, they must, and in fact they do, mean that the literal sense is not accordant to their understanding, that is, to the notions which their understandings have been taught and accustomed to form in their school of philosophy. Thus a Platonist who should become a Christian would at once, even in texts susceptible of a different interpretation, recognise, because he would expect to find, several doctrines which the disciple of the Epicurean or mechanic school will not receive on the most positive declarations of the divine word. And as we agree in the opinion that the *Minimi-fidian* party err grievously in the latter point, so I must concede to you, that too many Paedo-baptists (assertors of Infant Baptism) have erred, though less grossly, in the former. I have, I confess, no eye for these smoke-like wreaths of inference, this ever-widening spiral *ergo* from the narrow aperture of perhaps a single text; or rather an interpretation forced into it by construing an idiomatic phrase in an artless narrative with the same absoluteness, as if it had formed part of a mathematical problem. I start back from these inverted pyramids, where the apex is the base. If I should inform any one that I had called at a friend's house, but had found nobody at home, the family having all gone to the play; and if he on the strength of this information should take occasion to asperse my friend's wife for unmotherly conduct in taking an infant six months old to a

crowded theatre; would you allow him to press on the words "nobody" and "all the family," in justification of the slander? Would you not tell him, that the words were to be interpreted by the nature of the subject, the purpose of the speaker, and their ordinary acceptance; and that he must or might have known, that infants of that age would not be admitted into the theatre? Exactly so, with regard to the words, *he and all his household*. Had Baptism of infants at that early period of the Gospel been a known practice, or had this been previously demonstrated,--then indeed the argument, that in all probability there were infants or young children in so large a family, would be no otherwise objectionable than as being superfluous, and a sort of anticlimax in logic. But if the words are cited as the proof, it would be a clear *petitio principii*, though there had been nothing else against it. But when we turn back to the Scriptures preceding the narrative, and find repentance and belief demanded as the terms and indispensable conditions of Baptism--then the case above imagined applies in its full force. Equally vain is the pretended analogy from Circumcision, which was no sacrament at all; but the means and mark of national distinction. In the first instance it was, doubtless, a privilege or mark of superior rank conferred on the descendants of Abraham. In the Patriarchal times this rite was confined (the first governments being theocracies) to the priesthood, who were set apart to that office from their birth. At a later period this token of the premier class was extended to kings. And thus, when it was re-ordained by Moses for the whole Jewish nation, it was at the time said--Ye are all priests and kings; ye are a consecrated people. In addition to this, or rather in aid of this, Circumcision was intended to distinguish the Jews by some indelible sign: and it was no less necessary that Jewish children should be recognisable as Jews than Jewish adults--not to mention the greater safety of the rite in infancy. Nor was it ever pretended that any grace was conferred with it, or that the rite was significant of any inward or spiritual operation. In short, an unprejudiced and competent reader need only peruse the first thirty-three paragraphs of the eighteenth section of Taylor's Liberty of Prophesying; and then compare with these the remainder of the section added by him after the Restoration: those, namely, in which he attempts to overthrow his own arguments. I had almost said, affects; for such is the feebleness, and so palpable the sophistry, of his answers, that I find it difficult to imagine that Taylor himself could have been satisfied with them. The only plausible arguments apply with equal force to Baptist and Paedo-baptist; and would prove, if they proved any thing, that both were wrong, and the Quakers only in the right.

Now in the first place, it is obvious, that nothing conclusive can be drawn from the silence of the New Testament respecting a practice, which, if we suppose it already in use, must yet, from the character of the first converts, have been of comparatively rare occurrence; and which, from the predominant and more concerning objects and functions of the Apostolic writers (*1 Cor. i, 17*), was not likely to have been mentioned otherwise than incidentally, and very probably therefore might not have occurred to them to mention at all. But, secondly,

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admitting that the practice was introduced at a later period than that in which the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles were composed: I should yet be fully satisfied that the Church exercised herein a sound* discretion

*That every the least permissible form and ordinance, which at different times it might be expedient for the church to enact, are pre-enacted in the New Testament; and that whatever is not to be found there, ought to be allowed nowhere--this has been asserted. But that On either supposition, therefore, it is never without regret that I see a divine of our Church attempting to erect forts on a position so evidently commanded by the strong-hold of his antagonists. I dread the use which the Socinians may make of their example, and the Papists of their failure. Let me not, however, deceive you. (The reader understands, that I suppose myself conversing with a Baptist). I am of opinion, that the divines on your side are chargeable with a far more grievous mistake, that of giving a carnal and Judaizing interpretation to the various Gospel texts in which the terms, *baptism* and *baptize*, occur, contrary to the express and earnest admonitions of the Apostle Paul. And this I say without in the least retracting my former concession, that the texts appealed to, as commanding or authorizing Infant Baptism, are all without exception made to bear a sense neither contained nor deducible: and likewise that (historically considered) there exists no sufficient positive evidence, that the Baptism of infants was instituted by the Apostles in the practice of the Apostolic age.*

It has been proved, or even rendered plausible; or that the tenet is not to be placed among the revulsionary results of the Scripture-slighting will-worship of the Romish Church; it will be more sincere to say I disbelieve, than that I doubt. It was chiefly, if not exclusively, in reference to the extravagances built on this tenet, that the great Selden ventured to declare, that the words, *Scrutamini Scripturas*, had set the world in an uproar.

Extremes appear to generate each other; but if we look steadily, there will most often be found some common error, that produces both as its positive and negative poles. Thus superstitions go by pairs, like the two Hungarian sisters, always quarrelling and inveterately averse, but yet joined at the trunk.

*More than this I do not consider as necessary for the argument. And as to Robinson's assertions in his History of Baptism, that Infant Baptism did not commence till the time of Cyprian, who, condemning it

Lastly, we both coincide in the full conviction, that it is neither the outward ceremony of Baptism, under any form or circumstances, nor any other ceremony, but such a faith in Christ as tends to produce a conformity to his holy doctrines and example in heart and life, and which faith is itself a declared mean and condition of our partaking of his spiritual body, and of being *clothed upon* with his righteousness,--that properly makes us Christians, and can alone be enjoined as an article of faith necessary to salvation, so that the denial thereof may be denounced as a damnable heresy. In the strictest sense of essential, this alone is the

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essential in Christianity, that the same spirit should be growing in us which was in the fulness of all perfection in Christ Jesus. Whatever else is named essential is such because, and only as far as, it is instrumental to this, or evidently implied herein. If the Baptists hold the visible rite to be indispensable to salvation, with what terror must they not regard every disease that befalls their children between youth and infancy! But if they are saved by the faith of the parent, then the outward rite is not essential to salvation, otherwise than as the omission should arise from a spirit of disobedience: and in this case it is the cause not the effect, the wilful and unbaptized heart, not

as a general practice, allowed it in particular cases by a dispensation of charity; and that it did not actually become the ordinary rule of the Church, till Augustine, in the fever of his Anti-Pelagian dispute had introduced the Calvinistic interpretation of Original Sin, and the dire state of infants dying unbaptized--I am so far from acceding to them, that I reject the whole statement as rash, and not only unwarranted by the authorities he cites, but unanswerably confuted by Baxter, Wall, and many other learned Paedo-baptists before and since the publication of his work. I confine myself to the assertion--not that Infant Baptism was not--but that there exist no sufficient proofs that it was--the practice of the Apostolic age. the unbaptizing hand, that perils it. And surely it looks very like an inconsistency to admit the vicarious faith of the parents and the therein implied promise, that the child shall be Christianly bred up, and as much as in them lies prepared for the communion of saints--to admit this, as safe and sufficient in their own instance, and yet to denounce the same belief and practice as hazardous and unavailing in the Church--the same, I say, essentially, and only differing from their own by the presence of two or three Christian friends as additional securities, and by the promise being expressed!

But you, my filial friend! have studied Christ under a better teacher--the spirit of adoption, even the spirit that was in Paul, and which still speaks to us out of his writings. You remember and admire the saying of an old divine, that a ceremony duly instituted is a chain of gold around the neck of faith; but if in the wish to make it co-essential and consubstantial, you draw it closer and closer, it may strangle the faith it was meant to deck and designate. You are not so unretentive a scholar as to have forgotten the *pateris et auro* of your Virgil: or if you were, you are not so inconsistent a reasoner, as to translate the Hebraism, spirit and fire in one place by spiritual fire, and yet refuse to translate water and spirit by spiritual water in another place: or if, as I myself think, the different position marks a different sense, yet that the former must be *ejusdem generis* with the latter--the water of repentance, reformation in conduct; and the spirit that which purifies the inmost principle of action, as fire purges the metal substantially and not cleansing the surface only!

But in this instance, it will be said, the ceremony, the outward and visible sign, is a Scripture ordinance. I will not reply that the Romish Priest says the same of the anointing of the sick with oil and the imposition of hands. No, my answer is: that this is a very sufficient reason for the continued observance of a ceremonial rite so derived and sanctioned, even though its own beauty, simplicity, and natural significancy had pleaded less strongly in its behalf. But it is no reason why the Church should forget that the perpetuation of a thing does not alter the nature of the thing, and that a ceremony to be perpetuated is to be perpetuated as a ceremony. It is no reason why, knowing and experiencing even in the majority of her own members the proneness of the human mind to** superstition, the Church might not rightfully and piously adopt the measures best calculated to check this tendency, and to correct the abuse to which it had led in any particular rite. But of superstitious notions respecting the Baptismal ceremony, and of abuse resulting, the instances were flagrant and notorious. Such, for instance, was the frequent deferring of the Baptismal rite to a late period of life, and even to the deathbed, in the belief that the mystic water would cleanse the baptized person from all sin and (if he died immediately after the performance of the ceremony,) send him pure and spotless into the other world.

Nor is this all. The preventive remedy applied by the Church is legitimated as well as additionally recommended by the following consideration. Where a ceremony answered and was intended to answer several purposes, which purposes at its first institution were blended in respect of the time, but which afterwards by change of circumstances (as when, for instance, a large

**Let me be permitted to repeat and apply the note in a former page. Superstition may be defined as *superstantium (cujusmodi sunt ceremoniae et signa externa quae, nisi in significando nihili sunt paene nihil) substantiatio*. and ever-increasing proportion of the members of the Church, or those who at least bore the Christian name, were of Christian parents) were necessarily disunited--then either the Church has no power or authority delegated to her (which is shifting the ground of controversy) or she must be authorized to choose and determine, to which of the several purposes the ceremony should be attached. Now one of the purposes of Baptism was--the making it publicly manifest, first, what individuals were to be regarded by the World (*Phil. ii, 15*), as belonging to the visible communion of Christians: inasmuch as by their demeanour and apparent condition, the general estimation of *the city set on a hill and not to be hid (Matt. v, 14)*, could not but be affected--the city that even *in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation* was bound not only to give no cause, but by all innocent means to prevent every occasion, of *rebuke*. Secondly, to mark out, for the Church itself, those that were entitled to that especial dearness, that watchful and disciplinary love and loving-kindness, which over and above the affections and duties of philanthropy and universal charity, Christ himself had enjoined, and with an emphasis and in a form significant of its great and especial importance,--*A new commandment I give unto you, that*

ye love one another. By a charity wide as sunshine, and comprehending the whole human race, the body of Christians was to be placed in contrast with the proverbial misanthropy and bigotry of the Jewish Church and people: while yet they were to be distinguished and known to all men, by the peculiar love and affection displayed by them towards the members of their own community; thus exhibiting the intensity of sectarian attachment, yet by the no less notorious and exemplary practice of the duties of universal benevolence, secured from the charge so commonly brought against it, of being narrow and exclusive. "How kind these Christians are to the poor and afflicted, without distinction of religion or country: but how they love each other!"

Now combine with this the consideration before urged--the duty, I mean, and necessity of checking the superstitious abuse of the Baptismal rite: and I then ask, with confidence, in what way could the Church have exercised a sound discretion more wisely, piously, or effectively, than by fixing, from among the several ends and purposes of Baptism, the outward ceremony to the purposes here mentioned? How could the great body of Christians be more plainly instructed as to the true nature of all outward ordinances? What can be conceived better calculated to prevent the ceremony from being regarded as other and more than a ceremony, if not the administration of the same on an object (yea, a dear and precious object) of spiritual duties, though the conscious subject of spiritual operations and graces only by anticipation! and in hope;--a subject unconscious as a flower of the dew falling on it, or the early rain, and thus emblematic of the myriads who (as in our Indian empire, and henceforward, I trust, in Africa) are temporally and even morally benefitted by the outward existence of Christianity, though as yet ignorant of its saving truth! And yet, on the other hand, what more reverential than the application of this the common initiatory rite of the East sanctioned and appropriated by Christ--its application, I say, to the very subjects, whom he himself commanded to be brought to him--the children in arms, respecting whom *Jesus was much displeased with his disciples, who had rebuked those that brought them!* What more expressive of the true character of that originant yet generic stain, from which the Son of God, by his mysterious incarnation and agony and death and resurrection, and by the Baptism of the Spirit, came to cleanse the children of Adam, than the exhibition of the outward element to infants, free from and incapable of crime, in whom the evil principle was present only as potential being, and whose outward semblance represented the kingdom of Heaven? And can it--to a man, who would hold himself deserving of *anathema maranatha* (*I Cor. xvi. 22*), if he did not *love the Lord Jesus Christ*--can it be nothing to such a man, that the introduction and commendation of a new inmate, a new spiritual ward, to the assembled brethren in Christ--(and this, as I have shown above, was one purpose of the Baptismal ceremony) does in the Baptism of an infant recall our Lord's own presentation in the Temple on the eighth day after his birth? Add to all these considerations the known fact of the frequent exposure and the general light regard of infants, at the time when Infant Baptism is by the

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Baptists supposed to have been first ruled by the Catholic Church, not overlooking the humane and charitable motives that influenced Cyprian's decision in its favour. And then make present to your imagination, and meditatively contemplate the still continuing tendency, the profitable, the beautiful effects, of this ordinance now and for so many centuries back, on the great mass of the population throughout Christendom--the softening, elevating exercise of faith and the conquest over the senses, while in the form of a helpless crying babe the presence, and the unutterable worth and value, of an immortal being made capable of everlasting bliss are solemnly proclaimed and carried home to the mind and heart of the hearers and beholders! Nor will you forget the probable influence on the future education of the child, the opportunity of instructing and impressing the friends, relatives and parents in their best and most docile mood. These are, indeed, the *mollia tempora fandi*.

It is true, that by an unforeseen accident, and through the propensity of all zealots to caricature partial truth into total falsehood--it is too true, that a tree the very contrary in quality of that shown to Moses (*Exod. xv, 25*), was afterwards cast into the sweet waters from this fountain, and made them like *the water of Marah*, too bitter to be drunk. I allude to the Pelagian controversy, the perversion of the article of Original Sin by Augustine, and the frightful conclusions which this *durus pater infantum* drew from the article thus perverted. It is not, however, to the predecessors of this African, whoever they were that authorized Paedo-Baptism, and at whatever period it first became general--it is not to the Church at the time being, that these consequences are justly imputable. She had done her best to preclude every superstition, by allowing, in urgent cases, any and every adult, man, and woman, to administer the ceremonial part, the outward rite, of Baptism: but reserving to the highest functionary of the Church (even to the exclusion of the co-presbyters) the more proper and spiritual purpose, namely, the declaration of repentance and belief, the free choice of Christ as his Lord, and the open profession of the Christian title by an individual in his own name and by his own deliberate act. This office of religion, the essentially moral and spiritual nature of which could not be mistaken, this most solemn office the Bishop alone was to perform.

Thus--as soon as the purposes of the ceremonial rite were by change of circumstances divided, that is, took place at different periods of the believer's life--to the outward purposes, where the effect was to be produced on the consciousness of others, the Church continued to affix the outward rite; while to the substantial and spiritual purpose, where the effect was to be produced on the individual's own mind, she gave it befitting dignity by an ordinance not figurative, but standing in the direct cause and relation of means to the end.

In fine, there are two great purposes to be answered, each having its own subordinate purposes, and desirable consequences. The Church answers both, the Baptists one only. If, nevertheless, you would still prefer the union of the Baptismal rite with the Confirmation, and that the presentation of infants to the assembled Church had formed a separate institu-



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tion, avowedly prospective--I answer: first, that such for a long time and to a late period was my own judgment. But even then it seemed to me a point, as to which an indifference would be less inconsistent in a lover of truth, than a zeal to the separation in a professed lover of peace. And secondly, I would revert to the history of the Reformation, and the calamitous accident of the Peasants' War: when the poor ignorant multitude, driven frantic by the intolerable oppressions of their feudal lords, rehearsed all the outrages that were acted in our own times by the Parisian populace headed by Danton, Marat, Robespierre; and on the same outrageous principles, and in assertion of the same rights of brutes to the subversion of all the duties of men. In our times, most fortunately for the interests of religion and morality, or of their prudential substitutes at least, the name of Jacobin was everywhere associated with that of Atheist and Infidel. Or rather, Jacobinism and Infidelity were the two heads of the revolutionary Geryon--connatural mis-growths of the same monster-truck. In the German convulsion, on the contrary, by a mere but most unfortunate accident, the same code of Caliban jurisprudence, the same sensual and murderous excesses, were connected with the name of Anabaptist. The abolition of magistracy, community of goods, the right of plunder, polygamy, and whatever else was fanatical, were comprised in the word Anabaptism. It is not to be imagined that the Fathers of the Reformation could, without a miraculous influence, have taken up the question of Infant baptism with the requisite calmness and freedom of spirit. It is not to be wished, that they should have entered on the discussion. Nay, I will go farther. Unless the abolition of Infant Baptism can be shown to be involved in some fundamental article of faith, unless the practice could be proved fatal or imminently perilous to salvation, the Reformers would not have been justified in exposing the yet tender and struggling cause of Protestantism to such certain and violent prejudices as this innovation would have excited. Nothing less than the whole substance and efficacy of the Gospel Faith was the prize, which they had wrestled for and won; but won from enemies still in the field, and on the watch to retake, at all costs, the sacred treasure, and consign it once again to darkness and oblivion. If there be *a time for all things*, this was not the time for an innovation, that would and must have been followed by the triumph of the enemies of Scriptural Christianity, and the alienation of the governments that had espoused and protected it.

Remember, I say this on the supposition of the question's not being what you do not pretend it to be, an essential of the Faith by which we are saved. But should it likewise be conceded that it is a disputable point--and that in point of fact it is and has been disputed by divines, whom no pious Christian of any denomination will deny to have been faithful and eminent servants of Christ; should it, I say, be likewise conceded that the question of Infant Baptism is a point, on which two Christians, who perhaps differ on this point only, may differ without giving just ground for impeaching the piety or competence of either; in this case I am obliged to infer that the person who at any time can regard this difference as



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singly warranting a separation from a religious community, must think of schism under another point of view than that in which I have been taught to contemplate it by St. Paul in his Epistles to the Corinthians.

Let me add a few words on a diversity of doctrine closely connected with this;--the opinions of Doctors Mant and D'Oyly as opposed to those of the (so called) Evangelical clergy. "The Church of England (says Wall*) does not require assent and consent" to either

*Conference between two men that had doubts about Infant Baptism. By W. Wall, Author of the History of Infant Baptism, and Vicar of Shoreham in Kent. A very sensible little tract, and written in an excellent spirit; but it failed, I confess, in satisfying my mind as to the existence of any decisive proofs or documents of Infant Baptism having been an Apostolic usage, or specially intended in any part of the New Testament: though deducible generally from many passages, and imperfect accordance with the spirit of the whole.

A mighty wrestler in the cause of spiritual religion and Gospel morality, in whom more than in any other contemporary I seem to see the spirit of Luther revived, expressed to me his doubts whether we have a right to deny that an infant is capable of a spiritual influence. To such a man I could not feel justified in returning an answer *ex tempore*, or without having first submitted my convictions to a fresh revisal. I owe him, however, a deliberate answer; and take this opportunity of discharging the debt.

The objection supposes and assumes the very point which is denied, or at least disputed--namely, that Infant Baptism is specially enjoined in the Scriptures. If an express passage to this purport had existed in the New Testament--the other passages, which evidently imply a spiritual opinion "in order to lay communion." But I will suppose the person a minister: but minister of a Church which has expressly disclaimed all pretence to infallibility; a Church which in the construction of its Liturgy and Articles is known to have worded certain passages for the purpose of rendering them subscribable by both A and Z--that is, the opposite parties as to the points in controversy. I suppose this person's convictions those of Z, and that out of five passages there are three, the more natural and obvious sense of which is in his favour; and two of which, though not absolutely precluding a different sense, yet the more probable interpretation is in favour of A, that is, of those who do not consider the Baptism of an infant as prospective, but hold

operation under the condition of a preceding spiritual act on the part of the person baptized, remaining as now--then indeed, as the only way of removing the apparent contradiction, it might be allowable to call on the Anti-paedobaptist to prove the negative--namely, that an infant a week old is not a subject capable or susceptible of spiritual agency. And, *vice versa*, should it be made known to us, that infants are not without reflection and self-consciousness; then, doubtless, we should be entitled to infer that they were capable of a spiritual operation, and consequently of that which is signified in the Baptismal rite administered to adults. But what does this prove for those, who (as D. D. Mant and D'Oyly) not only cannot

show, but who do not themselves profess to believe, the self-consciousness of a new-born babe, but who rest the defence of Infant Baptism on the assertion, that God was pleased to affix the performance of this rite to his offer of salvation, as the indispensable, though arbitrary, condition of the infant's salvability? As kings in former ages, when they conferred lands in perpetuity, would sometimes, as the condition of the tenure, exact from the beneficiary a hawk, or some trifling ceremony, as the putting on or off of their sandals, or whatever else royal caprice or the whim of the moment might suggest. But you, honored Irving, are as little disposed, as myself, to favor such doctrine!

Friend pure of heart and fervent! we have learnt
A different love. We may not thus profane
The idea and name of Him whose absolute will
Is reason, truth supreme, essential order!

it to be an *opus operans et in praesenti*. Then I say, that if such a person regards these two sentences or single passages as obliging or warranting him to abandon the flock entrusted to his charge, and either to join such as are the avowed enemies of the Church on the double ground of its particular constitution and of its being an establishment, or to set up a separate church for himself--I cannot avoid the conclusion, that either his conscience is morbidly sensitive in one speck to the exhaustion of the sensibility in a far larger portion; or that he must have discovered some mode, beyond the reach of my conjectural powers, of interpreting the Scriptures enumerated in the following excerpt from the popular tract before cited, in which the writer expresses an opinion, to which I assent with my whole heart: namely,

"That all Christians in the world that hold the same fundamentals ought to make one Church, though differing in lesser opinions; and that the sin, the mischief, and danger to the souls of men, that divide into those many sects and parties among us, does (for the most of them) consist not so much in the opinions themselves, as in their dividing and separating for them. And in support of this tenet, I will refer you to some plain places of Scripture, which if you please now to peruse, I will be silent the while. See what our Saviour himself says, *John* x, 16; *John* xvi, 11. And what the primitive Christians practised, *Acts* ii, 46, and iv, 32. And what St. Paul says, *I Cor.* i, 10, 11, 12, and 2, 3, 4, also the whole twelfth chapter: *Eph.* ii, 17, &c, to the end. Where the Jewish and Gentile Christians are showed to be *one body, one household, one temple fitly framed together*: and yet these were of different opinions in several matters. Likewise chap. iii 6, iv, 1-13. *Phil.* ii, 1, 2, where he uses the most solemn adjurations to this purpose. But I would more especially recommend to you the reading of *Gal.* v, 20, 21. *Phil.* iii, 15, 15. The fourteenth chapter to the *Romans*, and part of the fifteenth, to verse 7, and also *Rom.* xv, 17.

Are not these passages plain, full, and earnest? Do you find any of the controverted points to be determined by Scripture in words nigh so plain or pathetic?"

Marginal note written (in 1816) in a copy of Wall's Work.

This and the two following pages are excellent. If I addressed the ministers recently seceded, I would first prove from Scripture and reason the justness of their doctrines concerning Baptism and conversion. 2. I would show, that even in respect of the Prayer book, Homilies, &c, of the Church of England, taken as a whole, their opponents were comparatively as ill off as themselves, if not worse. 3. That few mistakes or inconvenient phrases of the Baptismal Service did not impose on the conscience the necessity of resigning the pastoral office. 4. That even if they did, this would by no means justify schism from lay-membership: or else there could be no schism except from an immaculate and infallible Church. Now, as our Articles have declared that no Church is or ever was such, it would follow that there is no such sin as that of schism, that is, that St. Paul wrote falsely or idly. 5. That the escape through the channel of dissent is from the frying-pan to the fire; or, to use a less worn and vulgar simile, the escape of a leech from a glass-jar of water into the naked and open air. But never, never, would I in one breath allow my Church to be fallible, and in the next contend for her absolute freedom from all error: never confine inspiration and perfect truth to the Scriptures, and then scold for the perfect truth of each and every word in the Prayer book. Enough for me, if in my heart of hearts, free from all fear of man and all lust of preferment, I believe (as I do) the Church of England to be the most Apostolic Church; that its doctrines and ceremonies contain nothing dangerous to righteousness or salvation; and that the imperfections in its Liturgy are spots indeed, but spots on the sun, which impede neither its light nor its heat, so as to prevent the good seed from growing in a good soil and producing fruits of redemption.



CONCLUSION.

I am not so ignorant of the temper and tendency of the age in which I live, as either to be miprepared for the sort of remarks which the literal interpretation of the Evangelist will call forth, or to attempt an answer to them. Visionary ravings, obsolete whimsies, transcendental trash, and the like, I leave to pass at the price current among those who are willing to receive abusive phrases as substitutes for argument. Should any suborner of anonymous criticism have engaged some literary bravo or buffoon beforehand to vilify this work, as in former instances, I would give a friendly hint to the operative critic that he may compile an excellent article for the occasion, and with very little trouble, out of Warburton's Tract on Grace and the Spirit, and the Preface to the same. There is, however, one objection, which will so often be heard from men, whose talents and reputed moderation must give a weight to their words, that I owe it both to my own character and to the interests of my readers, not to leave it unnoticed. The charge will probably be worded in this way:--There is nothing new in all this! (as if novelty were any merit in questions of revealed religion!) It is, mysticism, all taken out of William Law, after he had lost his senses, poor man! in brooding over the visions of a delirious German cobbler, Jacob Behmen.

Of poor Jacob Behmen I have delivered my sentiments at large in another work. Those who have condescended to look into his writings must know that his characteristic errors are; first, the mistaking the accidents and peculiarities of his own overwrought mind for realities and modes of thinking common to all minds: and secondly, the confusion of nature, that is, the active powers communicated to matter, with God the Creator. And if the same persons have done more than merely looked into the present volume, they must have seen, that to eradicate, and, if possible, to preclude both the one and the other, stands prominent among its avowed objects.

Of William Law's Works I am acquainted with the Serious Call; and besides this I remember to have read a small Tract on Prayer, if I mistake not, as I easily may, it being at least six-and-twenty years since I saw it. He may in this or in other tracts have quoted the same passages from the fourth Gospel, which I have done. But surely this affords no presumption that my conclusions are the same with his; still less, that they are drawn from the same premisses; and least of all, that they were adopted from his writings. Whether Law has used the phrase, assimilation by faith, I know not; but I know that I should expose myself to a just charge of an idle parade of my reading, if I recapitulated the tenth part of the authors, ancient and modern, Romish and Reformed, from Law to Clemens Alexandrinus and Irenaeus, in whose works the same phrase occurs in the same sense. And after all, on such a subject, how worse than childish is the whole dispute!

Is the fourth Gospel authentic? And is the interpretation I have given true or false? These are the only questions which a wise man would put, or a Christian be anxious to an-

swer. I not only believe it to be the true sense of the texts; but I assert that it is the only true, rational, and even tolerable sense. And this position alone I conceive myself interested in defending. I have studied with an open and fearless spirit the attempts of sundry learned critics of the Continent to invalidate the authenticity of this Gospel, before and since Eichhorn's Vindication. The result has been a clearer assurance and (as far as this was possible) a yet deeper conviction of the genuineness of all the writings which the Church has attributed to this Apostle. That those, who have formed an opposite conclusion, should object to the use of expressions which they had ranked among the most obvious marks of spuriousness, follows as a matter of course. But that men, who with a clear and cloudless assent receive the sixth chapter of this Gospel as a faithful, nay, inspired record of an actual discourse, should take offence at the repetition of words which the Redeemer himself in the perfect foreknowledge that they would confirm the disbelieving, alienate the unsteadfast and transcend the present capacity even of his own elect, had chosen as the most appropriate; and which, after the most decisive proofs that they were misinterpreted by the greater number of his hearers, and not understood by any, he nevertheless repeated with stronger emphasis and without comment as the only appropriate symbols of the great truth he was declaring, and to realize which

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--that in their own discourses these men

**Of which our, *he was made flesh*, is a very inadequate translation. The Church of England in this as in other doctrinal points has preserved the golden mean between the superstitious reverence of the Romanists, and the avowed contempt of the Sectarians, for the writings of the Fathers, and the authority and unimpeached traditions of the Church during the first three or four centuries. And how, consistently with this honorable characteristic of our Church, a minister of the same could, on the Sacramentary scheme now in fashion, return even a plausible answer to Arnauld's great work on Transubstantiation, (not without reason the boast of the Romish Church), exceeds my powers of conjecture. should hang back from all express reference to these words, as if they were afraid or ashamed of them, though the earliest recorded ceremonies and liturgical forms of the primitive Church are absolutely inexplicable, except in connexion with this discourse, and with the mysterious and spiritual, not allegorical and merely ethical, import of the same; and though this import is solemnly and in the most unequivocal terms asserted and taught by their own Church, even in her Catechism, or Compendium of doctrines necessary for all her members;--this I may, perhaps, understand; but this I am not able to vindicate or excuse.

There is, however, one opprobrious phrase which it may be profitable for my younger readers that I should explain, namely, Mysticism. And for this purpose I will quote a sentence or two from a dialogue which, had my prescribed limits permitted, I should have attached to the present work; but which with an Essay* on the Church as instituted by Christ, and

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as an establishment of the State, and a series of Letters on the right and the superstitious use and estimation of the Bible, will appear in a small volume by themselves, should the reception given to the present volume encourage or permit the publication.

MYSTICS AND MYSTICISM.

Antinous.--"What do you call mysticism? And do you use the word in a good or in a bad sense?"

Nous.--"In the latter only; as far, at least, as we are concerned with it. When a man refers to inward feelings and experiences, of which mankind at large are not conscious, as evidences of the truth of any opinion--such

*See the Church and State, 3rd edit. a man I call a Mystic: and the grounding of any theory or belief on accidents and anomalies of individual sensations or fancies, and the use of peculiar terms invented, or perverted from their ordinary significations, for the purpose of expressing these idiosyncrasies and pretended facts of interior consciousness, I name Mysticism. Where the error consists simply in the Mystic's attaching to these anomalies of his individual temperament the character of reality, and in receiving them as permanent truths, having a subsistence in the divine mind, though revealed to himself alone; but entertains this persuasion without demanding or expecting the same faith in his neighbours--I should regard it as a species of enthusiasm, always indeed to be deprecated, but yet capable of co-existing with many excellent qualities both of head and heart. But when the Mystic, by ambition or still meaner passions, or (as sometimes is the case) by an uneasy and self-doubting state of mind which seeks confirmation in outward sympathy, is led to impose his faith, as a duty, on mankind generally: and when with such views he asserts that the same experiences would be vouchsafed, the same truths revealed, to every man but for his secret wickedness and unholy will;--such a Mystic is a fanatic, and in certain states of the public mind a dangerous member of society. And most so in those ages and countries in which fanatics of elder standing are allowed to persecute the fresh competitor. For under these predicaments, Mysticism, though originating in the singularities of an individual nature, and therefore essentially anomalous, is nevertheless highly contagious. It is apt to collect a swarm and cluster *circum fana*, around the new fane; and therefore merits the name of *fanaticism*, or as the Germans say, *Schwarmery*, that is swarm-making."

We will return to the harmless species, the enthusiastic Mystics;--a species that may again be subdivided into two ranks. And it will not be other than germane to the subject, if I endeavour to describe them in a sort of allegory or parable. Let us imagine a poor pilgrim benighted in a wilderness or desert, and pursuing his way in the starless dark with a lantern in his hand. Chance or his happy genius leads him to an *oasis* or natural garden, such as in the creations of my youthful fancy I supposed Enos,* the child of Cain to have found. And here, hungry and thirsty, the way-wearied man rests at a fountain; and the taper of his lantern throws its light on an over-shadowing tree, a boss of snow-white blossoms, through which the green and growing fruits peeped, and the ripe golden fruitage glowed. Deep, vivid, and faithful

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*Will the reader forgive me if I attempt at once to illustrate and relieve the subject by annexing the first stanza of the poem composed in the same year in which I wrote the *Ancient Mariner* and the first book of *Christabel*?

"Encinctur'd with a twine of leaves,
 That leafy twine his only dress!
 A lovely boy was plucking fruits
 In a moonlight wilderness.
 The moon was bright, the air was free,
 And fruits and flowers together grew
 On many a shrub and many a tree:
 And all put on a gentle hue,
 Hanging in the shadowy air
 Like a picture rich and rare.
 It was a climate where, they say.
 The night is more belov'd than day.
 But who that beauteous boy begui'd,
 That beauteous boy, to linger here?
 Alone, by night, a little child.
 In place so silent and so wild —
 Has he no friend, no loving mother near?"
 Wanderings of Cain. Poet, works, II. p. 100.

[continue]are the impressions, which the lovely imagery comprised within the scanty circle of light, makes and leaves on his memory. But scarcely has he eaten of the fruits and drunk of the fountain, ere scared by the roar and howl from the desert he hurries forward; and as he passes with hasty steps through grove and glade, shadows and imperfect beholdings and vivid fragments of things distinctly seen blend with the past and present shapings of his brain. Fancy modifies sight. His dreams transfer their forms to real objects; and these lend a substance and an outness to his dreams. Apparitions greet him; and when at a distance from this enchanted land, and on a different track, the dawn of day discloses to him a caravan, a troop of his fellow-men, his memory, which is itself half fancy, is interpolated afresh by every attempt to recall, connect, and piece out his recollections. His narration is received as a madman's tale. He shrinks from the rude laugh and contemptuous sneer, and retires into himself. Yet the craving for sympathy, strong in proportion to the intensity of his convictions, impels him to unbosom himself to abstract auditors; and the poor quietest becomes a penman, and, all too poorly stocked for the writer's trade, he borrows his phrases and figures from the only writings to which he has had access, the sacred books of his religion. And thus I shadow out the enthusiast Mystic of the first sort; at the head of which stands

the illuminated, Teutonic theosopher and shoemaker, honest Jacob Behmen, born near Gorlitz, in Upper Lusatia, in the 17th of our Elizabeth's reign, and who died in the 22nd of her successor's.

To delineate a Mystic of the second and higher order, we need only endow our pilgrim with equal gifts of nature, but these developed and displayed by all the aids and arts of education and favourable fortune. He is on

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his way to the Mecca of his ancestral and national faith, with a well-guarded and numerous procession of niei> chants and fellow-pilgrims, on the established track. At the close of day the caravan has halted : the full moon rises on the desert : and he strays forth alone^ out of sight but to no unsafe distance ; and chance leads him, too, to the same oasis or islet of verdure on the sea oi sand. He wanders at leisure in its maze of beieiuty and sweetness, and thrids his way through the odorous and flowering thickets into open spots of greenery, and dis* covers statues and memorial characters, grottoes, and refreshing caves. But the moonshine, the imaginative poesy o[Nature, spreads its soft shadowy charm overall, conceals distances, and magnifies heights, and modifies relations ; and fills up vacuities with its own whiteness, counterfeiting substance ; and where the dense shadows lie, makes solidity imitate hoUovniess ; and gives to all objects a tender visionary hue and softening. Interpret the moonlight and the shadows as the peculiar genius and sensibiUty of the individual's own spirit : and here you have the other sort : a Mystic, an enthusiast of a nobler breed — ^a Fenelon. But the residentiary, or the frequent visiter of the favoured spot, who has scanned its beauties by steady daylight^ and mastered its true proportions and lineaments, he wUl discover that both jnlgrims have indeed been there. He will know, that the delightful dream, which the latter tells, is a dream of truth ; and that even in the bewildered tale of the former there is truth mingled with the dream.

But the source, the spring-head, of the charges which I anticipate, lies deep. Materialism, conscicms and avowed Materialism, is in ill repute : and a confessed Materialist therefore a rare character. But if the faith be ascertained by the fruits : if the predominant, though

most often unsuspected, persuasion is to be learnt from the influences, under which the thoughts and affections of the man move and take their direction; I must reverse the position. Only not all are Materialists. Except a few individuals, and those for the most part of a single sect: every one, who calls himself a Christian, holds himself to have a soul as well as a body. He distinguishes mind from matter, the subject of his consciousness from the objects of the same. The former is his mind: and he says, it is immaterial. But though subject and substance are words of kindred roots, nay, little less than equivalent terms, yet nevertheless it is exclusively to sensible objects, to bodies, to modifications of matter, that he habitually attaches the attributes of reality, of substance. Real and tangible, substantial and material, are synonyms for him. He never indeed asks himself, what he means by mind? But if he did, and

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tasked himself to return an honest answer--as to what, at least, he had hitherto meant by it--he would find, that he had described it by negatives, as the opposite of bodies, for example, as a somewhat opposed to solidity, to visibility, and the like, as if you could abstract the capacity of a vessel, and conceive of it as a somewhat by itself, and then give to the emptiness the properties of containing, holding, being entered, and so forth. In short, though the proposition would perhaps be angrily denied in words, yet in fact he thinks of his mind, as a property, or accident of a something else, that he calls a soul or spirit: though the very same difficulties must recur, the moment he should attempt to establish the difference. For either this soul or spirit is nothing but a thinner body, a finer mass of matter: or the attribute of self-subsistency vanishes from the soul on the same grounds, on which it is refused to the mind.

I am persuaded, however, that the dogmatism of the Corpuscular School, though it still exerts an influence on men's notions and phrases, has received a mortal blow from the increasingly dynamic spirit of the physical sciences now highest in public estimation. And it may safely be predicted that the results will extend beyond the intention of those who are gradually effecting this revolution. It is not chemistry alone that will be indebted to the genius of Davy, Oersted, and their compeers: and not as the founder of physiology and philosophic anatomy alone, will mankind love and revere the name of John Hunter. These men have not only taught, they have compelled us to admit, that the immediate objects of our senses, or rather the grounds of the visibility and tangibility of all objects of sense, bear the same relation and similar proportion to the intelligible object--that is, to the object which we actually mean when we say, "It is such or such a thing," or "I have seen this or that."--as the paper, ink, and differently combined straight and curved lines of an edition of Homer bear to what we understand by the words, Iliad and Odyssey. Nay, nothing would be more easy than so to construct the paper, ink, painted capitals, and the like, of a printed disquisition on the eye, or the muscles and cellular texture (that is, the flesh) of the human body, as to bring together every one of the sensible and ponderable stuffs or elements, that are sensuously perceived in the eye itself, or in the flesh itself. Carbon and nitrogen, oxygen and hydrogen, sulphur, phosphorus, and one or two metals and metallic bases, constitute the whole. It cannot be these, therefore, that we mean by an eye, by our body. But perhaps it may be a particular combination of these? But here comes a question: In this term do you or do you not include the principle, the operating

cause, of the combination? If not, then detach this eye from the body. Look steadily at it--as it might lie on the marble slab of a dissecting room. Say it were the eye of a murderer, a Bellingham: or the eye of a murdered patriot, a Sidney!--Behold it, handle it, with its "various accompaniments or constituent parts, of tendon, ligament, membrane, blood-vessel, gland, humors; its nerves of sense, of sensation, and of motion. Alas! all these names like that of the organ itself, are so many anachronisms, figures of speech, to express that which

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has been: as when the guide points with his finger to a heap of stones and tells the traveller, "That is Babylon, or Persepolis." Is this cold jelly *the light of the body*? Is this the *micranthropos* in the marvellous microcosm? Is this what you mean when you well define the eye as the telescope and the mirror of the soul, the seat and agent of an almost magical power?

Pursue the same inquisition with every other part of the body, whether integral or simply ingredient; and let a Berzelius or a Hatchett be your interpreter, and demonstrate to you what it is that in each actually meets your senses. And when you have heard the scanty catalogue, ask yourself if these are indeed the living flesh, the blood of life? Or not far rather--I speak of what, as a man of common sense, you really do, not what, as a philosopher, you ought to believe--is it not, I say, far rather the distinct and individualized agency that by the given combinations utters and bespeaks its presence? Justly and with strictest propriety of language may I say, speaks. It is to the coarseness of our senses, or rather to the defect and limitation of our percipient faculty, that the visible object appears the same even for a moment. The characters, which I am now shaping on this paper, abide. Not only the forms remain the same, but the particles of the colouring stuff are fixed, and, for an indefinite period at least, remain the same. But the particles that constitute the size, the visibility of an organic structure, are in perpetual flux. They are to the combining and constitutive power as the pulses of air to the voice of a discourser; or of one who sings a roundelay. The same words may be repeated; but in each second of time the articulated air hath passed away, and each act of articulation appropriates and gives momentary form to a new and other portion. As the column of blue smoke from a cottage chimney in the breathless summer noon, or the steadfast-seeming cloud on the edge point of a hill in the driving air-current, which momentarily condensed and recomposed is the common phantom of a thousand successors; such is the flesh, which our bodily eyes transmit to us; which our palates taste; which our hands touch.

But perhaps the material particles possess this combining power by inherent reciprocal attractions, repulsions, and elective affinities; and are themselves the joint artists of their own combinations? I will not reply, though well I might, that this would be to solve one problem by another, and merely to shift the mystery. It will be sufficient to remind the thoughtful querist, that even herein consists the essential difference, the contradistinction, of an organ from a machine; that not only the characteristic shape is evolved from the invisible central power, but the material mass itself is acquired by assimilation. The germinal power of the plant transmutes the fixed air and the elementary base of water into grass or leaves; and on these the organic principle in the ox or the elephant exercises an alchemy still more stupendous. As the unseen agency weaves its magic eddies, the foliage becomes

indifferently the bone and its marrow, the pulpy brain, or the solid ivory. That what you see is blood, is flesh, is itself the work, or shall I say, the translucence, of the invisible energy, which soon surrenders or abandons them to inferior powers, (for there is no pause nor chasm in the activities of nature) which repeat a similar metamorphosis according to their kind;--these are not fancies, conjectures, or even hypotheses, but facts; to deny which is impossible, not to reflect on which is ignominious. And we need only reflect on them with a calm and silent spirit to learn the utter emptiness and unmeaningness of the vaunted Mechanicocorpuscular philosophy, with both its twins, Materialism on the one hand, and Idealism, rightlier named subjective Idolism, on the other: the one obtruding on us a world of spectres and apparitions; the other a mazy dream.

Let the Mechanic or Corpuscular scheme, which in its absoluteness and strict consistency was first introduced by Des Cartes, be judged by the results. By its fruits shall it be known.

In order to submit the various *phaenomena* of moving bodies to geometrical construction, we are under the necessity of abstracting from corporeal substance all its positive properties, and obliged to consider bodies as differing from equal portions of space** only by figure

**Such is the conception of body in Des Cartes' own system. Body is every where confounded with matter, and might in the Cartesian sense be defined space or extension, with the attribute of visibility. As Des Cartes at the same time zealously asserted the existence of intelligential beings, the reality and independent self-subsistence of the soul. Berkeleyanism or Spinosism was the immediate and necessary consequence. Assume a plurality of self-subsisting souls, and we have Berkeleyanism; assume one only (*unam et unicam substantiam*), and you have Spinosism, that is, the assertion of one infinite self-subsistent, with the two attributes of thinking and appearing. *Cogitatio infinita sine centra, et omniformis apparitio*. How far the Newtonian *vis inertiae* (interpreted any otherwise than as an arbitrary term = $x y z$, to represent the unknown but necessary and mobility. And as a fiction of science, it would be difficult to overvalue this invention. It possesses the same merits in relation to geometry that the atomic theory has in relation to algebraic calculus. But in contempt of common sense, and in direct opposition to the express declarations of the inspired historian (*Gen. i*), and to the tone and spirit of the Scriptures throughout, Des Cartes propounded it as truth of fact: and instead of a world created and filled with productive forces by the almighty *Fiat*, left a lifeless machine whirled about by the dust of its own grinding; as if death could come from the living fountain of life; nothingness and phantom from the plenitude of reality, the absoluteness of creative will!

Holy! Holy! Holy! let me be deemed mad by all men, if such be thy ordinance; but, O! from such madness save and preserve me, my God!

supplement or integration of the Cartesian notion of body) has patched up the flaw, I leave for more competent judges to decide. But should any one of my readers feel an interest

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in the speculative principles of natural philosophy, and should be master of the German language, I warmly recommend for his perusal the earliest known publication of the great founder of the Critical Philosophy, (written in the twenty-second year of his age!) on the then eager controversy between the Leibnitzian and the French and English Mathematicians, respecting the living forces--*Gedanken von der wahren Schatzung der lebendigen Kräfte*: 1747--in which Kant demonstrates the right reasoning to be with the latter; but the truth of the fact, the evidence of experience, with the former; and gives the explanation, namely: body, or corporeal nature, is something else and more than geometrical extension, even with the addition of a *vis inertiae*. And Leibnitz with the Bernouillis, erred in the attempt to demonstrate geometrically a problem not susceptible of geometrical construction. This tract, with the succeeding *Himmels-System*, may with propriety be placed, after the *Principia* of Newton, among the striking instances of early genius; and as the first product of the dynamic philosophy in the physical sciences, from the time, at least, of Giordano Bruno, whom the idolaters burned for an Atheist, at Rome, in the year 1600. See *The Friend*, vol. i, p. 151-155. 3d edit.

When, however, after a short interval, the genius of Kepler expanded and organized in the soul of Newton, and there (if I may hazard so bold an expression) refining itself into an almost celestial clearness, had expelled the Cartesian *vortices*;** then the necessity of an active power, of positive forces present in the material universe, forced itself on the conviction. For as a law without a lawgiver is a mere abstraction; so a law without an agent to realize it, a constitution without an abiding executive, is, in fact, not a law but an idea. In the profound emblem of the great tragic poet, it is the powerless Prometheus fixed on a barren rock. And what was the result? How was this necessity provided for? God himself--my hand trembles as I write! Rather, then, let me employ the word, which the religious feeling, in its perplexity, suggested as the substitute--the Deity itself was declared to be the real agent, the actual gravitating power! The law and the lawgiver were identified. God says Dr. Priestley) not only does, but is every thing. *Jupiter est quodcunque vides*. And thus a system, which commenced by excluding all life and immanent activity from the visible universe, and evacuating the natural world of all nature, ended by substituting the Deity, and reducing the Creator to a mere

**For Newton's own doubtfully suggested ether, or most subtle fluid, as the ground and immediate agent in the *phaenomena* of universal gravitation, was either not adopted or soon abandoned by his disciples; not only as introducing, against his own canons of right reasoning, an *ens imaginarium* into physical science, a suffiction in the place of a legitimate supposition; but because the substance (assuming it to exist) must itself form part of the problem which it was meant to solve. Meantime Leibnitz's pre-established harmony, which originated in Spinoza, found no acceptance; and, lastly, the notion of a corpuscular substance, with properties put into it, like a pincushion hidden by the pins, could pass with the unthinking

only for any thing more than a confession of ignorance, or technical terms expressing a *hiatus* of scientific insight *anima mundi*: a scheme that has no advantage over Spinosism but its inconsistency, which does indeed make it suit a certain order of intellects, who, like the *pleuro nectae* (or flat fish) in ichthyology which have both eyes on the same side, never see but half of a subject at one lime, and forgetting the one before they get to the other are sure not to detect any inconsistency between them.

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And what has been the consequence? An increasing unwillingness to contemplate the Supreme Being in his personal attributes: and thence a distaste to all the peculiar doctrines of the Christian Faith, the Trinity, the Incarnation of the Son of God, and Redemption. The young and ardent, ever too apt to mistake the inward triumph in the detection of error for a positive love of truth, are among the first and most frequent victims to this epidemic *fastidium*. Alas! even the sincerest seekers after light are not safe from the contagion. Some have I known, constitutionally religious--I speak feelingly; for I speak of that which for a brief period was my own state--who under this unhealthful influence have been so estranged from the heavenly Father, the living God, as even to shrink from the personal pronouns as applied to the Deity. But many do I know, and yearly meet with, in whom a false and sickly taste co-operates with the prevailing fashion: many, who find the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, far too real, too substantial; who feel it more in harmony with their indefinite sensations

To worship nature in the hill and valley,
Not knowing what they love;--

and (to use the language, but not the sense or purpose of the great poet of our age) would fain substitute for the Jehovah of their Bible A sense sublime

Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air;
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought.
And rolls through all things!

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WORDSWORTH.

And this from having been educated to understand the divine omnipresence in any sense rather than the only safe and legitimate one, the presence of all things to God!

Be it, however, that the number of such men is comparatively small! And be it (as in fact it often is) but a brief stage, a transitional state, in the process of intellectual growth! Yet among a numerous and increasing class of the higher and middle ranks, there is an inward

withdrawing from the life and personal being of God, a turning of the thoughts exclusively to the so-called physical attributes, to the onnipresence in the counterfeit form of ubiquity, to the immensity, the infinity, the immutability;--the attributes of space with a notion of power as their *substratum*,--a Fate, in short not a moral creator and governor! Let intelligence be imagined, and wherein does the conception of God differ essentially from that of gravitation (conceived as the cause of gravity) in the understanding of those, who represent the Deity not only as a necessary but as a necessitated being; those, for whom justice is but a scheme of general laws; and holiness, and the divine hatred of sin, yea and sin itself, are words without meaning, or accommodations to a rude and barbarous race? Hence, I more than fear the prevailing taste for books of natural theology, physico-theology, demonstrations of God from nature, evidences of of Christianity, and the like. Evidences of Christianity!

I am weary of the word. Make a man feel the want of it; rouse him, if you can, to the self-knowledge, of his need of it; and you may safely trust it to its own evidence,--remembering only the express declaration of Christ himself: *No man cometh to me, unless the Father leadeth him?* Whatever more is desirable--I speak now with reference to Christians generally, and not to professed students of theology--may, in my judgment, be far more safely and profitably taught, without controversy or the supposition of infidel antagonists, in the form of Ecclesiastical history.

The last fruit of the Mechanico-corpuscular philosophy, say rather of the mode and direction of feeling and thinking produced by it on the educated class of society; or that result, which as more immediately connected with my present theme I have reserved for the last--is the habit of attaching all our conceptions and feelings, and of applying all the words and phrases expressing reality, to the objects of the senses: more accurately speaking, to the images and sensations by which their presence is made known to us. Now I do not hesitate to assert, that it was one of the great purposes of Christianity, and included in the process of our redemption, to rouse and emancipate the soul from this debasing slavery to the outward senses, to awaken the mind to the true criteria of reality, namely, permanence, power, will manifested in act, and truth operating as life. My words, said Christ, *are spirit*; and they (that is, the spiritual powers expressed by them) *are truth*;--that is, very being. For this end our Lord, who came from heaven to *take captivity captive*, chose the words and names, that designate the familiar yet most important objects of sense, the nearest and most concerning things and incidents of corporeal nature: water, flesh, blood, birth, bread! But he used them in senses, that could not without absurdity be supposed to respect the mere phaenomena, water, flesh, and the like, in senses that by no possibility could apply to the color, figure, specific mode of touch or taste produced on ourselves, and by which we are made aware of the presence of the things, and understand them--*res, quae sub apparitionibus istis statuendae sunt*. And this awful recalling of the drowsed soul from the dreams and phantom world of sensuality to actual reality,--how has it been evaded! These words, that

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were spirit--these mysteries, which even the Apostles must wait for the Paraclete, in order to comprehend,--these spiritual things which can only be spiritually discerned,--were mere metaphors, figures of speech, oriental hyperboles! "All this means only morality!" Ah! how far nearer to the truth would these men have been had they said that morality means all this!

The effect, however, has been most injurious to the best interests of our Universities, to our incomparably constituted Church, and even to our national character. The few who have read my two Lay Sermons, are no strangers to my opinions on this head: and in my treatise on the Church and Churches, I shall, if providence vouchsafe, submit them to the public, with their grounds and historic evidences in a more systematic form.

I have, I am aware, in this present work furnished occasion for a charge of having expressed myself with slight and irreverence of celebrated names, especially of the late Dr. Paley. O, if I were fond and ambitious of literary honour, of public applause, how well content should I be to excite but one third of the admiration, which, in my inmost being, I feel for the head and heart of Paley! And how gladly would I surrender all hope of contemporary praise, could I even approach to the incomparable grace, propriety, and persuasive facility of his writings! But on this very account I believe myself bound in conscience to throw the whole force of my intellect in the way of this triumphal car, on which the tutelary genius of modern idolatry is borne, even at the risk of being crushed under the wheels! I have at this moment before my eyes the eighteenth of his Posthumous Discourses: the amount of which is briefly this--that all the words and passages in the New Testament which express and contain the peculiar doctrines of Christianity, the paramount objects of the Christian Revelation, all those which speak so strongly of the value, benefit, and efficacy, of the death of Christ, assuredly mean something: but what they mean, nobody, it seems, can tell! But doubtless we shall discover it, and be convinced that there is a substantial sense belonging to these words--in a future state! Is there an enigma, or an absurdity, in the Koran or the Vedas, which might not be defended on the same pretence? A similar impression, I confess, was left on my mind by Dr. Magee's statement or exposition (*ad normam Grotianam*) of the doctrine of Redemption; and deeply did it disappoint the high expectations, sadly did it chill the fervid sympathy which his introductory chapter, his manly and masterly disquisition on the sacrificial rites of Paganism, had raised in my mind.

And yet I cannot read the pages of Paley, here referred to, aloud, without the liveliest sense, how plausible and popular they will sound to the great majority of readers. Thousands of sober, and in their way pious. Christians will echo the words, together with Magee's kindred interpretation of the death of Christ, and adopt the doctrine for their make-faith:



and why? It is feeble. And whatever is feeble is always plausible; for it favours mental indolence. It is feeble: and feebleness, in the disguise of confessing and condescending strength, is, always popular. It flatters the reader, by removing the apprehended distance between him and the superior author; and it flatters him still more by enabling him to transfer to himself, and to appropriate, this superiority: and thus to make his very weakness the mark and evidence of his strength. Ay, quoth the rational Christian--or with a sighing, self-soothing sound between an Ay and an Ah!--I am content to think, with the great Dr. Paley, and the learned Archbishop of Dublin--

Man of sense! Dr. Paley was a great man, and Dr. Magee is a learned and exemplary prelate; but You do not think at all!

With regard to the convictions avowed and enforced in my own Work, I will continue my address to the man of sense in the words of an old philosopher:--*Tu vero crassis auribus et obstinato corde respuis quae forsitan vere perhibeantur. Minus hercule calles pravissimis opinionibus ea putari mendacia, quae vel auditu nova, vel visu rudia, vel certe supra captum cogitationis (extemporaneae tuae) ardua videantur: qua si paulo accuratius exploraris, non modo compertu evidentialia, sed etiam factu facilia, senties.***

IN compliance with the suggestion of a judicious friend, the celebrated conclusion of the fourth book of Paley's Moral and Political Philosophy, referred to in p. 267 of this Volume, is here transcribed for the convenience of the reader:-- "Had Jesus Christ delivered no other declaration than the following--"The hour is coming, in the which

** *Apu'. Metam. I. Ed.* all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation;--he had pronounced a message of inestimable importance, and well worthy of that splendid apparatus of prophecy and miracles with which his mission was introduced, and attested; a message in which the wisest of mankind would rejoice to find an answer to their doubts, and rest to their inquiries. It is idle to say, that a future state had been discovered already:--it had been discovered as the Copernican system was:--it was one guess among many. He alone discovers, who proves; and no man can prove this point, but the teacher who testifies by miracles that his doctrine comes from God."

Paedianus says of Virgil,--*Usque adeo expers invidiae ut siquid erudite dictum inspiceret alterius, non minus gauderet ac si suum esset.* My own heart assures me that this is less than the truth: that Virgil would have read a beautiful passage in the work of another with a higher and purer delight than in a work of his own, because free from the apprehension of his judgment being warped by self-love, and without that repressive modesty akin to shame, which in a delicate mind holds in check a man's own secret thoughts and feelings, when they respect himself. The cordial admiration with which I peruse the preceding passage as a masterpiece of composition, would, could I convey it, serve as a measure of the vital im-

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portance I attach to the convictions which impelled me to animadvert on the same passage as doctrine.



APPENDIX.

A SYNOPTICAL SUMMARY OF THE SCHEME OF THE ARGUMENT TO PROVE THE DIVERSITY IN KIND, OF THE REASON AND THE UNDERSTANDING. SEE P. 161.

The position to be proved is the difference in kind of the understanding from the reason.

The axiom, on which the proof rests, is: subjects, which require essentially different general definitions, differ in kind and not merely in degree. For difference in degree forms the ground of specific definitions, but not of generic or general.

Now reason is considered either in relation to the will and moral being, when it is termed the **practical reason = A: or relatively to the intellective and sciential faculties, when it is termed theoretic or speculative reason = *a*. In order therefore to be compared with the reason, the understanding must in like manner be distinguished into the understanding as a principle of action,

**N. B. The practical reason alone is reason in the full and substantive sense. It is reason in its own sphere of perfect freedom; as the source of ideas, which ideas, in their conversion to the responsible will, become ultimate ends. On the other hand, theoretic reason, as the ground of the universal and absolute in all logical conclusion, is rather the light of reason in the understanding, and known to be such by its contrast with the contingency and particularity which characterize all the proper and indigenous growths of the understanding. in which relation I call it the adaptive power, or the faculty of selecting and adapting means and medial of proximate ends = B: and the understanding, as a mode and faculty of thought, when it is called reflection = *b*. Accordingly, I give the general definitions of these four: that is, I describe each severally by its essential characters: and I find, that the definition of A differs *toto genere* from that of B, and the definition of a from that of *b*.

Now subjects that require essentially different definitions do themselves differ in kind. But understanding, and reason, require essentially different definitions. Therefore understanding and reason differ in kind.

The End.



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