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SEVEN ANSWERS,

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SEVEN ANSWERS

TO THE

SEVEN ESSAYS AND REVIEWS.

By JOHN NASH GRIFFIN, M.A.

OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN; FORMERLY SENIOR MODERATOR AND UNIVERSITY GOLD MEDALLIST IN MATHEMATICS AND PHYSICS; AND MODERATOR AND MEDALLIST IN ETHICS AND LOGICS;

INCUMBENT OF ST. MARY'S, SPRING GROVE.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION,

BY THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH NAPIER,

LATE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND.

London:

LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, & ROBERTS.

1862.

WESTMINSTER:
PRINTED BY THOMAS BRETTELL, RUPERT STREET, HAYMARKET.

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PREFACE.

THE following Answers to the "Essays and Reviews" were originally published in Special Supplements to "THE LONDON REVIEW." They are now reprinted in the more permanent form of a Volume with little more than a few verbal alterations. Being limited both as to time and space when writing them, the arguments throughout are necessarily condensed, but it will be found that every point of any importance in the Essays and Reviews has been noticed, and I venture to hope refuted.

The importance to the Church of Christ of the questions at issue, cannot be overstated. Now that the first excitement naturally produced by the publication of the Essays has passed away, calm reflection confirms the verdict which the religious faith of this Christian nation intuitively pronounced. Indeed, the more the views put forward are considered, the more do they appear opposed, not only to the teaching of the Church of England, but to that of the Church in all ages.

I have to acknowledge my deep obligation to the Right Honourable JOSEPH NAPIER, for the very valuable Introduction from his graceful and able pen prefixed to this volume. In him we have a bright example of the union of humblest faith with the

highest order of intellect, of a mind which can grasp the abstrusest questions of law and politics, and yet loves, with the simplicity of a little child, to learn wisdom from the Bible.

I feel that I should also express my thanks to the Managers of THE LONDON REVIEW for opening the pages of their very able, instructive, and interesting paper for the discussion of this question, at a time when it was most important it should be noticed; thus enabling me, through its wide circulation, to command the attention of a far larger number of persons than otherwise I could possibly have done.

I humbly commend to God's blessing this attempt to vindicate His truth, and maintain the divine character of His word.

PARSONAGE,
SPRING GROVE, MIDDLESEX,—W.
18*th December*, 1861.

INTRODUCTION.

As a tribute to a friendship of long standing, and a token of esteem for a faithful and able Minister of the Church to which I belong, I have, at the request of Mr. GRIFFIN, drawn up an Introduction to this volume, which contains his answers to the "Essays and Reviews."

A free and full discussion of the important questions which have so much attracted public attention, in consequence of the publication, to which I have alluded, seems to me at present not only unavoidable but desirable. Good service may be done by every faithful appeal to the judgment and the conscience of thoughtful readers, and whatever disturbance of convictions, whatever diffusion of doubts may attend the clearing process, the triumph of truth in the end cannot be doubtful.

I do not take upon me to pronounce on the views which Mr. Griffin has forcibly and lucidly put forward in reply to the Essayists; each reader is

bound to form his own responsible judgment upon them. On the personal question which has been much stirred, as to the complicity of each of the Essayists, in the opinions set forth by his associates, I would say, that as the compiler of the volume obviously meant that it should do its work, *as a whole*, so he must have calculated (if not intended) that each Essay would be read in the light and the shadow of the others, and that the effect of the whole would thus be cumulative and combined. It is therefore open to those who come forward to reply—to treat the publication as one entire volume; to answer the Essays as a combined whole, as well as in detail; but at the same time I cannot see the necessity, nor admit the justice of imputing to any one of the writers the adoption or approval of any view to which his own independent sanction has not been given. The protest at the beginning, the note at the close of the later editions, plainly intimate that the Essayists are not prepared to share in a joint responsibility.

"There is something" (says Coleridge) "to my mind at once elevating and soothing, in the idea of an order of learned men reading the many works of the wise and great in many languages, for the purpose of making one book contain the life and virtue of all others, for their brethren's use, who have but that one to read." (Notes on English Divines, Vol. I. p. 119). It is indeed instructive and elevating to the head and heart to study the works of such men of this order,

as Dr. Lee, Mr. Westcott, and Dr. Wordsworth, with others like-minded, who have offered their contributions to the common stock of biblical exegesis, in a spirit and with a power worthy of the sacred subject, and of the order to which it is their privilege to belong. Painful, then, is the contrast, when we turn to the pages of other men of the same order, and find them labouring to demolish what they were peculiarly bound to uphold, and undermining the very foundations of Revealed Truth. If miracles are impossible, or incredible if possible, if prophecy is a pretence, if sacred history is but a myth, the Church is a monster fraud, and the Clergy are but "common cheats." The swords of some of the Essayists are two-edged; their use of them, suicidal.

Our Church, it may be admitted, does not expressly propound any preconceived theory of inspiration, nor does she profess to limit the influence or define the operation of the Holy Spirit. But in her formularies, it is not left open to doubtful disputation, whether the living oracles of God have been preserved in the accredited canon of the Old and New Testament, emphatically described as "the pure Word of God," of which the Church has been made the witness and the keeper. In this sacred volume, *and in this only*, all things necessary to salvation are said to be contained. A guard of honour (as it were) is placed around it, in acknowledgment of its perfect truthfulness, and paramount authority.

To drag it down to the level of human composition, is to degrade and dishonour what is supernatural and inspired; to seek its full interpretation in the common method of expounding the language of works of human learning, in the cold canons of grammar and of criticism, is to seek the living amongst the dead, to confound the Word of the living God, and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, with the language of fallible man and the aspirations of the human soul. The Bible speaks to our faith; the Spirit bears witness with our spirit; the truths of God's pure and Holy Word are spiritually discerned.

It does not appear that our blessed Lord ever propounded in terms any sharply-defined theory of inspiration, but how conclusive is his perfect example as to the deference due to the Divine Authority of the Word of God! He who spake as never man spake —Himself the way, the truth, and the life—appeals to the written Word as "the supreme law." The Genesis, the creation of man, the writings of Moses, the history of Abraham and of Noah, the fate of Lot's wife, the typical story of Jonah, the three known divisions of the Old Testament, the prophecies concerning Himself—each and all are on the fitting occasions made the subject of direct reference, and dealt with as the recorded and inspired truth of the living and the true God. He confounds cavillers with the difficulties which their reason could not solve, and which the Spirit, whom they grieved, would not remove. But to the humble and the meek, who were willing

to listen with the gentle and simple docility of childhood, He unfolds the Divine truths which are contained in the pure pages of the inspired volume, hidden then, as now, from "the wise and prudent"—the self-sufficient and pretentious—wise only in the wisdom which knew not God—but revealed unto babes—to the trusting faith, the loving heart, the artless simplicity of the child. Lord Bacon has observed with memorable wisdom that "as in the inquiry of Divine truth the pride of man hath ever inclined to leave the oracles of God's Word, and to vanish in the mixture of their own inventions, so in the self-same manner in inquisition of nature they have ever left the oracle of God's works, and adored the deceiving and deformed imagery which the unequal mirrors of their own minds have represented unto them. Nay, it is a point fit and necessary in the front and beginning of this work, without hesitation or reservation to be professed, that it is no less true in this human kingdom of knowledge than in God's kingdom of heaven, that no man shall enter into it except he become first as a little child." (3 Vol. Sped. Ed., p. 224; 4 Vol. 69). The wisdom which led him onward as the great reformer of physical science, had its fresh springs in the Divine Word. This taught him that man must learn, with a child's docility, the lessons which God has revealed in His word, or written in his works. By patient observation and calm reflection man is qualified to be a minister and interpreter of nature. The method has been tried, and has led

to great discoveries in physical science; mental and ethical science has, in like manner, though at a later period, shared in the benefit of this reformed philosophy. It has been a work of no common toil to sweep away the cobweb systems of centuries, the entangled hypothesis, and the speculative theory, which exhausted human energy, and diverted inquiry from the direct path of scientific progress. Strange that the great volume, the Word of Revealed Truth, should await the application to itself of its authoritative aphorism.

My conviction deepens with repeated reflection on this subject, that the principles and true spirit of the inductive philosophy have yet to fulfil a gracious purpose in the appropriate study of the Holy Scriptures. When our contentious controversies which are 'of the earth earthy,' shall have been clean swept away, when learning and criticism shall have satisfied the devout scholar, in clearing the sacred text, and when our slow hearts shall have been quickened, and in the diligent search for truth, with faith and prayer, we have come with simplicity to God's Word, to seek therein the Divine knowledge of His will, of our destiny and our duties; willing to deal with the volume of His Word as with the volume of His works, expecting like difficulties in each, and recognising their relative purposes in the discipline of life, we may hope that there will be a genuine science of Scripture, a reformed philosophy of faith.

It is this animating hope, which has led me to take no greater interest in current theories in Biblical controversy, than is consistent with the earnest desire that they may give place to 'a more excellent way.' The dreamy and delusive abstractions about miracles for instance, properly belong to the age, when the many subtleties of the schools perplexed philosophy and profaned religion. 'Why should it be thought a thing *incredible* with you that God should raise the dead?' was the direct appeal of the inspired Apostle to the conscience and common sense of Agrippa? To what cause did our blessed Lord attribute the disbelief of the disciples in the testimony as to His resurrection? To their unbelief and hardness of heart (Mark xvi. 14.) 'The miracle itself' (says Mill in his Logic, 4th ed. p. 159) 'considered merely as an extraordinary fact may be satisfactorily certified by our senses or by testimony.' A fact which is possible is credible, and if credible, it is proveable. If there is a Being who has power over nature, whose will has endowed all the causes with the powers by which they produce their effects, a direct interposition of His will can realize the effect which He has ordained, and the purpose which He has designed. To reject miracles in the abstract, is to deny the power of God: to disbelieve the miracles of the Gospel is to harden the heart against the inspired record of the Holy Scriptures. "I have been used for many years," says Dr. Arnold, "to study the history of other times, and to examine and weigh

the evidence of those who have written about them, and I know of no one fact, in the history of mankind, which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer, than the great sign that God has given us, that Christ died and rose again from the dead." (Sermon on the Christian Life, 4th ed. 15, 16.)

If, indeed, we are all of us bound in the adamantine chains of physical necessity, if the moral order of the world be a delusion, if the prayer of the believer be powerless, 'if Christ be not risen,' it matters little whether pantheism or atheism be the reigning philosophy; the witnesses of God are found to be false, and His Word, which claims to be inspired, is falsified and discredited.

It is well worthy of observation, that throughout the volume of Essays and Reviews, there is not a new objection to be found; its scepticism is second-hand, if not stale. For my own part, I find, in the great work of Bishop Butler, ample materials for a sufficient if not complete reply. It may be that each hostile thrust has not been separately parried, but the onslaught has been met by moral considerations as well as by logical exposure, so as to bring conviction home to the heart of the candid and conscientious reader. The frame of nature, as the Apostle Paul has taught us, the visible and material world, left the Gentile without excuse, because these were *sufficient* to convince a moral and intelligent being of the eternal power and Godhead of the Almighty Creator. It is

then a practical, not a speculative question, practical indeed in the very highest sense,—whether they who have had Revealed Truth, the message of free salvation in the Holy Scriptures placed before them, with all its miraculous accompaniments, its external and internal evidences, its confirmations from without and from within, from history and from prophecy—whether they can without presumption the most reckless, without peril the most awful, discredit or neglect so great salvation?

The traditional authority of the Holy Scriptures, and the historical reality of the Christian religion, are more than enough to place men under the most solemn responsibility to which as moral, intelligent, and immortal creatures we could be subject. Difficulties, many and various, may be expected, and are to be found; but, blessed be God! they melt away before the loving heart, the patient search, the prayer of faith. What comfort, what encouragement is there, when we take up some of the objections, to which no sufficient answer could at one time have been given but this only, they may yet prove to be unfounded, and, in the course of God's providence, the full solution may yet be revealed. This expectation has in modern times been repeatedly realized long after the faithful heart that had cherished it had ceased to beat. To reproduce, in an English dress, the exhausted sophistry of continental sceptics, and bring out in a modern style the old exploded fallacies of our own native Deists, to ignore the detection of the sophistry,

and to disparage the authority of those who have answered and exposed the fallacies,—these are perverted efforts, of which we may say "an enemy hath done this." What is to be substituted for that which is sought to be swept away? To what are men to look for present guidance and for future hope, if the ancient landmarks are thus removed, and the old foundations thus destroyed? It is not to be denied that in more than one of these Essays may be found truthful and instructive suggestions. Lucid intervals occur in some, trains of thought in others, with which the unsound and sceptical portions are in melancholy contrast. The objectionable topics to which my attention has been mainly directed, are the depreciation of the truthfulness of the inspired Word of God, and the profaning of its proper interpretation. On the former I am not a theorist; I have no sharply-defined system, either to propound or to defend. I take the Bible to contain a positive and supernatural revelation made to man; to be an immediate inspiration of the Spirit. I believe that it teaches what is of unspeakable importance for me and all men to know, and that to him who seeks diligently therein for the truth as it is in Jesus, in the spirit and with the aids which the Scriptures themselves declare to be available and essential, will be disclosed what human reason cannot otherwise discover, nor yet discredit with impunity. In consulting the writings of the learned men to whom I have already referred, and also the excellent volume

of the works of Mr. Horne, which Mr. Ayre has recently edited, the candid searcher for truth who seeks honestly to test the doubts and difficulties which may have been designed 'to try him and to prove him,' will find an ample reward for patient reference and calm reflection. Let him remember this, that these Holy Scriptures, given by inspiration of God, and written for our learning, have been accepted in the fulness of their Divine authority by Ambrose and Augustine, Jerome and Origen, Clement and Chrysostom; by our colossal men, our Bacon, Newton, Locke, Boyle, Berkeley, and Butler; that in our own day the most eminent of our philosophers are also the most uncompromising believers in the inspired record, Sir David Brewster, Professor Owen, Sir Roderick Murchison, Professor Phillips, Sedgwick, Rawlinson, Whewell, Hincks, Robinson, and Lloyd, a cloud of witnesses—'the noble living and the noble dead:' men who have read the volumes of Nature and of Grace,—the Works and the Word of God—and have found what Lord Bacon has so aptly said, "That it was the same God who gave the Christian law to men that gave also those laws of Nature to inanimate creatures" (5th vol. p. 7). "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. iv. 11).

And now as to the question of interpretation, let us hear what John Selden has said. "The Scripture

may have more senses besides the literal, *because God understands all things at once;* but a man's writing has but one true sense, which is that which the Author meant when he writ it" (Table-talk, pp. 11, 12). Lord Bacon has dwelt upon this topic more than once. I would especially refer to the passages in Vol. 3, pp. 484–7, and the 5th Vol. 116–7. "The other method of interpretation," says this man of wisdom, "which I set down as an excess, appears at the first glance sober and modest, *yet in reality it both dishonours the Scriptures themselves, and is very injurious to the Church.* This is (in a word) when the divinely inspired Scriptures are explained in the same way as human writings. But we ought to remember that there are two things which are known to God, the Author of the Scriptures, but unknown to man; namely, the secrets of the heart, and the successions of time." "The function of language" (as Dugald Stewart has well observed) "is not so much to convey knowledge according to the common phrase from one mind to another, *as to bring two minds into the same train of thinking and to confine them as nearly as possible to the same track.* Many authors have spoken of the wonderful mechanism of speech, but none has hitherto attended to the far more wonderful mechanism which it puts into action behind the scene." As then the Holy Scriptures reveal the mind and the will of God, through man to man, addressing him who with the hearing ear, the seeing eye, and the understanding heart, attends to the language

which is designed to bring his spirit into communion with the Holy Spirit; and as God uses the help of our reason to illuminate us, "so should we" (to use the words of Bacon) "likewise turn it every way that we may be more capable of receiving and understanding His mysteries; *provided only that the mind be enlarged according to its capacity, to the grandeur of the mysteries, and not the mysteries contracted to the narrowness of the mind,*" (5 Vol. 114) "For," saith he, in the 130th Aphorism of the Nov. Org., "interpretation is the true and natural work of the mind, *when freed from impediments.*" In the interpretation of the word of God, these impediments in the interpreter may be moral—they may be spiritual—the nature of the disease may at least expose the folly of the empiricism which would suggest a remedy other than moral or spiritual. The interpreter must be healed. The two questions of inspiration and interpretation are vitally connected. As the former is disparaged, the latter is vulgarized; as the Word of God is lowered to the level of human composition, its interpretation is reduced to the common method of ordinary exposition. But who are they that would set aside the wisdom of Selden and of Bacon, and of the several other accredited commentators, masters of Israel, whose faith we have been taught to follow; who are these that would lead us in a new path with a promise of attaining a unity not hitherto realized? We can try their method conclusively, at least as regards themselves. The Articles of our Church are emphatically required

to be construed and subscribed according to their plain, obvious, natural, and grammatical meaning. They of the new school of interpreters, who have subscribed these Articles, have solemnly signified their assent to them in their plain and obvious meaning, and according to a grammatical interpretation of what moreover is but the language of man. Where is the promised unity, and who have marred it ?

" Sincerum est nisi vas—quodcunque infundis acescit."

I need not point the application, but the lesson which may be read is both significant and instructive. May God grant that this assault on the acknowledged inspiration and accredited interpretation of His Holy Word may lead all who acknowledge that they have a " common salvation," " the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," to cast aside their mutual jealousies, their unprofitable controversies, that they may unite with one heart and one mind in defending the Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures.

Blessed Word of God ! May all who have known the comfort of its heavenly truths, who have loved the pure and simple wisdom, the sublime morality, the elevating and quickening power of the lively oracles, who have felt their support in the day of suffering or of sorrow, their sacred influence on the heart, in the closet, the household, and the Church, their guidance in the daily life, their lessons for the hour of death, who remember their glorious triumphs, the mourners they have comforted, the martyrs they have sustained,

the master spirits and the towering intellects that have bowed in humility to do them reverence and homage, may all who desire to preserve for man this unspeakable, this precious gift of God, rally round the standard now raised in this sacred cause, and God defend the right!

JOSEPH NAPIER.

4, MERRION SQUARE (DUBLIN),
12th Dec., 1861.

ORIGINAL INTRODUCTION.

WE feel that were the volume entitled "The Essays and Reviews," the production of some one avowed sceptic, the notice it has already received would be more than sufficient; but there are circumstances connected with it which give it an importance and a power for evil, which intrinsically it does not possess. The position and character of the writers, the bold assault upon the most sacred truths from a quarter to which they might naturally look for defence, the display of learning which is in fact very superficial, the assumption of an advanced intellectualism,—all these are calculated to lend it weight, and make it pregnant with danger to the thoughtless and inexperienced. We therefore feel called upon to consider the work at some length, and by a rigid examination to lay bare its fallacies and errors.

The following is a list of the "Essays and Reviews," with the name of their respective authors:—

The Education of the World. By FREDERICK TEMPLE, D D., Chaplain in ordinary to the Queen; Head Master of Rugby School; Chaplain to the Earl of Denbigh.

Bunsen's Biblical Researches. By ROWLAND WILLIAMS, D.D., Vice-Principal and Professor of Hebrew, St. David's College, Lampeter; Vicar of Broad Chalke, Wilts.

On the Study of the Evidences of Christianity. By BADEN POWELL, M.A., F.R.S., Savilian Professor of Geometry in the University of Oxford.

Séances Historiques de Genève.—The National Church. By HENRY BRISTOW WILSON, B.D., Vicar of Great Staughton, Hunts.

On the Mosaic Cosmogony. By C. W. GOODWIN, M.A.

Tendencies of Religious Thought in England, 1688–1750. By MARK PATTISON, B.D.

On the Interpretation of Scripture. By BENJAMIN JOWETT, M.A., Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Oxford.

Among these writers are two Professors in the University of Oxford, the Vice-Principal of a Divinity College, the Head Master of one of the public schools of England and Chaplain to the Queen, while another has been lately elected the Rector of his College. It will be admitted that the position of these writers is such as to give weight to their opinions; and that, if these opinions are erroneous and pernicious, there is reason to fear that the mind of the youth of England may be poisoned, and the faith of some of the future ministers of her Church destroyed.

The authors of the "Essays and Reviews," in a preliminary notice, inform the reader that "they have written in entire independence of each other, and without concert or comparison." As they affirm this, we are bound to believe it, but still it would not be hard to show that there is not only a unity of thought, but a similarity of expression pervading the whole; that while the several Essays touch the same chords, each writer selects a particular and different note, in such a way as to give to the whole performance a unity, practically, at least, of design and execution. What the object of the writers may be in giving this assurance, it is not so easy to perceive. It may be that they did not wish to shock too violently the religious feeling of England by letting it be supposed that the volume is the result of a combination to remove the ancient landmarks of the faith, and to uproot all that is sacred and dear to the Christian; or it may be they wished to make the marvellous unity of thought and design that pervades it appear more striking and remarkable; if this be so, we can only say it shows that when men make shipwreck of the faith, and slip the cable to let the soul drift from its moorings, they are very likely to strike on the same rocks and quicksands; and that if men will turn away from the truth to follow the will-o'-the-wisp of a light of their own kindling, they need not be surprised if they meet in the same

quagmire of error. Though they speak of being "responsible for their respective articles only," the claim of limited liability can in this case hardly be conceded, for they unitedly put forward the volume as one, and as having a definite design. "The volume, it is hoped, will be received as an attempt to illustrate the advantage derivable to the cause of religious truth, from a free handling, in a becoming spirit, of subjects peculiarly liable to suffer by the repetition of conventional language, and from traditional methods of treatment."

What this "conventional language" and these "traditional methods of treatment" are, becomes very apparent from a perusal of the Essays. The conventional language is the language in which apostles and martyrs have clothed the truths of Christianity; and the "traditional methods of treatment" would seem to be the bringing of every doctrine and every principle to the Sacred Scriptures, as the standard by which it is to be determined and judged. The advantage that has resulted to the cause of religion and moral truth from the "free handling" referred to may be thus briefly enumerated. Christianity is described, not as the great plan devised by infinite wisdom for the salvation of men, but as one of many instrumentalities employed by Providence in the work of human civilization; the predictive element of prophecy is altogether denied; miracles are declared to be not only improbable but impossible; a disingenuous subscription of the Articles is recommended; the statements of Scripture are represented as irreconcileable with the discoveries of science; the foundations of religious belief and the basis of revelation are said to be uncertain and perplexing; the inspiration of Scripture in any supernatural sense is altogether set aside; while the practical conclusion come to is that man's con-

science and reason must determine his belief and conduct.

The method in which these grave questions are treated is most reprehensible. The volume is distinguished for boldness of assertion and poverty of argument; doubts are suggested in the absence of proof, the same flattery of the human intellect which our first parents were unable to resist is employed, while the "yea, hath God said?" runs through it all. We should have thought that before men would incur the responsibility and guilt of putting a stumbling-block in the way of the weak, and causing, perhaps, the downfall and ruin of many, they would have had new discoveries to make and new arguments to advance, which, however painful to bring forward, conscience compelled them to disclose; but after a careful study of these Essays, we confidently assert, and we believe we shall be able to prove, that there is nothing whatever in them new. The old objections, many of them the most frivolous, often repeated, and as often refuted, are again served up as if they were fresh; and the writers present themselves to the gaze of the Christian world in "the cast-off clothes" of the deism of the past century, and the thread-bare garments of the rationalism of the present; a spectacle at which all good men mourn, and at which the infidel and the sceptic exult and blaspheme. In this volume the authors quoted are often misrepresented, and some objections flippantly made, which they who made them should have known were deprived of all weight by the answers they have long since received. We have discovered, in one or two cases, the adoption of the ideas if not of the words of others, to say the least bordering on plagiarism, and proving that the most paradoxical writers are not always the most original thinkers.

The intellectual state of the authors of these Essays is aptly sketched by one of them:—

"Some men show their want of intellectual self-control by going back, not to the dominion of law, but to the still lower level of intellectual anarchy. They speculate without any foundation at all. They confound the internal consistency of some dream of their brains with the reality of independent truth. They set up theories which have no other evidence than compatibility with the few facts that happen to be known; and forget that many other theories of equal claims might easily be invented. They are as little able to be content with having no judgment at all as those who accept judgments at second hand. They never practically realize that when there is not enough evidence to justify a conclusion, it is wisdom to draw no conclusion. They are so eager for light that they will rub their eyes in the dark and take the resulting optical delusion for real flashes. They need intellectual discipline—but they have little chance of getting it, for they have burst its bands." —Pp. 38, 39.

Such, unhappily, being a too faithful description of the mental state of the authors of these Essays, not only is loss to themselves but mischief to others to be apprehended. Intellectual anarchists cannot publish their dreams, however baseless, or scatter abroad their theories, however wild and fanciful, especially upon subjects of such vital moment, without doing injury to others. Here we have questions raised, not affecting the Church of England merely, or any denomination or section of the Christian Church, but affecting Christianity itself. This is a question not about rival creeds, but whether there be a creed at all, not about conflicting interpretations, but whether there be any revelation. We believe that not only religiously, but socially and morally, the happiness of man is bound up with the questions raised in these Essays. If the views taught in them be received, what is left for man? Literally nothing. Faith is eclipsed, hope destroyed, certainty is at an end, and that only remains which failed of old to guide the heathen world to happiness or holiness.

Fully persuaded that the best interests of men are endangered by rationalistic teaching, and knowing that young and ardent minds may be deceived by the bold assertions and specious fallacies of these Essays, we

propose to consider them consecutively, and to refute them in detail. We deprecate all bitterness in controversy; but no spurious charity shall tempt us to draw a veil over error, or deter us from calling it by its right name. It may be said of us, as it is of Butler in one of the Essays, that "he comes forward, not as an investigator, but a pleader." We admit it. We write, believing that the Bible is the word of God, and that the faith it reveals is his remedial measure for the salvation of a lost world.

ANSWER TO THE FIRST ESSAY, "THE EDUCATION OF THE WORLD."

THE world is an enigma unless studied in the light of revelation. The condition of the human race presents problems that can be solved only by the Bible. The fall of man and Redemption by Christ explain the history of earth. Revelation makes known what universal experience proves, that sin has brought misery and ruin upon the world; but it also makes known the mystery of God's redeeming grace. The one great subject of Scripture is the Father's love in the redemption of sinners through his Son. "Christianity," says Butler, "contains an account of a dispensation of things not at all discoverable by reason, ... a revelation of a particular dispensation of Providence, carrying on by His Son and Spirit, for the recovery and salvation of mankind, who are represented in Scripture to be in a state of ruin*." The language of Lord Bacon, as illustrating this "particular dispensation of Providence," is worthy of notice :—

"He chose, according to His good pleasure, man to be that creature to whose nature the person of the Eternal Son of God should be united; and amongst the generations of men elected a small flock, in whom, by the participation of Himself, He purposed to express the riches of His glory; all the ministration of angels, damnation of devils and reprobates, and universal administration of all creatures, and dispensation of all

* Butler's Analogy, Part ii. chap. i. ii.

times, having no other end, but as the ways and ambages of God, to be further glorified in His saints, who are one with their head the Mediator, who is one with God*."

This is the great mystery "concerning Christ and the Church;" and however Christians may differ as to particulars concerning it, they all agree that the great end he has in view, in the dispensations of his providence and grace, is, in the language of the Apostle, "that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish" (Eph. v. 27). God, then, in time, is educating his Church for eternity. And the education of the Church explains the history of the world. But the world is not the Church; to confound them, is to confound what God has entirely divided; to speak of the whole human race as a unit, an individual whom God is educating, is simply to shut our eyes to the truths of revelation, and to ignore the facts of the world's history. Yet this is what is done in the essay before us. One would suppose that the author never heard of sin or of its wages; of scenes that were enacted in Eden and on Calvary. Views are put forward, and theories propounded, wholly at variance with them; as if they were regarded only as myths. But there are other things equally disregarded which cannot be treated as myths, even by the wildest fancy, the sin and sorrow and death that are in the world.

"Man cannot be considered as an individual" (p. 2). "We may conclude that we are to look for that progress which is essential to a spiritual being, subject to the lapse of time, not only in the individual, but also quite as much in the race taken as a whole. We may expect to find in the history of man, each successive age incorporating into itself the substance of the preceding. This power, whereby the present ever gathers into itself the results of the past, transforms the human race into a colossal man, whose life reaches

* Bacon's Theological Works: A Confession of Faith.

from the Creation to the day of judgment. The successive generations of men are days in this man's life. The discoveries and inventions which characterize the different epochs of the world's history are his works. The creeds and doctrines, the opinions and principles of the successive ages are his thoughts; the state of society at different times are his manners. He grows in knowledge, in self-control, in visible size, just as we do. And his education is in the same way, and for the same reason, precisely similar to ours" (p. 3). "We may, then, rightly speak of a childhood, a youth, and a manhood of the world" (p. 4).

Now we ask, on what foundation does this pretty theory concerning this "colossal man," this "spiritual being," rest?" Not on Scripture, nor on facts, nor on experience; but on fancy. It may suit perhaps the atmosphere of a great educational establishment, but it lifts us entirely out of the region of this matter-of-fact world. The whole theory might be dismissed in one word, it is contrary to experience. There is, doubtless, a sense in which the progress of the world may be traced, and the education of the human race be considered. The present is influenced by the past, the discoveries and inventions of every age become the inheritance of those that succeed, the progress of science gives man every day a greater mastery over nature; and as the highways of the world are opened up, and nations are brought together, the human mind expands, civilization advances, knowledge increases, prejudices are removed; and so, in a social sense, we may speak of and trace the progress of the world's education. But if from this we argue the moral and spiritual progress of the human race; if we believe that by a progressive development it is advancing forward through successive stages to its higher destiny, we are putting the ideal in the place of the actual, and substituting for the reality of things a mere phantom of the imagination. What evidence is there that mankind, as a spiritual being, is growing in knowledge and self-control? Let tyranny and oppression, trampling on the liberty of nations; let thrones falling and

dynasties sinking amid the execrations of emancipated peoples; let the ambition of kings and the intrigues of cabinets; let civilized and Christian countries, trafficking in human blood and stamping on the brow of another race the hatred brand of slavery; let science, taxed to render more destructive the implements of war; let the rush of armies and the groans of dying thousands on the battle-fields of civilized Europe; let the gigantic commercial frauds and the domestic profligacy of the nineteenth century, all give in their witness; and if we have an ear to hear the voice of truth, we shall understand that man's nature, even under the most favourable circumstances, remains what it ever was,—fallen and alienated from God, smitten with a sore disease which it needs a power divine to heal.

The fundamental fallacy pervading this essay is, the confusion of two things which are diametrically opposed, and which stand out in Scripture in bold contrast with each other,—the world and the Church; and the error of the writer is, that he makes God's dealings with the world in providence, take the place of His dealings with the Church in grace. To educate the world is represented as the ultimate end of all God's ways; his purpose in Christ to "redeem unto himself a peculiar people," is entirely ignored. That the fallacy occurred to the mind of the author, is evident; for, in developing the comparison he institutes between the education of the world and that of an individual, he finds himself more than once obliged to substitute the Church for the human race.

"The growth of the Church is, in this case, the development of the human race. It cannot, indeed, yet be said that all humanity has united into one stream" (p. 15).

And again:—

"If the Christian Church be taken as the representative of mankind, it is easy to see that the general law observable in the

development of the individual may also be found in the development of the Church" (p. 40.)

Now, even were this so, we object to the "if." He has no right to speak one time of the Church, and the next moment of the human race, as if they were convertible; whereas, they are the very opposite poles. As well might light be taken as the representative of darkness, as the Church the representative of the world. Our Lord says, "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." Again, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." The foundation, then, of the argument is unsound, and so there is nothing built upon it but error.

What the purposes are for which mankind is being educated, or what is to be the end of his training, we are not informed; but its stages are traced, and the means employed in his education discussed.

"This training has three stages," "in childhood," "in youth," "in manhood." "First come Rules, then Examples, then Principles. First comes the law, then the Son of Man, then the gift of the Spirit. The world was once a child, under tutors and governors, until the time appointed by the Father. Then, when the fit season had arrived, the Example to which all ages should turn was sent to teach men what they ought to be. Then the human race *was left to itself to be guided by the teaching of the Spirit within*" (p. 5).

Such are the stages in the education of this "Colossal Man," the lesson to be taught is "the lesson of humanity." And this lesson consisted in the discipline of "the human conscience," "the human will," "the reason and taste," and "the spiritual imagination." But the pupil was too big, and "the whole lesson of humanity was too much to be learned by all at once. Different parts of it fell to the task of different parts of the human race" (p. 8). Thus, the world being too large, and the lesson too long, God broke up the one into different classes, and

divided the other into different parts; "the world, as it were, went to school, and was broken up into classes." The classes into which the human race were divided are four:—the Hebrews, Romans, Greeks, and Asiatics. Each of these was taught a particular lesson, and each contributed that lesson as an element to the general education of the whole. Now, it will readily be admitted that every nation has left an impression upon the world, and that the influence of the literature and laws of Greece and Rome is felt even in our day; and if, as indeed we are told, civilization be the lesson of humanity, then we can easily recognize a variety of teachers. "It is not difficult to trace the chief elements of *civilization* which we owe to each of the four" (p. 15). But when it is added, "each of these contributed something to the growth of the future Church, and the growth of the Church is in this case the development of the human race," we entirely demur, for the civilization of the human race and the growth of the Church are altogether different things.

And here we must observe that this theory has not even the merit of originality; for in it we perceive the perversion of the substance of some lectures by the late Rev. F. W. Robertson, of Brighton, a clergyman of great talent and piety, whom it is evident from the reference to his name in one of the essays, the Rationalistic school would be anxious to claim; but from whose sermons may be gathered a distinct denial of its errors. He, too, speaks of the "four divisions of the world," "the Greeks, the Romans, the Barbarians, and the Jews;" but he does so to show the degeneracy and corruption of the religions of the world, and to establish the necessity of their being superseded by Christianity.

Let us hear the Rev. Frederick Robertson, the preacher, and the Rev. Frederick Temple, D.D., the essayist.

REV. F. ROBERTSON *.

" Different nations seem, consciously or unconsciously, destined by God to achieve different missions.. The *Jew* had the highest: to reveal to the world holiness. *The Oriental* stands as a witness to the reality of the invisible above the visible. *The Greek* reminded the world of eternal beauty; and the destiny of *the Roman* seems to have been to stamp upon the minds of mankind the ideas of law, government, order.

" *The Greek*, seeing the right only on its side of beauty, ended in mere intellectual refinement.

" Hence Greek religion degenerated into mere *taste*.

" The Greek saw this world almost only on its side of *beauty*. His name for it was kosmos, divine order or regularity. *One and the same adjective* expressed the noble and the *beautiful*. What was the consequence? Religion degenerated into *the arts*.

" It was not merely beauty but human beauty, not merely life, but human life, which was the object of his profoundest veneration. His effort, therefore, was, in his conception of his God, to realize *a beautiful human being*.

" The *Roman* has left above all that system of law, the slow result of ages of experience, which has so largely entered into the *modern jurisprudence of most European nations*.

REV. F. TEMPLE.

" The *Hebrews* may be said to have disciplined the human conscience, *Rome* the human will, *Greece* the reason and taste, *Asia* the spiritual imagination.

" *To Greece* was entrusted the cultivation of the reason and the *taste*. Her gift to mankind has been science and *art*.

" Her highest idea was not holiness as with the Hebrews, nor law as with the Romans, but *beauty*. Even Aristotle placed *the beautiful* (τὸ καλόν,) at the head of his moral system.

" Greece, in fact, was not looking at another world, nor even striving to organize the present, but rather aiming at the development of free nature. The *highest possible cultivation of the individual*, the most finished perfection of the natural faculties, was her dream.

" To *Rome* we owe the forms of local government which, in England, have saved liberty. *Justinian's laws have penetrated into all modern legislation*, and almost all improvements bring us only nearer to his code.

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* Sermons preached at Trinity Chapel, Brighton, by the late Rev. F. W. Robertson, M.A.

"The Roman's destiny was different. He set out with the great idea of duty and law, exhibiting in public affairs *government* and *order;* stamping upon the world the great idea of obedience to law.	"Rome contributed her admirable spirit of *order* and organization. To her had been given the genius of *government* she had been trained to by centuries of difficult and tumultuous history.
"In Rome *religion degenerated into allegiance to the state.* Religion, a Roman word, means obligation—abounding power. The Roman began, like the Jew, with law. He started with the idea of duty.	"That which *religion was to the Jew, law* was to the Roman.
"The *Oriental* stands as a witness to the *reality of the invisible* above the visible."	"*Asia* supplies the corrective by perpetually leaning to the mysterious. She learned to fix her thoughts *upon another world.*

From a comparison of these extracts it will be easily seen that the idea of the "Education of the World" is not altogether original. But how different are the ends which the preacher and the essayist have in view. In the one case it is to prove the necessity for the advent of a Saviour and the introduction of Christianity; in the other to raise the religion of the world to the level of Christianity. Speaking of the Grecian, Mr. Robertson beautifully says:—

"In all this system one thing was wanting—the sense of sin. The Greek worshipped the beautiful, adored the human, deified the world: of course in this worship found no place for sin. The Greek would not have spoken to you of sin: he would have told of departure from a right line; want of moral harmony; discord within: he would have said that the music of your soul was out of tune. Christ came to convince the world of sin. And after Him that deep cloud began to brood upon the hearts of Christendom, which rests upon the conscience which has been called into vitality of action and susceptibility. For this, Greece had no remedy. The universe has no remedy but one.

There is no prescription for the sickness of the heart, *but that which is written in the Redeemer's blood.*"

Let us now hear the author of "The Education of the World" speaking of the Greek :—

To the Greeks we owe the corrective which conscience needs to borrow from nature. Conscience, startled at the awful truths which she has to reveal, too often threatens to withdraw the soul into gloomy and perverse asceticism; then is needed the beauty which Greece taught us to admire, to show us another aspect of the Divine attributes!" (p. 18).

So that conscience is to be quieted by the teachings of nature, and the soul is to turn to Grecian beauty to see in it the attributes of God reflected in a milder aspect. This may be Pantheism; it may be philosophy, but it is not Christianity. We can now understand the statement that "though the education of the world flowed in parallel channels, it did not form a single stream" (p. 81). In other words as afterwards expressed :—

"Other nations, meanwhile, had a training parallel to and contemporaneous with theirs (the Hebrews). The natural religions, shadows projected by the spiritual light within, shining on the dark problems without, were all, in reality, systems of law, given also by God. . . . . The poetical gods of Greece, the legendary gods of Rome, the animal worship of Egypt, the sun worship of the East . . . . were the means of educating these people to similar purposes in the economy of Providence to that for which the Hebrews were destined" (p. 15).

Is the writer really serious? What! shall we be told that the idolatrous religions of the heathen world are from that God who declares them to be an abomination? Shall we be told that worship, of which cruel and obscene rites constitute the very essence, has in it a divine element? and that the degrading superstitions of the Gentile nations were the means by which Providence was educating them? Not such, unquestionably, is the teaching of St. Paul. "Their foolish heart was darkened; professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of

the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things; wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts" (Rom. i. 21—24). "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God" (1 Cor. x. 20).

We have reserved for consideration to the last, the part in this general system of education assigned to the Hebrew race, and the lessons to teach which they were selected.

"The results of this discipline of the Jewish nation may be summed up in two points—a settled national belief in the unity and spirituality of God, and an acknowledgment of the paramount importance of chastity as a point of morals" (p. 11).

But important as these principles are in religion and morals, shall it be said that to teach them was the grand and ultimate design of God in choosing Israel as a nation? Is it for this they are still preserved in the earth, while other nations have perished, and ancient empires have passed away? The author seems to have felt a misgiving on this point.

"The idea of monotheism, and the principle of purity, might seem hardly enough to be the chief results of so systematic a discipline as that of the Hebrews" (p. 13).

But we are reminded that "in reality they are the cardinal points in education;" that impurity exceeds all other vices in virulence, and is the one which must be subdued, "in order to build up human character," and that therefore, being the one which has inflicted the most deadly blows, it had to be met by a people whose toughness of nature has enabled them to outlive the wrecks of time. The passage is a curiosity:—

"The people whose extraordinary toughness of nature has enabled it to outlive Egyptian Pharaohs, and Assyrian kings, and Roman Cæsars, and Mussulman caliphs, was well matched against a power of evil which has battled with the human spirit ever since the creation" (p. 14).

The Hebrew race, through the *extraordinary toughness of their* nature, has resisted and overcome the evil spirit of impurity, and survived the grave in which the hand of time has buried other nations. This is as poor philosophy as it is bad divinity. It is a novel theory, which few, we are inclined to think, will be disposed to adopt. However it may be regarded as an antiquated tradition, we believe that man's nature, be it ever so tough, is prone to evil, and that the only power by which it can successfully resist it, is the power of God. Nor will toughness of nature be more likely to be accepted as a sufficient explanation of the standing miracle presented to the world in the Jewish people. We know that before ever they were a nation the wondrous destiny was foretold by which they have been borne downward on that stream of time which has buried ancient empires and mighty races beneath its resistless waves. We know it was foretold that, though scattered among the nations, they should remain a living witness for God in the earth; and that they were called to be the instruments in His hand for the accomplishment of his eternal purposes. And what were these? Were they merely to teach man monotheism and a purer code of morality; that the Hebrew people should unite with the Greek, the Roman, and the Asiatic in educating the world? No; but that from them should spring the promised seed who was to redeem the world; and that in their polity, and worship, and religion, might be shadowed forth the higher truth into which the Church was to be guided. "To whom," says St. Paul, "pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the Service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers; and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." (Rom. ix. 4, 5.)

We are now to mark the world entering upon the second stage of its existence and education:—

"The childhood of the world was over when our Lord appeared on earth. The tutors and governors had done their work. It was time that the second teacher of the human race should begin his labour. The second teacher is Example—(p. 20). . . . The period of youth in the history of the world, when the human race was, as it were, put under the teaching of example, corresponds, of course, to the meeting point of the Law and Gospel. The second stage, therefore, in the education of man, was the presence of our Lord upon earth" (p. 24).

The world having grown too old for rules, and having reached the age when it should be educated by example, our Lord appeared, thus to be its teacher. True, he was not the only example; there were many great and good men both before and after him.

"Saints had gone before and saints had been given since; great men and good men had lived among the heathen; there were never at any time examples wanting to teach either the chosen people or any other. But the one Example of all examples came in the fulness of time, just when the world was fitted to feel the power of his presence" (p. 24).

Such is said to be the great end of His mission who came in the fulness of time,—to be an example. Christ did, indeed, leave us an example that we should follow his steps. But does Scripture declare this to have been the great end for which he came into the world? No; his life would have been in vain without his death; without his atonement his example would have been useless. The Apostle who speaks of his example stops not there, but adds, "who his ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter ii. 24). When St. Paul speaks of Christ having come in the fulness of time, what is the object for which God is declared to have sent him forth? To educate the world? No. To leave mankind an example? No. But "to REDEEM them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (Gal. iv. 5.) Redemption is the theme of the Bible, the great subject of revelation, the work towards which the lines of a past

eternity have converged, and from whence the life and glory of eternity will spring. The death of Christ is the corner-stone on which all human hope is based; his atonement the key-note to which every song in heaven is tuned. To say that He came merely to be a teacher, to take part with others in the education of the world, is to assign to Him a mission unworthy of the great mystery of the incarnation. Were this all, the infidel might well object that our world is too insignificant to have lavished upon it such a stupendous miracle, that the end proposed is wholly disproportioned to the means alleged for its accomplishment. No. Something greater, something deeper, something intimately connected with the moral glory of God, brought Him from his throne, and led him to visit, in the nature and form of man, a world that is but a speck in the universe, a sand grain upon creation's boundless shore. What it was we learn in the echoes of the new song of the Redeemed, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."

> "Redemption is the science and the song
> Of all eternity."

To proceed. The Lord having come as an example, it is said,—

> "The first and largest place in the New Testament is assigned to His life, four times told. This life we emphatically call the Gospel. If there is little herein to be technically called doctrine, yet here is the fountain of all inspiration" (pp. 25, 26).

The life of Christ cannot be too highly regarded, whether viewed as an example, or considered in its connection with the work of human redemption; but if it be meant to separate his life from his death and resurrection, then it is not true that we call his life emphatically the Gospel. His whole life was a preparation for his death; towards it his soul continually travailed. "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished."

And so the four histories which record his life, not only dwell at length upon the circumstances of his death, but teach the ethical and spiritual imports of his cross and passion. The Gospels, while they reveal the facts of Christianity, reveal the faith which is built upon these facts. It argues a strange forgetfulness of the teaching of our Lord, to say that in them there is little technically to be called doctrine. It is true, indeed, that until the Spirit was poured out upon the Church, the whole mystery of the faith was not fully and clearly revealed. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." But granting this, we at the same time affirm that every fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, every essential truth of Christianity was taught by Christ. The Trinity (John xiv. 26, xv. 26); the personality of the Holy Spirit (John xvi. 13); His own essential Godhead and equality with the Father (John xiv. 9, 10); the corruption of man's heart (Matt. xv. 19); his natural state of death and condemnation (John iii. 36); the atonement (Matt. xx. 28); man's spiritual weakness (John vi. 44); regeneration (John iii. 5); the free grace of Christ in quickening dead souls (John v. 21); justification by faith (John iii. 36, v. 24); the resurrection (John v. 28, 29). When these and such-like truths are plainly taught by Christ in the Gospels, shall it be said that there is in them little that can be called doctrine?

But while the Redeemer appeared as the great example for the instruction of mankind, we are forbidden to suppose that He was the only one to whom this office was entrusted. "He was the example of mankind, and there can be no other example in the same sense;" but

"Our Lord's presence was not the only influence of that kind which has acted upon the human race. Three companions were appointed by Providence to give their society to this creature whom God was educating; Greece, Rome, and the early Church" (p. 26).

Thus, as "*this creature*" in the first stage of its education had four teachers, "Rome, Greece, Asia, and Judea," so in the second stage, when brought under the influence of example, it still has four, our Lord, Greece, Rome, and the early Church. Greece and Rome have not only helped to discipline the human race, but have also given to it "the companionship of their bloom."

"The inspiration which is drawn by the man from the memory of those whom he loved and admired in the spring-time of life, is drawn by the world now from the study of Greece and Rome. . . . . Beneath whatever was wrong and foolish it recognizes that beauty of a fresh nature which never ceases to delight. And the sins and vices of that joyous time are passed over with the levity with which men think of their young companions' follies" (p. 28).

That Greece and Rome exercised an influence on the political and intellectual life of the world no one will deny; but to represent them as associated with Christ and the early Church in the work of educating the human race is, in the first place, to create a fiction of the imagination, and then to make darkness and light, God and Satan, minister to this creature*.

To the early Church, however, is assigned the office of chiefly influencing our religious life. The way in which she is described as doing this must well be noted. It is by example, not precepts. The world was to be taught by seeing the lives of saints, not by hearing the words of prophets: and so we are not to read the New Testament to find out—

"Doctrines logically stated, for there is no attempt at logical precision. The New Testament is almost entirely occupied with two lives—the life of our Lord and the life of the early Church.

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* If in any region of Heathendom the evil spirit had pre-eminent sway, it was in the mythological system of Greece, which, with all its beautiful imagery and all its ministrations to poetry and art, left man powerless against his passions, and only amused him while it helped him to be unholy.—Conybeare and Howson, "Life of St. Paul," vol. i. chap. ix.

Among the Epistles there are but two which seem, even at first sight, to be treatises for the future instead of letters for the time—the Epistle to the Romans and the Epistle to the Hebrews. But even these, when closely examined, appear, like the rest, to be no more than the fruit of the current history. That early church does not give us precepts but an example. She says, Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ. This had never been said by Moses nor by any of the prophets. But the world was now grown old enough to be taught by seeing the lives of saints better than by hearing the words of prophets " (p. 28).

It is not difficult to perceive the drift of all this; indeed, it is not attempted to be concealed. It is plainly to set aside all distinctive truth, all dogmatic teaching. We are asked to believe that in the New Testament there are no doctrines logically stated; that is, we take it, no truth clearly defined; that we have in it example, not precepts; and that the Epistles are "letters for the time," not "treatises for the future." Now we admit that some of the Epistles, for example, those to the Corinthians and Galatians, are the fruit of the current history of the Church. Error in doctrine and practice was the immediate occasion which called them forth; but, even were this true of all the Epistles, would it be any proof that the warning and instruction they contain were not intended for the use and edification of the Church in every age? Surely not; on the contrary, it would seem such instruction would ever after be the more needed, the error which once arose being the more likely again to appear. In point of fact, such is not the case. Some of the Epistles were evidently written as connected treatises on great Christian truths, setting them forth objectively in fulness of doctrinal statement. Thus in the Epistle to the Romans there is a logically arranged argument on the fundamental doctrine of justification; while in that to the Hebrews the typical character of the Levitical dispensation is beautifully unfolded, and the priesthood of Christ, in all its various bearings, brought out. Nor are these the only ones which

present this character. In the Epistle to the Ephesians we have the mystery "concerning Christ and his Church" revealed, traced backward to its source in the eternal purposes of God, and carried forward to its accomplishment in the ages to come; the whole subject of the Epistle furnishing the strongest refutation of the theory of "*The Education of the World.*" Dean Alford says of this Epistle:—

"We have here an entire absence of all controversial allusion, and of all assertion as against maintainers of doctrinal error. The Christian state, and its realization in the Church, is the one subject*."

Again:—

"He might pour forth to his Ephesians all the fulness of the Spirit's revelations and promptings on the great subject of the Spouse and Body of Christ. To them, without being bound to narrow his energies evermore into one line of controversial direction, he might lay forth, as he should be empowered, *their foundation in the counsel of the Father, their course in the satisfaction of the Son, their perfection in the work of the Spirit.*

"We have in the Ephesians the free outflowing of the earnest spirit: to the mere surface reader, without system; but to him that delves down into it, *in system far deeper, and more recondite, and more exquisite:* the greatest and most heavenly work of one whose very imagination was peopled with the things in the heavens, and even his fancy rapt into the visions of God†."

It is wholly untrue, then, that there is no system of divine truth revealed in the New Testament. The Son of God is "the truth," and his doctrine is emphatically "the faith." We hear of, and are exhorted earnestly to contend for τῇ ἅπαξ παραδοθείσῃ τοῖς ἁγίοις πίστει—"the faith *once for all* delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). By the belief of it sinners are to be saved,

* Prolegomena, Chap. iii. sect. vi. vol. iii.

† Prolegomena, Chap. iv. sect. iv.

by the belief of it saints are sanctified; by it the spiritual man is formed. We read of "that mould of doctrine into which ye were delivered,"—εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδαχῆς* (Rom. vi. 17). It was for this sacred deposit Paul was so anxious; for this John was so jealous. When Paul speaks of that by which we are saved, if we hold it fast, what is its nature? Is it some dreamy, undefined mysticism? No, but a system of Divine truth, based upon the historical facts of Christianity. "I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; *by which also ye are saved*, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, *how that Christ died for our sins* according to the Scriptures; and *that he was buried*, and *that he rose again the third day* according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 1—4). With such a passage and such teaching as this before us, how can it be said that there are no doctrines logically stated, and that what the early Church gives us is only example? If we take from the Bible all distinctive truth, what do we leave? A track of light reflected on the world by the footsteps of the Son of God; but like the moon-beams on the waters, varying in direction with the position of each beholder, and leaving no fixed path along which we are to steer. The object of this endeavour to eliminate the doctrinal element from

* "De W. thinks it is the Pauline form of teaching of justification by faith, distinguished from the Judaistic—*to which ye were delivered*—this inversion to the passive agrees admirably with τύπος, as a mould, exemplar, or pattern after which they were to be fashioned: so κατὰ τὰ δόγματα τυποῦσθαι.—Arrian. Enchir. ii. 19 [Thol.]: and Beza: 'Hoc dicendi genus magnam quandam emphasin videtur habere. Ita enim significatur evangelicam doctrinam quasi instar typi cujusdam esse, cui veluti immittamur, ut ejus figuræ con formemur, et totam istam transformationem aliunde provenire.'—[Thol.] And Chrys. remarks,—τὸ παραδοθῆναι, τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ βοηθείαν αἰνίττεται." —ALFORD, *in loc.*

Scripture is admitted. It is plainly avowed to be to deliver man, now that he has reached maturity, from the despotism of the letter of the Bible, and place him under the guidance of his own conscience.

We are now to follow the author through the parallel he institutes between the education of the individual and the human race in its last stage.

"The susceptibility of youth to the impression of society wears off at last. The age of reflection begins. From the storehouse of his youthful experience the man begins to draw the principles of his life. The spirit or *conscience* comes to full strength, and assumes the throne intended for him in the soul. As an accredited judge, invested with full powers, he sits in the tribunal of our inner kingdom, decides upon the past, and legislates upon the future, WITHOUT APPEAL EXCEPT TO HIMSELF. He decides, not by what is beautiful, or noble, or soul inspiring, but by what is right. Gradually he frames his code of laws, revising, adding, abrogating, as a wider and deeper experience gives him clearer light. He is the third great teacher and the last" (p. 31).

Thus, when conscience enters on its office, education does not cease; its function is to guide us into truth. And so it leads the man in the last stage of his progress in various ways. He learns "by experience," "by reflection," "by mistakes," "by contradiction," and "collision."—

"Such is the last stage in the education of the human soul, and similar (as far as it has yet gone) has been the last stage in the education of the human race. Of course so full a comparison cannot be made in this instance as was possible in the two that preceded it. For we are still within the boundaries of this third period, and we cannot yet judge it as a whole. But *if the Christian Church be taken as the representative of mankind*, it is easy to see that the general law observable in the development of the individual may also be found in the development of the Church" (p. 40).

The Christian Church the representative of mankind! Here the whole theory fails; the castle in the air crumbles; *the education of the world* comes to a stand; a new pupil is introduced; in fact, the teacher

becomes the learner; and we are now asked to trace "*the development of the Church.*"

Well, then, having entered on her last stage of education, "the Church, in the fullest sense, is left to herself to work out by her natural faculties, the principles of her own action" (p. 40). She commenced at once the task "by determining her leading doctrines," "partly by reflection," "partly by perpetual collision with every variety of opinion." Thus her "career of dogmatism" began. "The Church's whole energy was taken up in the first six centuries of her existence, in the creation of a theology" (p. 43), for "when Christians needed creeds . . . and systems of theology, they could not find them in the New Testament. They found there only the materials out of which such needs could be supplied" (p. 29). Now we submit if they found this, it is enough. If the Church found the materials of her theology in Scripture, she did not create it. Though the Apostles' Creed or Thirty-nine Articles may not be found in the New Testament in so many words, if they can be proved thereby, they are to be received as embodying Divine truth. However, "the Church of the Fathers claimed to do what not even the Apostles had claimed—namely, not only to teach the truth, but to clothe it in logical statements" (p. 41). In fact, the Church of the Fathers had not learned the cloudy, foggy style so generally affected by writers of a certain school in the present day, in order to teach truth without logic; multiplying words without meaning, and clothing fancies in a haze that they may be taken for realities. But it is confessed that "this was, after all, only an exaggeration of the proper function of the time. These logical statements were necessary" (p. 41). Now, however, it is different.

"And it belongs to a later epoch to see 'the law within the law, which absorbs such statements into something higher than them-

selves" (p. 41). "The mature mind of our race is beginning to modify and soften the hardness and severity of the principles which its early manhood had elevated into immutable statements of truth. . . . . We can acknowledge the great value of the forms in which the first ages of the Church defined the truth, and yet refuse to be bound by them; we can use them, and yet endeavour to go beyond them, just as they also went beyond the legacy which was left us by the Apostles" (pp. 43, 44).

In a word, even at the Reformation "the time was come when it is fit to trust to the conscience as the supreme guide" (p. 42).

Here, beyond a doubt, we have a specimen of a free handling of religious truth. We should have thought that what was true when Augustine and Chrysostom preached and wrote, is true now; and that what is false now could not have been true then; that if redemption through the death of Christ were true then, it must be true now; and that Christianity, like its great Author, is unchangeable. But no;

"Had the Bible been drawn up in precise statements of faith, or detailed precepts of conduct, we should have had no alternative but either *permanent subjection to an outer law*, or loss of the highest instrument of self-education. But the Bible, from its very form, is exactly adapted to our present want. It is a history: even the doctrinal parts of it are cast in a historical form, and are best studied by considering them as *records of the time in which they were written*, and as conveying to us the highest and greatest religious life *of that time*. Hence, we use the Bible—some consciously, some unconsciously—not to override, but to evoke the voice of conscience. . . . . The Bible, in fact, is hindered by its form from exercising a despotism over the human spirit; if it could do that, it would become an outer law at once; but its form is so admirably adapted to our need, that it wins from us all the reverence of a supreme authority, and yet imposes on us no yoke of subjection" (pp. 44, 45).

Thus the supremacy of the Bible is set aside, the human spirit is set free; it is under no outer law, no subjection; like the Gentile world, it is a law unto itself. Man is now to trust to conscience as the supreme guide; it is to be the teacher both of faith and morals, to determine his belief, and regulate his life.

" Private judgment puts conscience between us and the Bible, making conscience the *supreme interpreter*, whom it may be a duty to enlighten, but whom it can never be a duty to disobey" p. 45.

Now no one will deny that God has given a conscience unto man. It is "the candle of the Lord within;" and it is invested with authority. As Bishop Butler says:—

" There is a superior principle of reflection or conscience in every man, which distinguishes between the internal principles of his heart, as well as his external actions, which passes judgment upon himself and them. . . . It is by this faculty, natural to man, that he is a moral agent, that he is a law to himself; by this faculty, I say, not to be considered merely as a principle in his heart, which is to have some influence as well as others, but considered as a faculty in kind and in nature, supreme over all others, and which bears its own authority of being so*."

But observe, the supremacy which Butler claims for conscience is a supremacy over all the other passions and affections and principles of man's nature; it has a superior nature to every other principle. An appetite or passion may incline or lead a man to follow it. Conscience commands him to obey it. Man's conscience, then, is invested with authority over the other principles of his nature. But Butler is far from saying that it is to overrule a higher voice of God, that it is the criterion of right, the fountain of moral truth, that there is nothing anterior to it; indeed, while his theory of conscience is correct, he stops short, and does not touch the great ethical question which lies deeper.

" The most palpable defect of Butler's scheme is, that it affords no anwer to the question, 'What is the distinguishing quality common to all right actions?' If it be answered, their criterion is that they are approved and commanded by conscience, the answerer would find

* Sermon II. upon Human Nature.

that he was involved in a vicious circle; for conscience itself could be no otherwise defined than as the faculty which approves and commands right actions*."

Again, and this is most important, while no one would say it is a duty to disobey conscience, it is admitted, "it may be a duty to enlighten it," but how is it to be enlightened if it be the supreme guide, if it refuse subjection to any outer and higher law, if it is to sit in judgment upon the teachings of the Bible, instead of the Bible reflecting its light upon it? The truth is, conscience needs to be enlightened, and not only enlightened, but often corrected; like every other part of man's nature it has felt the influence of the fall. Man is a harp with all its chords unstrung, and conscience needs to be turned by the finger of God. We read of "a conscience seared with a hot iron," of "an evil conscience," as well as of "a pure conscience," and "a good conscience." Man's conscience is indeed a compass, but to make it safe always to go by it, it is necessary it should sometimes be regulated; there are disturbing influences acting upon it, and unless it be corrected and enlightened by the pure Word of God, instead of guiding us in the way of life, it may lead us into the paths of death.

We cannot listen, then, to the cry for toleration when it claims liberty to "substitute the spirit for the letter, and practical religion for precise definitions of truth" (p. 43). A plea for toleration is very specious, it is sure to enlist the sympathy of liberal and enlightened minds. We believe toleration to be a Christian duty taught in Scripture, both by precept and example. But toleration has its limits; if there be such a thing as truth, we have as good a right to claim toleration for it as others have for error. Why should toleration be all on one side? We may be willing to bear and forbear, but no Church which believes that

* Mackintosh on Ethical Philosophy, Sect. v.—Butler.

the Scriptures are the Word of God can listen to "arguments in favour of tolerating all opinions" (p. 46). This is licence, not liberty. The fact is, the question is raised whether there be any spiritual truth, whether the Bible be the word of God. We must not conceal it, this is not a question of difference of opinion between those who believe in revelation. We hesitate not to declare, it is a question between revelation and infidelity. For this the Church is prepared, nor does she fear the result of any investigation, whether philosophical, or scientific, or historical. But while we agree with the following passage in the letter, we dissent entirely from its spirit.

"If geology proves to us that we must not interpret the first chapters of Genesis literally; *if* historical investigations shall show us that inspiration, however it may protect the doctrine, yet was not empowered to protect the narrative of the inspired writers from occasional inaccuracy; *if* careful criticism shall prove that there have been, occasionally, interpolations and forgeries in that Book, as in many others, *the results should still be welcome!*" (p. 47).

To what purpose is this string of hypotheticals to give birth to such a common-place truism? "*Ifs*" are not arguments; and even though they be only employed to introduce a statement that no one will dispute, they should not be made the medium of conveying insinuations which, though powerless to convince, are mischievous to disturb. The passage, however, gives the key-note to which the performances in subsequent essays are tuned.

In conclusion, we have in this Essay a striking illustration of the truth of the inspired statement, "The world by wisdom knew not God." Here we have human intellect groping in Egyptian darkness; seeking its inspiration from Greece and Rome, and not from the oracles of God. How unlike is this philosophy to the philosophy of St. Paul; how unlike the philosophy of "*The Education of the World*" to the philosophy of the

Epistle to the Ephesians! Here we have man's wisdom forming fanciful theories about the education of a "Colossal man," alike opposed to Scripture and experience; there we have the mystery revealed into which angels desire to look; and the divine purpose concerning the Church made known, by the study of which the powers and principalities of Heaven learn "the manifold wisdom of God."

ANSWER TO THE SECOND ESSAY, "BUNSEN'S BIBLICAL RESEARCHES."

BARON BUNSEN has been lately summoned before that tribunal at which we must all appear. By an open grave there should be no unseemly controversy about the dead. We are willing to believe that morally and socially he was all that his warmest admirers represent. We believe him to have been an eminent statesman, a distinguished scholar, a courteous gentleman, and a sincere friend. But while saying this, truth compels us to declare that we know of no man, who, as a biblical student, has more sadly perverted his talents, or whose writings are more likely to be injurious to the cause they profess to serve. At present we have only to do with them as they form the subject of the review we are now to examine. That the writer of it fully adopts Baron Bunsen's views there can be no question; indeed, in some respects, the English divine is in advance of the German philosopher, and the pupil occasionally manifests some slight dissatisfaction with the master for not carrying out his principles farther. His "own testimony is, where we have been best able to follow him, we have generally found most reason to agree with him" (p. 93). We feel ourselves perfectly justified, therefore, in speaking as if we had to deal with but one author, and that one, the reviewer, except when, as in some cases, he expresses his dissent.

In this review, we regret to say, we can see nothing but an undisguised assault upon the Bible as a revelation from God, and upon the Christianity therein revealed. The integrity and authority of the Scriptures are at once assailed, and in each line there is a daring attempt to justify the language of Bunsen, quoted at the close: "How long shall we bear this fiction of an external revelation?"

The writer begins by intimating that our idea of revelation is too narrow, that it is "repressive," and "put over against conscience as an adversary," that we should not confine it to one people or period, that "considerations, religious and moral, no less than scientific and critical, have, where discussion was free, widened the idea of revelation for the Old World, and deepened it for ourselves; not removing the footsteps of the Eternal from Palestine, but tracing them on other shores" (p. 51). So, again: "If a theologian has his eyes opened to the Divine energy as continuous and omnipresent, he lessens the sharp contrast of epochs in revelation." "Devotion raises time present into the sacredness of the past; while criticism reduces the strangeness of the past into harmony with the present" (p. 50). And, lest any one should think that "an irrational supernaturalism" belongs to the past, which cannot be claimed for the present, or should doubt whether criticism could accomplish the work assigned, we are reminded that questions of miraculous interference turn upon our conceptions of physical law as unbroken, that they include inquiries into evidence, and that the "distinction between poetry and prose, and the possibility of imagination's allying itself with affection should not be overlooked" (p. 51). In other words, the miracles of the Old Testament are to be regarded as the fictions of poetry, and not the facts of prose, while the works of Christ, viewed by his followers through

the combined medium of imagination and affection, were invested with the character of supernaturalism.

Such being the case, scholars are reproached for their timidity in avowing their convictions :—

" They stand balancing terror against mutual shame. Even with those in our universities who no longer repeat the required Shibboleths, the explicitness of truth is rare. He who assents most, committing himself least to baseness, is reckoned wisest" (pp. 52, 53).

Yet these are the men who have taken conscience as their supreme guide! Of this baseness, however, neither Baron Bunsen nor his reviewer can be accused. And the latter, employing as his weapons the works of the former, openly assails the chronology, the prophecies, and the doctrines of Scripture. In his work " Egypt's place in Universal History," Bunsen, we are told, " sifts the historical date of the Bible," and the conclusion arrived at as the result of this sifting, is that its chronology is wrong. Now, for an announcement such as this we might reasonably expect that very sufficient evidence would be offered, but upon what is it made to rest ? upon

" a sketch which must combine suggestions, which the author has scattered strangely apart, and sometimes repeated without perfect consistency " (p. 53), " especially the dynastic records of the Ptolemaic priest, Manetho, are compared with the accounts of the stone monuments. The result, *if we can receive it*, is to vindicate for the civilized kingdom of Egypt, from Menes downward, an antiquity of nearly four thousand years before Christ " (p. 54).

It is well said " if we can receive it." Who was this Manetho ? What are those dynastic records ? Is the ancient history of Egypt so certain, so entirely removed from the fabulous that it can be relied on ? Let us hear Rollin :—

" No part of ancient history is more obscure or uncertain than that of the first kings of Egypt. This

proud nation, fondly conceited of its antiquity and nobility, thought it glorious to lose itself in an abyss of infinite ages which seemed to carry its pretentions backward to eternity. According to its own historians, first gods, and afterwards demigods or heroes, governed it successively through a series of more than twenty thousand years. But the absurdity of this vain and fabulous claim is easily discovered.

"To gods and demigods men succeeded as rulers or kings in Egypt,—of whom Manetho has left us thirty dynasties or principalities. This Manetho was an Egyptian high-priest, and keeper of the sacred archives of Egypt, and had been instructed in the Grecian learning. He wrote a history of Egypt, which he pretended to have extracted from the writings of Mercurius and other ancient memoirs, preserved in the archives of the Egyptian temples. He drew up this history under the reign and at the command of Ptolemy Philadelphus. If his thirty dynasties are allowed to be successive, they make up a series of time of more than five thousand three hundred years, to the reign of Alexander the Great; but this is a manifest forgery. Besides, we find in Eratosthenes, who was invited to Alexandria by Ptolemy Euergetes, a catalogue of thirty-eight kings of Thebes, all different from those of Manetho. The clearing up of these difficulties has put the learned to a great deal of trouble and labour. The most effectual way to reconcile such contradictions is to suppose, with almost all the modern writers upon this subject, that the kings of these different dynasties did not reign successively after one another, but many of them at the same time, and in different countries of Egypt*."

Thus it is attempted to set aside the chronology of Scripture by contradictory catalogues of ancient kings, and records forged by an Egyptian priest

* Rollin's Ancient History, Book I. part iii. vol. 1, p. 47.

anxious to claim a fabulous antiquity for his nation; though it seems to be admitted, in a note, that the Armenian version of Eusebius's chronology tells a different story from that of Manetho and his tables. And, indeed, this is true, not only of the Armenian, but also of the Greek translation of the chronicle of Eusebius,—they both differ materially from Manetho, both in the number of the kings and the number of the years in the several dynasties; while the records of Manetho, as preserved by Julius Africanus, Eusebius, and Josephus, concerning the shepherd-kings are so contradictory that it is impossible to know what Manetho really wrote.

But this question has been lately put beyond dispute in a very able work on the chronology of Ancient Egypt*. The learned author proves from astronomical and hieroglyphic records upon its monuments, that several of the dynasties on Manetho's list are contemporaneous:—

"The Memphites of the fourth dynasty are clearly shown by the monuments to have been in part contemporary with the Elephantinites of the fifth; the Diospolites of the eleventh and twelth dynasties are likewise shown to have been in part contemporary with the Heracleopolites of the ninth, and the Shepherds of the fifteenth†."

The dynastic records of Manetho, then, when compared with the stone monuments, are proved to be utterly fallacious. The author says:—

"The errors in Manetho's lists, and the manner in which the monuments assist us in verifying or correcting those lists, will be discussed in many places throughout this portion of the present work. The instances of corruption by copyists, to be noticed hereafter, plainly show us that we cannot rely upon

* Horæ Ægypticæ, by Reginald Stuart Poole.
† Horæ Ægypticæ, Part ii. sect. i.

the accuracy of the numbers in Manetho's dynasties as they now stand, and that we must, therefore, correct that historian's lists, as far as possible, from the dates and other records on the monuments. I must also distinctly state that I place no reliance upon Manetho in any case in which he is not in some degree confirmed by the monuments or other trustworthy ancient authority*."

In the "concluding remarks" by which the volume is closed, we find the following important words.

"But what is far more important and interesting, is the fact that these results vindicate the Bible, showing that the monuments of Egypt in no manner, on no point, contradict that sacred book, but confirm it. Some have asserted that they disprove the Bible; and others have insinuated that they weaken its authority. The monuments completely disprove both these ideas; and their venerable records most forcibly warn us, not only against the disbelief of sacred history, but also against distrusting too much the narratives of ancient profane history, and even tradition."

When such is the real value of Manetho's tables, we are not surprised that they appear not to be considered quite sufficient to overthrow the chronology of Scripture, and that additional aid should be sought for from other sources. This is found in

"The development of commerce and government, and still more of languages, and physical features of race. . . . . Again, how many years are needed to develop modern French out of Latin, and Latin itself out of its original crude forms? . . . . . When, again we have traced our Gaelic and our Sanscrit to their inferential pre-Hellenic stem, what farther effort is not forced upon our *imagination*, if we would *guess* the measure of the dim background in which the Mongolian and Egyptian languages, older *probably*, than the Hebrew, became fixed, growing early into the type which they retain? Do we see an historical area of nations and languages extending itself over nearly ten thousand years; and can we *imagine* less than another ten thousand, during which the possibilities of

* Horæ Ægypticæ, Part ii. sect. ii.

these things took body and form? Questions of this kind require from most of us a special training for each; but Baron Bunsen revels in them, and his theories are, at least, suggestive"—(pp. 54, 55).

Now, however, Baron Bunsen may revel in such questions, or however suggestive may be his theories, we solemnly protest against this method of treating the subject under consideration; we protest against introducing imagination and guesses and probabilities, into a discussion where the genuineness and authenticity of the Bible is the question at issue. If imagination be permitted to summon at will ten or twenty thousand years, simply that in them "the possibilities of things" may take body and form, we see not why even then it should stay its flight. Besides, the considerations suggested are by no means such as to require that the claim of twenty thousand years should be granted. The development of commerce, government, languages, and peculiarities of race, is but a poor ground on which to make such a demand. On the contrary, a strong argument from hence may fairly be brought against any lengthened duration of the world's history. If it could really claim such an immense antiquity, would it not present a very different aspect from what it does at present? Would a vast portion of the world be still uncivilized? Is it possible that the continents of America would have been unknown till within the last four hundred years? Would the arts and sciences have attained their present perfection only in our day, and all the most useful discoveries be modern? Thus the condition of nations, the aspect of the world, the face of society, the progress of science, all corroborate the testimony of Scripture and the voice of history as to the recent origin of our present system. Has not commerce multiplied a hundred fold in a few years? while whoever will take the trouble of comparing the English language now with what it was in the days of Chaucer, will find it hard to believe it required

a lapse of ages for French to be developed out of Latin.

In the absence, then, of some more satisfactory proof that our common dates are wrong, we must be excused if we hold fast by the ancient landmarks, especially as it is admitted, "it is not so easy to say how they should be rectified" (p. 57). Nor are we at all surprised at this admission, when we consider the attempt of Baron Bunsen to do so, some of which appear, even to his reviewer, "sufficiently doubtful."

"The idea of bringing Abraham into Egypt as early as 2876 B.C., is one of our author's most doubtful points, and may seem hardly tenable. But *he wanted time* for the growth of Jacob's family into a people of two millions, and he felt bound to place Joseph under a native Pharaoh, therefore, before the Shepherd Kings. He also contends that Abraham's horizon in Asia is antecedent to the first Median conquest of Babylon, in 2204. A famine *conveniently* mentioned under the twelfth dynasty of Egypt completes his proof. Sesortosis, therefore, is the Pharaoh to whom Joseph was minister; the stay of the Israelites in Egypt is extended to fourteen centuries; and the date 215 represents the time of oppression. Some of these details are sufficiently doubtful to afford ground of attack" (pp. 57, 58).

We should say so indeed. We have here an example of the way in which imagination can give birth to time, to suit "the possibilities." "He wanted time," "he felt bound," &c. And therefore he brings Abraham into Egypt nearly eight centuries too soon, and places Joseph before the Shepherd Kings, though they ruled in Egypt when Abraham visited it. Again, the sojourn of Israel in Egypt is extended to fourteen centuries, though, in truth, it was but four hundred and thirty years.

The contents of the Pentateuch are as freely handled as are its dates, and, we venture to say, with as little credit or advantage to the cause of rationalism, falsely so called. "The deluge is no longer a disturbance of law from which science shrinks, but a prolonged play of the forces of fire and water." In Genesis we

have "the half-ritual, half-traditional notices of the beginning of our race," and "barely consistent genealogies" (p. 56). The long lives of the first patriarchs belong to the domain of legend, or of symbolical cycle. "The historical portion begins with Abraham, when the lives become natural" (p. 57). "The avenger who slew the first born *may have been* the Bedouin host." And so in the passage of the Red Sea, "the description *may* be interpreted with the latitude of poetry" (p. 59). When either an author or his reviewer presumes to write after this fashion, he cannot expect that what he says will receive any serious examination. We may, however, notice one instance of the convenience of introducing "the latitude of poetry." Manetho, whose chronology is to supersede that of the sacred record, places the Exodus under Menephtha, son of the great Romses, about the year B.C. 1314. To be sure the Egyptian authorities carry Menephtha's reign to a later period, but *as it is not affirmed that Pharaoh was drowned* (see Exod. xiv. 6, 8, 10, 17, 18, 28; Ps. cxxxvi. 15!), it is no serious objection"! "A greater difficulty is that we find but three centuries then left us from the Exodus to Solomon's temple" (p. 59). This is a difficulty indeed, seeing, in fact, that nearly five centuries intervened. But surely the imagination that thinks nothing of creating ten thousand years, need make but little account of two centuries. Such is the criticism to which the intellect and scholarship of the present day are expected to do homage!

It is easy to see that the end to which all this tends is to question the genuineness of the Pentateuch, and the other books of the Old Testament. "The continual recurrence of these difficulties (it is said) bears with ever-growing induction upon the question, whether the Pentateuch is of one age and hand, and whether subsequent books are contemporary with the events? And it is plainly stated "that traces of editorship, if not of composition, are manifest to

whoever will recognise them" (p. 59), that ancient fragments "are embedded in a crust of later narrative, the allusions to which betray, at least, a time when kings were established in Israel." So that "the Pentateuch is Mosaic as embodying the developed system of Moses, rather than as written by the great lawgiver's hand" (p. 60). Now we cannot allow a question of this importance to be thus summarily disposed of; what the traces and allusions referred to may be, we know not, though they are "manifest to whoever will recognise them." Had they been mentioned, it might perhaps have been possible to dispose of them; as it is, it will be enough to refer to the work of Dean Graves on the Pentateuch, in the Appendix to which will be found all the texts collected by Le Clerc, as affording reason to doubt whether the Pentateuch was composed by Moses. These texts are there fully considered, and the objections founded on them conclusively refuted.

In this admirable work, by a connected chain of reasoning, Dean Graves traces the Pentateuch downward to the times of Moses, and completely demolishes every pretence by which a later date is attempted to be assigned to it, and referring to the command of Joshua to the people to "keep and do all that is written in the book of the Law of Moses," he sums up his argument thus:—

"Now, what was this book of the Law? Undoubtedly the same of which it is said, that when Moses had made an end of writing the words of the Law in a book, until they were finished, he commanded the Levites, and said, 'Take this book of the Law, and put it in the side of the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be a witness against you.' That book which he commanded to be read before all Israel, at the end of every seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, at the Feast of Tabernacles. This, surely, must have been the same

with that which the Jews have received from the present hour back to the Babylonish Captivity, which must have preceded that event, because it is also received by the hostile Samaritans, who were planted in Judea at the commencement of the captivity; which must have preceded the division of the kingdom of Judah and Israel, because it was acknowledged in both; which must have preceded the establishment of the kings, because it supposes no such form of government, but rather condemns it. In a word, that book of the Law, which every writer and every sect among the Jews have quoted and acknowledged, in every possible form of quotation and acknowledgment, from the present period back to the immediate successor of Moses himself, who solemnly attests its authenticity and divine original*."

To which we would add, and acknowledged by a greater than Joshua, even Jesus himself. "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for *he wrote of me*. But if ye believe not *his writings*, how shall ye believe my words?" (John v. 46, 47).

We come now to be introduced to another work of Baron Bunsen, "Gott in der Geschichte, or God in History," and to another department of labour in his biblical researches. "As, in his Egypt, our author sifts the historical date of the Bible, so in his 'Gott in der Geschichte,' he expounds its directly religious element" (p. 60). In doing this, the German philosopher proves that he does not belong to "the despairing school, who forbid us to trust in God or in conscience, unless we kill our souls with literalism." As an example of this, that wondrous trial of Abraham's faith, which is declared to have been the immediate work of God, is ascribed to "the fierce ritual of Syria," which spake to him "with the awe of

* Graves on the Pentatouch, Part i. Lect. i.

a divine voice" (p. 61). Again: though the whole Mosaic economy is expressly revealed to us as divine, though its laws, its ritual, its sacrifices, its priesthood are declared to have been appointed by God;

> "Moses," we are told, "would gladly have founded a pure religious society, in which the primitive tables, written by the divine finger on man's heart, should have been law; but the rudeness and hardness of his people's heart compelled him to a sacerdotal system and formal tablets of stone" (p. 62).

But we proceed to consider what is regarded as the most important service of Baron Bunsen, in expounding the directly religious element of Scripture, and exhibiting "the Hebrew Prophets as witnesses to the Divine Government;" and in the discussion of this subject, we are compelled to say, we are brought into contact with open infidelity. One of the great external evidences of revealed religion is fulfilled prophecy,—one of the great evidences that Jesus is the Christ, is that "to Him give all the Prophets witness." Yet this evidence is positively and altogether denied. The prophets witnessed to the truth and righteousness of God; they instructed mankind by the moral lessons which they taught, but that is all. Of secular or Messianic prognostication, there is in their writings nothing. "Miraculous prophecy" exists only in the dreams of the fathers, and "the declamatory assertions" of "modern rhetoric." "Most Englishmen accustomed to be told that history is expressed by the Prophets in a riddle, which requires only a key to it, are disappointed to hear of moral lessons however important" (p. 64). Now we are by no means disappointed to hear of moral lessons in the Prophets, but we are deeply grieved to hear any man still calling himself a Christian say, that to look for a fulfilment of any of the Old Testament prophecies in the facts of the New, is to "twist the letter into harmony with the details of Gospel history" (p. 64).

Far be it from us to undervalue the moral element in the prophetic writings, but in recognising and admiring this, we must not deny the predictive, that which in fact constitutes the essential character of the word of prophecy. The great and primary object of the mission of the prophets is as the messengers of God, to make known his will to the world, and to reveal to the Church the things to be hereafter.

Whether it be true or false, this at least is the claim which Scripture makes. To foretell the future is declared to be the prerogative of God, and that he did so by the mouth of his Prophets is the truth that underlies the whole of revelation. This challenge is given to the idols of the heathen :—

" Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen : let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end : or declare us things for to come. Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods " (Isa. xli. 22, 23) ; and that which the Gods of the heathen could not do, the Lord does. " Who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord ? Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done." (xlv. 21 ; xlvi. 10.)

We turn now to our Lord. We hear his disciples ask him what should be the sign of his coming, and of the end of the world, or age, and in answer to this question, we find him speaking of the future, and of things that should come to pass, and closing his discourse thus, "Behold I have foretold you all things." (Mark xiii. 23.) Now, it is immaterial to the present question what the meaning of Christ's prophecy may be, whether it refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, or to his second coming, or to both. The point we mean to insist on is this: either the

words just quoted are a forgery, or they were spoken by Christ; if they were spoken by Him, there is such a thing as predictive prophecy, or else Christ was an impostor. We put the matter thus strongly, for these writers must be forced from the neutral ground they would too gladly occupy. If they are prepared to say that the Lord was an impostor, let them do so at once, let them join the cry, "Away with this fellow from the earth;" but we will not permit them, Judas-like, to "betray the Son of Man with a kiss." Either our Lord foretold the future, or he was a deceiver.

Again, the last book of the Bible opens thus: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass." Yet we are told that the notion that history is expressed by the Prophets in a riddle, is "the inheritance of days when Jerome could say, 'no one doubts that by Chaldeans are meant demons'" (p. 64). But, really, we are unable to see how the two things are connected. If the system of Origen in finding a mystical meaning in every word and incident of Scripture be sometimes employed by Jerome and others in their interpretations, is this a proof that there is no literal fulfilment of prophecy? We may condemn the system of Origenising without denying the prophetic element. The principle contended for by the writer of this review is, that the prophecies find their elucidation in contemporaneous history, and that there is no such thing as miraculous prognostication. We are aware that German writers, by "poetical penetration" and philological researches, have endeavoured "to lower the directly predictive element in prophecy." There is, however, at least one bright exception among them, Hengstenberg, who, in his "Christology," beginning with Genesis and ending with Malachi, proves that "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

But whatever be the view of German authors, we positively deny the truth of the following statement:—

"In our own country, each successive defence of the prophecies, in proportion as its author was able, detracted something from the extent of literal prognostication; and either laid stress upon the moral element, or urged a second as the spiritual sense" (p. 65).

Before proceeding to examine the truth of this, we may observe that the students of prophecy very generally recognise this character in its structure, that some of its predictions admit of a double sense, or a twofold application; that where two persons or events are correlative, typical, or analogous, the prediction which has a primary reference to that which is near, sometimes finds its higher and perfect fulfilment in the spiritual and more remote. For example, many of the Psalms which apply to circumstances in David's history are applied in the New Testament to Christ, and can find their complete accomplishment only in Him.

"Scripture prophecy," says Davison*, "is so framed in some of its predictions, as to bear a sense directed to two objects; of which structure the predictions concerning the kingdom of David furnish a conspicuous example. . . . . The double sense of prophecy is, of all things, the most remote from fraud or equivocation, and has its ground of reason perfectly clear. For what is it? Not the convenient latitude of two unconnected senses, wide of each other, and giving room to a fallacious ambiguity; but the combination of two relative, analogous, and harmonizing, though disparate subjects, each clear and definite in itself; implying a two-fold truth in the prescience, and creating an aggravated *difficulty*, and thereby an accumulated proof, in the completion."

This was perceived too by Lord Bacon, and spoken

* Discourses on Prophecy, by John Davison, B.D. Discourse V., part ii.

of by him as a mark of the divine character of prophecy*.

But now it is by this that the statement we have just quoted is endeavoured to be proved, let us attend to what follows:—

"Even Butler foresaw the possibility, that every prophecy in the Old Testament might have its elucidation in contemporaneous history, but literature was not his strong point, and he turned aside endeavouring to limit it, from an unwelcome idea. Bishop Chandler is said to have thought twelve passages in the Old Testament directly Messianic. Others restricted this character to five. Paley ventures to quote only one. Bishop Kidder conceded freely an historical sense in Old Testament texts, remote from adaptations in the New. The apostolic Middleton pronounced firmly for the same principle. Archbishop Newcome and others proved in detail its necessity" (p. 65).

Let us pause here a moment. To what does all this tend? Granting that the prelates named recognise a primary historical application of some of the Old Testament prophecies, does this prove that they detract from the extent of literal prognostication? Quite the reverse. On the contrary, they add to the predictive element, as Davison says, by "implying a twofold truth in the prescience." But that the fairness and honesty of the writer as a controversialist may be fully appreciated, we would examine the passage a little. "Even Butler *foresaw the possibility*, that every prophecy in the Old Testament might have its elucidation in contemporaneous history." Now, unless by his foreseeing the possibility, it be meant that he saw the probability, it has nothing to say to the purpose in hand, for there are few things the possibility of which might not be conceived. But how did Butler foresee this possibility? He simply sup-

* Atque licet plenitudo et fastigium complimenti eorum, plerumque certæ ætati vel etiam certo momento destinetur; attamen habent interim gradus nonnullos et scalas complimenti, per diversas mundi ætates.—De Augmentis Scientiarum.—Lib. ii. cap xi.

poses it in order to meet the very objection which the author of this essay is endeavouring to draw from it against the predictive element. He says:—

"It may be made appear that the showing, even to a high probability, *if that could be*, that the Prophets thought of some other events in such and such predictions; and not those at all which Christians alleged to be completions of those predictions; *or that such and such prophecies are capable of being applied to other events than those to which Christians apply them;* that this would not confute or destroy the force of the argument from prophecy, even with regard to those very instances. . . . To say, then, that the Scriptures and the things contained in them can have no other or farther meaning than those persons thought or had who first recited or wrote them, is evidently saying that those persons were the original, proper, and sole authors of these books; *i.e.* that they are not inspired; which is absurd, whilst the authority of those books is under examination. . . . *Hence may be seen to how little purpose those persons busy themselves, who endeavour to prove that the prophetic history is applicable to events of the age in which it was written, or of ages before it.* And thus, upon the whole, the matter of inquiry evidently must be, as above put, whether the prophecies are applicable to Christ, and to the present state of the world and of the Church,—applicable in such a degree as to imply foresight; not whether they are capable of any other application: *though I know no pretence for saying the general turn of them is capable of any other**."

Yet, "even Butler foresaw the possibility that every prophecy in the Old Testament might have its elucidation in contemporaneous history!"

Again: "Bishop Chandler *is said* to have thought twelve passages in the Old Testament directly Messianic." We should like to ask the writer did he

* Butler's Analogy, Part ii. chap. vii.

ever read Bishop Chandler's "Defence of Christianity from the prophecies of the Old Testament." If he did not, his writing in this loose manner from mere hearsay, on a subject of such deep and solemn interest, is altogether unpardonable; but if he did, we are compelled to charge him with the most flagrant and culpable dishonesty. In replying to an objector who pronounced that all the prophecies cited by the Apostles are fulfilled in Christ only in a secondary and allegorical sense, Bishop Chandler admits, "that all the texts quoted in the New Testament regard not the Messias as the sole object of the prophecy;" "though," he adds, "as we shall show, those of the typical kind are, nevertheless, direct proofs." But he then proceeds to prove, "that there are prophecies that literally and simply speak of the coming of the Messias." And in doing this he certainly confines himself to twelve (Malachi iii. 1; v. 5, 6. Haggai ii. 6—9. Zechariah ix. 9; xii. 10. Daniel ii. 44, 45; vii. 13, 14; ix. 24—27. Micah v. 2. Habakkuk ii. 3, 4. Amos xi. 11, 12. Isaiah lii. 13; liii.), to the discussion of which he devotes one hundred and thirteen pages, which he introduces with these words:—

"Let the disquisition of particular texts determine the truth of this author's assertion. To *name them all* would carry me into too great a length. I shall therefore *select some of the principal* prophecies, which being proved to regard the Messias immediately and solely, in the obvious and literal sense, according to scholastic rules, may *serve as a specimen* of what the Scriptures have predicted of a Messias that was to come*."

We think after this, it would have been more to the purpose, if the writer of the essay, in attempting to prove that there is no direct Messianic prophecy,

* Defence of Christianity, chap. ii. sect. i.

had endeavoured to grapple with these passages instead of flippantly introducing into a string of dishonest sentences, "Bishop Chandler *is said* to have thought twelve passages in the Old Testament directly Messianic!"

Once more: "Paley *ventures* to quote only one." Here, for the third time, we have the same disgraceful pleading adopted. Are not these words *designed* to lead us to suppose that Paley felt he could not safely refer to any more? Now it is true he did quote but one. What, however, are the facts? In a volume containing a summary of the whole of the Christian Evidences, Paley devotes one short chapter to the evidence from prophecy. And, as his manner is, he selects one strong case as sufficient to prove and illustrate his argument, he takes Isaiah lii. 13; liii. He examines this prophecy in detail; proving that it speaks of the Messiah and of Him alone, and concludes:—

"*There are other prophecies* of the Old Testament, interpreted by Christians to relate to the Gospel history, which are both deserving of great regard, and of a very attentive consideration; *but I content myself with stating the above*, as well because I think it the clearest and the strongest of all, as because most of the rest, in order that their value might be represented with any tolerable degree of fidelity, *require a discussion unsuitable to the limits and nature of this work**."

Yet, "Paley *ventures* to quote only one!"

We really feel that this essay might now be set aside with well-merited contempt. The author who proves himself so unscrupulous in writing on any subject, puts himself beyond the pale of serious criticism; but one who does so in an attempt to shake our faith in the Word of God, is deserving of the

* Evidences of Christianity, part ii. chap. i.

highest moral reprobation. Having, however, taken him in hand, we mean still further to expose his shallowness, sophistry, and dishonesty. Two other works of eminent writers on prophecy are noticed,—but how?

"Keith's edition of Newton need not be here discussed. Davison of Oriel, with admirable skill threw his argument into a series, as it were, of hypothetical syllogisms, with only the defect (which some readers overlook) that his minor premise can hardly in a single instance be proved" (p. 66).

He declines, then, to discuss Newton. And why? Simply because he could not;—because in every line of it there is a refutation of the statement that there is no predictive element in prophecy. In that great work we are made to stand, as it were, in the council-chamber of the Omniscient, and then brought down along the stream of time to see prophecy passing into history, and to behold nations rise and empires fall according as God had spoken. As for Davison, he is dismissed with a sneer at his logic: his skill is admitted, but his logic is bad; his argument is admirable, except that the minor premise of his hypothetical syllogism is false. It would have been more satisfactory if this were proved, and not merely asserted. Davison's plan is this: he proposes a "*criterion*" of prophetic inspiration, the conditions of which, *if* fulfilled by a prediction, may assure us that it is in truth a divine prophecy; and then he brings some of the prophecies, both of the Old and New Testament, to the test of this criterion. The conditions are as follows:—

"First, the *known promulgation* of the prophecy prior to the event. Secondly, the *clear* and *palpable fulfilment* of it. Lastly, the *nature of the event* itself, if, when the prediction of it was given, it lay *remote* from human view, and was such as could not be foreseen

by any supposable *effort of reason*, or be *deduced* upon principles of *calculation* derived from *probability* or *experience**."

He then shows that these conditions are fulfilled in the Scripture prophecies concerning Christianity, the Jewish people, the great Apostacy, Pagan kingdoms, the descendants of Ishmael, and the four Empires, thus fully establishing the reality both of secular and Messianic prognostication. When it is said that "his minor premise can hardly in a single instance be proved," it is meant that the prophecies he examines do not fulfil the conditions of the criterion proposed; but as the author does not attempt to show this, his assertion will now hardly be considered a proof.

It may be asked, then, how is the predictive element attempted to be set aside? Thus,—instead of a candid consideration of the prophecies, we find two pages of stale and childish objections strung together, collected from the Psalms and some of the Prophets, all of which have been a thousand times answered, yet put forward with an air as if nothing had ever been said about them, and something new and startling had been discovered. We shall give an extract as a specimen of the deep philological learning at whose magic touch the faith of the Church in the prophetic Scriptures is to crumble.

"If he would follow our version in rendering the second Psalm, *Kiss the Son*, he knows that Hebrew idiom convinced even Jerome the true meaning was, *Worship purely*. He may read in Psalm xxxiv. that 'not a bone of the righteous shall be broken,' but he must feel a difficulty in detaching this from the context, so as to make it a prophecy of the Crucifixion. If he accepts these versions of Psalm xxii. 17, he may wonder how 'piercing the hands and the

* Davison on Prophecy, Discourse viii.

feet' can fit into the whole passage; but if he prefers the most ancient Hebrew reading, he finds, instead of '*piercing*,' the comparison 'like a lion.' And this corresponds sufficiently with the 'dogs' of the first clause; though a morally certain emendation would make the parallel more perfect by reading the word 'lions' in both clauses. In either case the strong monsters are intended, by whom Israel is surrounded and torn. Again, he finds in Hosea that 'the Lord loved Israel when he was young, and called him out of Egypt to be his Son;' but he must feel with Bishop Kidder, that such a citation is rather accommodated to the flight of Joseph into Egypt, than a prediction to be a ground of argument. Fresh from the service of Christmas, he may sincerely exclaim, *Unto us a Child is born;* but he knows that the Hebrew translated *Mighty God*, is at least disputable, that perhaps it means only 'strong and mighty one, Father of an Age;' and he can never listen to any one who pretends that the Maiden's Child, in Isaiah vii. 16, was not to be born in the reign of Ahaz, as a sign against the kings of Pekah and Rezin" (pp. 68, 69).

To test still further the honesty and critical skill of the writer of this extract, we would say a few words upon the first and the last passage referred to. We are told that Hebrew idiom convinced even Jerome that the true meaning of *Kiss the son*, in the second Psalm, is *Worship purely*. Now this statement is without foundation. Jerome, indeed, admits that he thus translated the words, assigns his reason, and justifies his doing so. But how? Is it by saying that the Hebrew idiom convinced him this was the true meaning? No; but by asking how he had erred in rendering a *doubtful word* in a way that would not be likely to give offence, or to be misunderstood. He says that the Hebrew בר (bhar), may mean either a son or pure, and that in translating the word kiss, *worship*, he gave the sense rather, for that they who do homage are wont to kiss the hand; and that the Hebrews put a kiss for worship. But while Jerome adopts this free translation, he does not say that the true meaning of the word נשקו (nash-sheku), is doubtful; nor could he, for, as Hengstenberg remarks, "the verb in Pi. invariably has the sense of kissing." When we compare the garbled extract from Jerome

given in a note with the passage as it really is*, the most charitable conclusion which we can come to is, that it was taken by the writer at second hand.

Again: as to Isaiah vii. 14, no one is to be listened to who pretends that "the Maiden's Child spoken of was not to be born in the reign of Ahaz." Now, though we are not to be listened to, it is perfectly certain that the prophet in this passage speaks of the miraculous conception, and of the birth of Him who is the Immanuel, God with us, and of His birth alone; so thoroughly is this the case that even a double application cannot here be admitted.

"A son of the prophet, as in general, every subject except the Messiah is excluded by the circumstance that in chapter viii. 8, Canaan is called the Land of Immanuel,—if the prophet had announced so solemnly the birth of his own child, he would have made himself ridiculous. Further; how, then, did the prophet know that after nine months a child would be born to him? or, if the pregnancy be considered as having already commenced, how did he know that just a son would be born to him? This is a question to which most of these Rationalistic interpreters take good care not to give any reply. Plüschke, indeed, is of opinion that, upon a bold conjecture, the prophet had ventured this statement †."

Besides, every other interpretation is excluded by the prediction that a *Virgin* should conceive. The word here used עלמה (Almah) occurs in six other

* Quod ego nolens transferre putide, sensum magis secutus sum, ut dicerem, adorate; quia enim qui adorant solent deosculari manum, et capita submittere;.....et Hebræi juxta linguæ suæ proprietatem, deosculationem pro veneratione ponunt.

Quid igitur peccavi, si verbum ambiguum diversa interpretatione converti? et qui in commentariolis ubi libertas est disserendi, dixeram: adorate filium in ipso corpore, ne violentus viderer interpres et Judaicæ calumniæ locum darem, &c.—Hieron. adversus Ruffinium, Epist. lxvi.

† Hengstenberg's Christology, in loc.

passages of Scripture, in every one of which it is used of unmarried persons. Luther's offer, then, was a safe one. "If a Jew or a Christian can prove to me that in any passage of Scripture Almah means 'a married woman,' I will give him a hundred florins, though God alone knows where I may find them." The word, as Hengstenberg observes, "designates an unmarried person in the first years of youth; and, if this be the case, unviolated chastity is a matter of course in the context."

But now supposing that all these passages were given up, that it were admitted they could be applied to Christ only by accommodation, does the writer really imagine that he has disposed of the great body of Scripture prophecy? It would seem so. He exultingly looks around on the havoc he has caused, and triumphs over his fallen foe, direct prognostication.

"When so vast an induction on the destructive side has been gone through, it avails little that some passages may be doubtful, one perhaps in Zechariah, and one in Isaiah, capable of being made directly Messianic, and a chapter *possibly* in Deuteronomy, foreshadowing the final fall of Jerusalem. Even these few cases, the remnant of so much confident rhetoric, tend to melt, if they are not already melted, in the crucible of searching inquiry" (pp. 69, 70).

It is a pity he did not try his potent alchymy on that chapter, Deuteronomy xxviii., first having perused Josephus. He forgets he declined to put Newton into this crucible, and neglected to submit to its tests the twelve directly Messianic passages of Bishop Chandler, or even the syllogisms of Davison, which, with their false premise, he doubtless might easily have melted, but which he found more convenient to dismiss with a *negatur minor*. As by misrepresenting Jerome he is powerful in the Psalms, he of course cannot quote Psalm xvi. as Messianic, though he knows Peter declares that in it David being a prophet spake of the resurrection of Christ, "that

his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption" (Acts ii. 25—31); nor Psalm xxii. 18, "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture," though he knows St. John declares the soldiers cast lots for the seamless coat of Christ, that this Scripture might be fulfilled (John xix. 24.) Nor will he admit that Psalm xl. 7, 8, "Then said I, Lo I come to do thy will, O my God," is the language of Messiah, voluntarily undertaking the work of man's redemption, though he knows that this is shown to be its meaning in Hebrews x. 5—10. Nor will he say that Psalm xlv. 6, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre," refers to any but Solomon, though he knows that in Hebrews i. 8, these words are declared to be addressed to the Son. Nor dare he say that Psalm lxviii. 18, "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men," speaks of the ascension of Christ, though he knows St. Paul so interprets it (Eph. iv. 8). Nor yet that Psalm lxix. 21, "In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink" has any reference to the death of Christ, though he knows St. John declares that Jesus said, I thirst, "that the Scripture might be fulfilled" (John xix. 28). Nor will he venture to assert that Psalm cx. 1, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool," refers to the Messiah, though he knows that Christ expressly applies the passage to himself (Matt. xxii. 43—45). Nor, once more, can he allow that Psalm cxviii. 22, "The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner," has any Messianic meaning, though he knows that not only St. Peter applies it to Christ, but Christ himself expressly does the same, (Acts iv. 11; Matt. xxi. 42). Our author knew that were he guilty of the weakness of being in the slightest degree influenced by the interpretations of these Psalms given by Christ and his

Apostles, he would have received from his fellow-Rationalists the ridicule he predicted for Baron Bunsen, from his countrymen under similar circumstances. "If our German had ignored all that the masters of philology have proved on these subjects, his countrymen would have raised a storm of ridicule, at which he must have drowned himself in the Nekar" (p. 70).

We are now nearly done with this writer as a Biblical critic. But he ventures, to speak more fully though not less superficially, of two portions of the prophetic Scriptures; and upon these, therefore, we must have with him a word. Daniel and Isaiah have ever been the great difficulties in the way of the Jew and the Infidel, and they appear to be no less obnoxious to our modern Rationalists. They must certainly be felt to be very inconvenient by those who hold that there is no such thing as secular or Messianic prognostication, especially by Bunsen's reviewer, who, in this matter, surpasses even his master, reproving him for ascribing to the prophets anything like foresight at all.

"Why he should add to his moral and metaphysical basis of prophecy, a notion of foresight by vision of particulars, or a kind of *clairvoyance*, though he admits it to be a natural gift, consistent with fallibility, is not so easy to explain. One would wish he might have intended only the power of seeing the ideal in the actual, or of tracing the Divine government in the movements of men. *He seems to mean more than presentiment or sagacity; and this element in his system requires proof*" (p. 70).

Daniel and Isaiah, then, must be brought down to a "moral and metaphysical basis." And for this purpose, as nothing new can be said, the old exploded subterfuges and objections of the Jew and the Infidel must be produced. Isaiah speaks of the Jewish remnant, or of Jeremiah, or of anything or any one, save the Messiah; and as for Daniel, it is history not prophecy, the real author of the book having lived after the events spoken of occurred. In the case of Daniel, we are told we

"May doubt whether all parts of the book are of one age, or what is the starting point of the seventy weeks; but two results are clear beyond fair doubt, that the period of weeks ended in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes, and that those portions of the book, supposed to be specially predictive, are a history of past occurrences up to that reign" (p. 69).

The coolness with which these assertions are made is certainly surprising. One would think that the writer was here treading on clear and undisputed ground; whereas in a single sentence he totally ignores "all that the masters of philology have proved on these subjects." In opposition to his assertions, we confidently affirm that Daniel is a prophecy, not a history, and that even should the earliest starting point be taken for the seventy weeks that can possibly be fixed they would not end for one hundred and seventeen years after Antiochus was dead. The earliest starting point that can be supposed is the first year of Cyrus (Ezra i. 1), B.C. 536. Seventy weeks,=490 years, reckoned from this brings us to B.C. 46; but Antiochus died B.C. 163; consequently, reckoning the seventy weeks even from the decree of Cyrus, they would not terminate for 117 years after Antiochus was dead. So much for the assertion, it is "clear beyond fair doubt, that the period of weeks ended in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes." Nor is there so much uncertainty as to the period from whence they are to be counted. It is very generally agreed, by the best and most learned writers, that they are to be counted either from the seventh or the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes (see Ezra vii.; Nehemiah ii.), *i. e.* B.C. 457 or B.C. 445. If we take the seventh of Artaxerxes, which seems the most probable, *i. e.* B.C. 457, and count from it sixty-nine weeks,=483 years, the time given in Daniel for the manifestation of the Messiah, we come to A.D. 26; to which, if four years be added for the admitted error in the Christian era, we are brought to the baptism of Christ, and his entrance upon his public ministry. But not to dwell more

particularly on this, as it is not the question immediately before us, we would close this part of the discussion with the words of Hengstenberg :—

* "If we turn to history, it must strike the most prejudiced mind as a very remarkable fact, that of all the current chronological calculations, in relation to this period of time, there is not a single one whose results differ more than ten years from the statements of the prophecy. But, on closer examination of these calculations, we find that the one which has the greatest probabilities in its favour fully establishes the agreement of prophecy and history, even to a single year."

But now it is asserted, that the book of Daniel is nothing but a history, the portions supposed to be specially predictive being but a record of events previous and up to the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes; in other words, it is said, that the book belongs to a more recent date than is assigned to it.

"In distinguishing," says Bunsen's reviewer, "the man Daniel from our book of Daniel, and in bringing the latter as low as the reign of Antiochus, our author only follows the admitted necessities of the case. Not only Macedonian words, such as *symphonia* and *psanterion*, but the texture of the Chaldaic with such late forms as דֵּן, לְכוֹן and אִלֵּן the pronominal ם and ה having passed into ן. And not only minute description of Antiochus's reign, but the stoppage of such description at the precise date, 169 B.C. remove all philological and critical doubt as to the age of the book" (p. 76).

We would ask the writer, was he not well aware when penning this that he was but repeating the objections of Porphyry, in the third century; of Collins in the eighteenth; and which after being dead and buried, have been revived by Berthold and Bleek? Was he not well aware that they have been so answered and disposed of that no honest man should ever again so much as name them? Had he condescended to

* Hengstenberg on Daniel.

have discussed Newton he would have found every one of them numbered among the eleven objections of the deistical Collins, who himself was but a copyist of Porphyry; and he would have found, too, that they have all been long since fully refuted. The book could not have been written by Daniel, who was carried captive into Babylon, because it is said there are in it Macedonian words. Now what are these words? The writer names two of them, *symphonia* and *psanterion*. Why did he not name another? Because there is but one other he could name; and that, like these two, the name of a *musical instrument;* every other word of alleged Grecian origin having been given up; so that the whole question turns on three names of musical instruments. And what is the real case with reference to these? Why, first of all, their derivation is exceedingly doubtful; they are much more probably of Semitic than of Grecian origin. And the affinity of the Grecian names might be traced from the original language of the world; or supposing that they are derived the one from the other, why should not the Greek be derived from the Chaldee, and not the Chaldee from the Greek? That this is the true solution of the matter is certain. The words in question passed from the east into the west, it being a matter of history that the Greeks had some slight intercourse with the Asiatics; and when it is remembered that the words in question are the names of musical instruments, and that the Greeks acknowledge* they received their music from the east, we think no reasonable mind will regard the "Macedonian words" as a difficulty. But then, again, it is said "the texture of the Chaldaic" determines the book to be of a later age. To this it is a sufficient answer that the Chaldee of the book of Daniel agrees exactly with the

* Et cum Baccho totam Asiam ad Indiam usque consecraverint, magnam quoque musicæ partem inde transferunt.—Strabo, Lib. 10.

Chaldee of Ezra, and both differ from that of the Targums. Now Ezra and the man Daniel were contemporary. But, lastly, "the minute description of Antiochus's reign," and "the stoppage of such description at the precise date 169 B.C." remove all doubt as to the date of the book. This, we know, was Porphyry's great objection. The clearness of the prophecies led him to think they must be history. But, as Bishop Newton exclaims, "What an argument is this against the book of Daniel!—his prophecies are clear, and therefore are no prophecies*." As to the assertion that this clearness of description stops at the reign of Antiochus, we would observe, even could this be shown, it would prove nothing, for we see in other prophets that a certain period often bounds the sphere of their vision, and that their distinct prognostications terminate in great culminating events. Thus everything is minutely foretold by Jeremiah with reference to the captivity and to Babylon, while few predictions unconnected with these are to be found in his prophecy. But it is not true that in Daniel minuteness of detail ends with Antiochus. To say so is a mere assumption; an assumption of the very point we have shown to be wholly untenable, that the seventy weeks terminate with his reign. Daniel's wondrous prophecy embraced the whole future; his vision carried him forward to the coming ages. He predicted the advent of the Messiah, the time of his appearing, his violent death, the destruction of Jerusalem, the doings of Antichrist, the resurrection of the just, the times of the end; while Christ himself not only recognized Daniel as a prophet, but speaks of one of his predictions as being even then unfulfilled, a prediction, too, which is found in one of the most minutely descriptive passages of the book. (Matt. xxiv. 15). Thus, then, either such descriptions did not

* Introduction to the Dissertations on Daniel.

stop at the precise date 169 B.C. or else our Lord was in error, and mistook history for prophecy! Such is a specimen of the proof by which it is attempted to be shown that "those portions of the book supposed to be specially predictive are a history of past occurrences;" and that "the necessities of the case" require us to distinguish "the man Daniel from our Book of Daniel."

We think we shall show that the only distinction the necessities of the case require, is the obvious one between an author and his work; for that there is the most incontestible evidence that the book of Daniel was in existence before Antiochus was born, and there is not the shadow of a pretence for assigning to it any other authorship than that of the prophet Daniel himself. In the first place, not only does our Lord recognize the genuineness of the book of Daniel, but also Josephus refers to it as the work of Daniel, speaks of him as a prophet, and says it is to be found among the sacred writings.

"If any one be so very desirous of knowing truth as not to waive such points of curiosity, and cannot curb his inclination for understanding the uncertainties of futurity, and whether they will happen or not, let him be diligent in reading the book of Daniel, which he will find among the sacred writings*."

Again, although the present Greek version is that of Theodotion, it is certain there was an ancient Greek version ascribed to the LXX. It was inserted by Origen in his "Hexapla," and is referred to, among others by Jerome†, who says the Church rejected the Septuagint translation because it differed

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* Antiquities of the Jews, Lib. x. chap. x. sect. 4.

† Danielem prophetam juxta Septuaginta interpretes Domini Salvatoris Ecclesiæ non legunt, utentes Theodotionis editione..... hoc unum affirmare possum, quod multum à veritate discordet.—Hieron. in Dan. Præf.

considerably from the original. Now upon this statement of Jerome we can raise an additional argument for the date of the original, for if it be true, as alleged, that it was not written till after the time of Antiochus, then the Alexandrine version of it must have been, to say the least, contemporary with it, on which supposition it would be impossible to account for its being the least accurate of all the Alexandrian translations. Once more, and this should settle the question beyond dispute, we have it on the authority of Josephus that when Alexander the Great was at Jerusalem the prophecy of Daniel was shown to him, in which a Greek was announced as the destroyer of the emperor of the Persians, and that, interpreting it of himself, he granted, in consequence, considerable favours to the Jews.

"And when the book of Daniel was showed him, wherein Daniel declared that one of the Greeks should destroy the empire of the Persians, he supposed that himself was the person intended; and as he was then glad, he dismissed the multitude for the present, but the next day he called them to him, and bade them ask what favours they pleased of him; whereupon the High Priest desired that they might enjoy the laws of their forefathers, and might pay no tribute on the seventh year*."

Now Alexander visited Jerusalem B.C. 332, and Antiochus Epiphanes died B.C. 163, yet the book of Daniel is a history of Antiochus's reign!

We have next to notice what Baron Bunsen's reviewer says of the fifty-second and fifty-third chapters of Isaiah; and he would be indeed most sanguine who, after the specimens we have had, would hope to meet with anything original or worthy of serious refutation. Whoever does so will be disappointed. The same style is pursued to the end. He still

* Antiquities, Lib. xi. chap. viii. sect. 5.

continues his propensity to deal in "old clothes;" the old errors and old objections, refuted as often as they have been repeated, are still the staple of his trade. By him the modern Jewish or rationalistic interpretation of this prophecy is preferred to that given in the New Testament. To the question of the Ethiopian eunuch, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself or of some other man?" (Acts viii. 34), the writer answers, of Jeremiah, or of the Jewish remnant; which he is not sure, but he is sure that Philip was wrong when he "began at that Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."

"Baron Bunsen puts together with masterly analysis the illustrative passages of *Jeremiah;* and it is difficult to resist the conclusion to which they tend" (p. 72). "Their weight (in the master's hand) is so great, that if any single person should be selected, they prove Jeremiah should be the one...." Still the general analogy of the Old Testament, which makes *collective Israel*, or the *prophetic remnant*, especially the servant of Jehovah, and the comparison of chapters xliii. and xlix. may permit us to think the oldest interpretation the truest" (p. 73).

We have thus a view of the unity that exists among rationalistic interpreters as to the meaning of this prophecy. Bunsen applies it to Jeremiah; Hitzig to collective Israel; De Wette to the prophetic remnant; while the writer before us wavers between Jeremiah and the Jewish remnant. He makes an admission worthy of notice, as being an important element in determining the true application of the prophecy. "The servant in chapters ii. and iii. must have relation to the servant in chapters xliii. and xlix." (p. 71). Not only have they a relation, but without doubt they are the same; and therefore, if we would really determine whom we are to understand by the servant of the Lord, we must combine all that is said of him in the several passages; and when this is done, it will be seen that no other but the Messiah is spoken of. That this was the interpretation received among the Jews, at the time of

Christ, appears from Luke ii. 32, where Simeon speaks of the Saviour as φῶς εἰς ἀποκάλυψιν ἐθνῶν, with distinct reference to Isa. xlii. 6. And again, in Acts xiii. 47, St. Paul quotes Isa. xlix. 6, with reference to the preaching of Christ to the Gentiles.

In chap. liii. 2, it is said, "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as *a root* out of a dry ground." We are brought back by this to chap. xi. 10: "In that day there shall be *a root* of Jesse." Upon this parallel passage, Stier observes: "It is by our modern interpreters put aside as quietly as possible, for with a powerful voice it proclaims to us two truths; that the *same* Isaiah refers to his former prophecy,—and that the Servant of the Lord here is none other than the Messiah there." To whom but to the Messiah can verse 5 be applied? "He was wounded for our transgressions," or, rather, *pierced* חלל (*perforavit*, Gesenius). Again, verse 8, "For the transgression of my people was he stricken." On this we find a note in the Essay before us: "In verse 8, for *he was stricken*, the Hebrew is, נגע למו *the stroke was upon them; i.e.* on the generation of the faithful, which were cut off." This, we know, is the modern Jewish gloss, and for it, may be said that the Hebrew pronoun admits a plural signification. In support of the marginal reading "was the stroke *upon him*," it might be argued that the Septuagint translation is, "was *He smitten to death*," which, of course, excludes the Jewish interpretation; and Lowth notices an argument by which Dr. Kennicott reasons that in this, the Septuagint must have agreed with the ancient Hebrew text. But not to insist on this, Hengstenberg is disposed to give it the plural signification, and to refer למו to the preceding collective עמי (my people), and in it he thinks there is a beautiful declaration of the vicarious nature of the Messiah's suffering, translating it thus: "He was cut off out of the land of the living,

for the transgression of my people, whose the punishment." He says :—

"Before it, the relative pronoun is to be understood: for the sin of my people, whose the punishment, *q.d.*, whose property the punishment was, to whom it belonged*."

We would now observe that the Messianic interpretation of the prophecy is the one that was universally adopted by the Jews. The Chaldee paraphrast Jonathan refers it to Christ. He says, הא יצלח עבדי משיחא "Behold, my servant Messiah shall prosper." Pearson multiplies proofs from Jonathan, Jarchi, Alshech, that the Rabbins invariably applied the prophecy to Messiah; indeed, this is not denied. Even Gesenius says, "It was only the later Jews who abandoned this interpretation; no doubt, in consequence of their controversies with the Christians." Indeed, it is admitted in this Essay that "the first Jewish expositor who loosened without breaking Rabbinical fetters was R. Saadiah, in the ninth century" (p. 72); yet the force of all this is attempted thus to be set aside :—

"It is idle, with Pearson, to quote Jonathan as a witness to the Christian interpretation, unless his conception of the Messiah were ours. But the idea of the Anointed One, which in some of the Psalms belongs to Israel, shifted from time to time, being applied now to people, and now to king or prophet, &c." (p. 72).

Now there is not the slightest pretence for the insinuation that Jonathan and the Rabbins did not look for a *personal* Messiah†, while it is the only thing that would render a reference to their interpretation idle, for their conceptions of him being different from

* Christology: Isaiah liii. 8.

† The Midrash Tanchuma, an old commentary on the Pentateuch, says :—"This is the King Messiah, who is high and lifted up, and very exalted, more exalted than Abraham, elevated above Moses, higher than the heavenly angels."

ours does not in the slightest degree affect the question. One word more we would add, this Messianic interpretation, established by Christ and admitted by the Jewish writers, is the only one which has been received by the Christian Church for eighteen centuries. Yet now the Saviour is denied in the house of his friends.

"If any sincere Christian now asks, Is not then our Saviour spoken of in Isaiah; let him open his New Testament, and ask there with John the Baptist, whether he was Elias? If he finds the Baptist answering, *I am not*, yet our Lord testifies that in spirit and in power this was Elias; a little reflection will show how the historical representation, in Isa. liii., is of some suffering prophet or remnant, yet the truth and patience, the grief and triumph, have their highest fulfilment in Him who said, 'Father, not My will but Thine.' But we must not *distort the prophets* to prove the Divine WORD incarnate, and then from the incarnation reason back to the sense of prophecy. . . .Justice and humanity exclaim against such *traditional distortion*" (p. 74).

We take, then, the New Testament, and we ask Philip, Is the Saviour spoken of in Isaiah? and we find him from that Scripture preaching Christ to the Ethiopian noble. We ask St. John the same question, and we find him (chap. xii. 38) saying, that in the rejection of Christ and his words by the Jews, Isa. liii. was fulfilled. We take the New Testament, and we find that the Saviour himself, "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke xxiv. 27). Again, when, in the synagogue of Nazareth, he stood up to read, and there was handed to him the book of the prophet Isaiah, he opened the lxi. chapter and read the commission there given to the Lord's anointed; and closing the book he sat down, and as the eyes of all that were in the synagogue were fastened upon him, he said, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke iv. 21). Will it, then, be said that Christ is guilty of "traditional distortion," against which justice and

humanity exclaim, that he distorted the prophets in directly applying Isaiah to himself? Whatever sceptics and rationalists may say, the loving and believing language of the Church still will be, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write" (John i. 45). If the theory put forward be adopted, that there is no such thing as prophecy truly so called, on what, we would ask, did the faith of the Old Testament saints rest, how were there any looking for the consolation of Israel? or what foundation have we now for faith and hope? In such case the future would be to us darkness, no light from heaven would shine upon the grave, nor would our earthly pilgrimage be cheered by the hope of a glorious and joyful resurrection.

No one will now be surprised to learn that the writer who holds the views we have been considering with reference to the prophetic Scriptures, regards the Bible merely as a human composition. Its authors were indeed inspired, but so were Luther and Milton, and so are all "true hearts."

"God has been pleased to educate men and nations, employing imagination no less than conscience, and suffering his lessons to play freely within the limits of humanity and its short comings" (p. 77).

In other words, much that we find in Scripture is all imagination, and we must not "read its pages with that dulness which turns symbol and poetry into materialism."

"The sacred writers acknowledge themselves men of like passions with ourselves, and we are promised illumination from the spirit which dwelt in them." "We find our Prayer-book constructed on the idea of the Church being an inspired society." "If such a spirit did not dwell in the Church the Bible would not be inspired, for *the Bible is before all things the written voice of the congregation*" (p. 78).

Our "traditional theology" has taught us that the Bible is before all things the written Word of

God. The question of inspiration forms the leading subject of the last of these Essays, and, as it is only touched on here, we shall not now enter on its discussion. But we must at once protest against the following statement as altogether false: "Bold as such a theory of inspiration may sound, it was the earliest creed of the Church, and it is the only one to which the facts of Scripture answer" (p. 78). It were impossible, even for a writer who deals in mere assertion, to invent one more utterly unfounded. We assert, on the contrary, and we believe we shall be able to prove it, that the Universal Church with one voice, as well as the Scriptures themselves, claim for the written Word a supernatural inspiration.

The last work of Baron Bunsen noticed by his reviewer is "Hippolytus and his Age," which, though consisting of "a congeries of subjects," is described as "pregnant and suggestive beyond any book of our time." As the chronology of Scripture was assailed through his "Egypt," and the prophecy of Scripture through his "God in History," so the doctrines of Scripture are now attacked through his "Hippolytus." And here, we must say, the writer surpasses himself in disingenuousness. Afraid to commit himself too far he takes shelter behind his author, and from that position of security attempts to stab the faith he has vowed to defend. We are not about here to enter with him upon a discussion of doctrine. When a spoiler has laid his hand upon the casket we will not stop to reason with him as to the nature and value of the jewels it contains; but our dissection of this writer would not be complete did we not expose the mode of his attack, and lay bare the poverty of his religious belief. And here we may at once observe, that he appears to have made total shipwreck of the faith. It is not that this or that error is introduced, but all the fundamental doctrines of Christianity *seem*

either to be perverted or denied; we say seem, for here the ambiguous art of mystification, and of using words without distinct meaning, or, at least, without conveying any, prevails. For example :—

"In Him he finds brought to perfection that religious idea, which is the thought of the Eternal, without conformity to which our souls cannot be saved from evil" (p. 80).

A religious idea,—the thought of the Eternal,—brought to perfection in Christ! Or take this full sentence :—

"The eternal is what belongs to God, as Spirit, therefore the negation of things finite and unspiritual, whether world, or letter, or rite of blood" (p. 81).

Now we would ask what *is* the meaning of this? The negation of world, letter, rite of blood is that which belongs to God! It may be stupidity, but we confess ourselves wholly unable to fathom it.

With jargon such as this is mixed up the denial, through Baron Bunsen's mouth, of justification, regeneration, the Trinity, the incarnation, original sin, the atonement, the resurrection; Bunsen, we are told, "explains New Testament terms in such a way that he may be charged with using evangelical language in a philosophical sense." But, says his reviewer, plainly approving of his doing so, and adopting the results,

"In reply *he* would ask [read *I* would ask] what proof is there that the reasonable sense of St. Paul's words was not the one which the Apostle intended?" (p. 80).

We answer, none whatever. We are quite sure that the reasonable sense is what the Apostle intended. But we are equally sure that what is called the philosophical, is the unreasonable sense. Let us now hear some New Testament terms philosophically explained :—

"Why may not justification by faith have meant *the peace of mind*, or sense of Divine approval, which comes of trust in a righteous God, rather than a fiction of merit by transfer?" "Justification would be neither an arbitrary ground of confidence, nor a reward upon condition of our disclaiming merit, but rather *a verdict of forgiveness* upon our repentance (pp. 80, 81).

If this is to be taken as a specimen of the philosophical explanation of Scripture terms, it is not calculated to inspire us with much confidence in the system. Scripture speaks of peace as the fruit of justification, but if the writer's philosophy teaches him to say that justification by faith means peace of mind, he can do so, only let him not call it in the next sentence a verdict of forgiveness! Let us now attend to some further philosophical explanations:—

"If our philosopher had persuaded us of the moral nature of justification, he would not shrink from adding, that Regeneration is a correspondent giving of insight, or an awakening of forces of the soul. By Resurrection he would mean a spiritual quickening. . . . Propitiation would be the recovery of that peace which cannot be while sin divides us from the Searcher of hearts" (p. 81).

Propitiation the recovery of peace! Here, again, the effect and the cause are confounded. To propitiate is to conciliate; propitiation is "the offering by which propitiousness is obtained." If peace cannot be recovered so long as sin divides us from God, how is sin to be removed? This is the question which rationalism is unable to solve, but which Scripture with one united voice answers, by the blood of Christ. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. i. 7). On the sacrifice of the first martyr, on the doorposts of the houses of Israel, on Jewish altars, on the blood-sprinkled mercy-seat, on the cross of Christ, on the white robes of the redeemed, it is written, "without shedding of blood is no remission." But how is this deep mystery of redeeming

love blasphemed? We confess we are filled with indignation as we write it:—

"The angels who hover with phials, catching the drops from the cross, are pardonable in art, but make a step in theology towards transubstantiation. Salvation from evil through sharing the Saviour's spirit, was shifted into a notion of *purchase from God through the price of his bodily pangs.* The deep drama of heart and mind became externalized into *a commercial transfer*" (p. 87).

Had an Atheist written this, who scoffs at religion, or a Socinian, who, through prejudice and ignorance, repudiates and misrepresents the doctrine of the atonement, there would be nothing to surprise us; but that a man who, as a minister of the Church of England, stands at her altar, and, speaking of Christ's Cross and passion says, "WHEREBY ALONE we obtain remission of our sins,"—who with the emblems of Christ's body and blood before him, makes use of these words, "Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there (by his one oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the world,"—that a man who repeats the language of the liturgy, "By thine agony and bloody sweat, by thy cross and passion, good Lord, deliver us," should speak of the atonement which God himself has provided, as "*a commercial transfer,*" is the most painful and shameful exhibition of a perverted conscience that can be gathered from the dark annals of religious controversy. He knows, or he ought to know, that *Christians* believe that the dying Son was the *gift of the Father's love;* and that "the deep drama of heart and mind," of which he speaks, but which with his views he cannot explain, was justice putting into mercy's hand the cup for love divine to drink, that God might be a just God and yet a Saviour.

We shall not stop now to dwell upon the views which speak of the doctrine of original sin as if it made "the design of God altered by the first agents of his creation," of "the fall of Adam as representing ideally the circumscription of our spirits in limits of flesh and time;" of the Trinity, "as will, wisdom, and love, as light, radiance, and warmth, as fountain, stream, and united flow;" all of which it is admitted "has a Sabellian or almost a Brahmanical sound" (p. 89); but we would refer to two passages which, as far as we can understand them, deny the reality of the resurrection, the incarnation, yea, of the very existence of God:—

"This expression of spirit, in deed and form, is generally akin to creation, and illustrates the incarnation. For though the true substance of Deity took body in the Son of Man, they who know the divine Substance to be Spirit will conceive of such embodiment of the Eternal Mind very differently from those who abstract all divine attributes, such as consciousness, forethought, and love, and then imagine a material *residuum*, on which they confer the Holiest name. *The Divine attributes are consubstantial with the Divine Essence.* He who abides in love, abides in God, and God in him. Thus the incarnation becomes with our Author as purely spiritual as it is with St. Paul. The Son of David by birth is the Son of God by the Spirit of holiness" (p. 82).

The incarnation, then, is purely spiritual; and to show that St. Paul held it to be so, Romans i. 1—3 is referred to, but is falsely quoted and wrongly interpreted. "The Son of David by birth is the Son of God by the Spirit of holiness." This seems to mean that the man Jesus, David's son, was the Son of God by having his spirit, or, as expressed in a passage already quoted, "the religious idea, the thought of the Eternal being brought to perfection in Him." But what does St. Paul say? He first speaks of Jesus Christ our Lord as the Son of God, and then opens out his twofold nature. "Concering *his Son* Jesus Christ our Lord, *which was made of the seed of David*, according to the flesh, and declared to be the

Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness," *i. e.* his holy or divine spirit (*Κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης*)*." According to the flesh, he was made of the seed of David; according to his divine nature, he was declared to be the Son of God.

But while we are told that "the *true substance* of Deity *took body* in the Son of man, we are reminded that this true substance is nothing but thought, love, and other attributes, and that therefore philosophers—

" will conceive of such embodiment of the Eternal Mind very differently from those who abstract all Divine attributes, such as consciousness, forethought, and love, and then imagine a material *residuum*, on which they confer the Holiest name" (p. 82).

Now, we know that God is a Spirit, and no one will think of his essence as " a *material* residuum;" yet we do believe that there is an eternal, self-existent, spiritual Being, who is distinct from his attributes, in whom these attributes dwell; but no, " the Divine attributes are consubstantial with the Divine Essence!" We solemnly declare this is nothing short of Atheism. To say that the essence of God is nothing more than attributes is to deny the truth and reality of His being and existence. An attribute is not a substance, nor an essence. A spirit is not an attribute, not love, not forethought,—but a spiritual substance, which has attributes. To deny this is to push the dreams of Berkeley further than he dreamed of. Bishop Berkeley argues that there is no such thing as matter in the

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* *ἁγιως* is not = *ἅγιον*,—this epithet would be inapplicable here, for it would point out the third person in the Blessed Trinity, whereas it is *the Spirit of Christ Himself* in distinction from His Flesh, which is spoken of. And this Spirit is designated by the gen. of quality, *ἁγιωσύνης*, to show that it is not a human but a divine spirit which is attributed *here* to Christ—a spirit to which holiness belongs as its essence. The other interpretations certainly miss the mark by overlooking the *κατὰ σάρκα*, and *κατὰ πνεῦμα*, the two sides of the person of Christ here intended to be brought out.—ALFORD, *in loc.*

universe, that the qualities and accidents of things are but thoughts or ideas in the mind, having no other substance or material residuum in which they reside. It has been justly objected to this theory that the existence of mind, as well as of matter, might, with equal reason, be dénied, that it might be said there is no spiritual substance in the universe, but that all is idea, thought; and here we have the objection realized and applied to the denial of the existence of God as a spiritual Being. His essence and attributes are consubstantial!

On this subject of a purely spiritual incarnation, there is quoted, in a note, a sentence from Tertullian's work against Praxeas, "Neque sermo aliud quam Deus, neque caro aliud quam homo," but to what purpose we are really at a loss to discover, for Tertullian's whole argument is directly opposed to the "purely spiritual incarnation;" and, indeed, the view put forward of the embodiment of the Eternal Mind, of the true substance of the Deity taking body in the Son of Man, seems to approach, as near as its rationalism will permit it, to the Patripassian error that Tertullian is combating. Praxeas first introduced into Rome the heresy, that the Father himself descended into the Virgin, was born of her, and suffered, and that the same was Jesus Christ. Against this Tertullian argues, proving the reality of the two natures in Christ, and his distinct personality from the Father. Had the writer continued the quotation*,

* Quia neque sermo aliud quàm Deus, neque caro aliud quàm homo, sic et Apostolus de utraque ejus substantia docet: qui factus est inquit ex semine David. Hic erit homo et filius hominis, qui definitus est filius Dei secundum spiritum. Hic erit Deus, et sermo Dei filius. Videmus duplicem statum, non confusum, sed conjunctum in una persona. Deum et hominem Jesum....Ergo Jesus idem erit Christus, qui à patre unctus est; non pater qui filium unxit.—Tertullian, adv. Praxeam, chap. xxvii. xxviii.

he would not have found it very favourable to his view of the incarnation, which represents it as the embodiment of the Eternal Mind in the Son of Man.

Once more :—

" On the great hope of mankind, the immortality of the soul, the *Hippolytus* left something to be desired. It had a Brahmanical, rather than a Christian or Platonic sound. But the second volume of " Gott in der Geschichte" seems to imply that if the author recoils from the fleshly resurrection and Judaic millennium of Justin Martyr, he still shares the aspirations of the noblest philosophers elsewhere, and of the firmer believers among ourselves, to a revival of conscious and individual life in such a form of immortality as may consist with union with the spirit of our Eternal Life-giver" (p. 90).

We have been accustomed to think that the great hope of mankind, as brought to light by the Gospel, is the resurrection of the flesh; but it now appears that, recoiling from a fleshly resurrection, the highest aspiration of our philosophers and firmest believers is to such a form of immortality as may be consistent with union with the spirit of our Eternal Life-giver. This, it must be confessed, has a very Brahmanical sound.

Now " if we would estimate the truth of such views," we are told that two lines of inquiry present themselves as certain. First, we are to remember that revelation is not confined to the first half century of the Christian era; secondly, that our Scriptures are imperfect, and must therefore be weighed, and received with some reserve.

" Spiritual affection and metaphysical reasoning forbid us to confine revelations like those of Christ, to the first half century of our era, but show at least affinities of our faith existing in men's minds anterior to Christianity, and renewed with deep echo from living hearts in many a generation. Again, on the side of external criticism, we find the evidences of our canonical books and of the patristic authors nearest to them, are sufficient to prove illustration in outward act of principles perpetually true; but not adequate to guarantee narratives *inherently incredible*, or *precepts evidently wrong*.

Hence we are obliged to assume in ourselves *a verifying faculty*, not unlike the discretion which a mathematician would use in weighing a treatise on geometry, or the liberty which a musician would reserve in reporting a law of harmony" (pp. 82, 83).

In other words, if we would know the truth, we must not search for it merely in our canonical books, we must listen for its deep echo from living hearts in many generations; and moreover, knowing that in these books there are "narratives inherently incredible," and "precepts evidently wrong," we must bring our "verifying faculty" to bear upon them, just as a mathematician would weigh a geometrical treatise.

We have now brought our examination of this Essay to a close; and though during the discussion we have as far as possible abstained from everything personal, we are sure our readers must share with us the feelings of pity and regret which its perusal has caused us. When a clergyman of the Church of England can write of the German philosopher's exclamation, "How long shall we bear this fiction of an external revelation?"—

"there will be some who think his language too vehement for *good taste;* others will think burning words needed by the disease of our time. These will not quarrel on points of taste with a man who, in our darkest perplexity, has reared again the banner of truth, and uttered thoughts which give courage to the weak and sight to the blind" (p. 93),

if we give him credit for sincerity, we must feel for him the deepest pity. Deep indeed must be his perplexity, dark indeed must be his blindness, whose God is an attribute, whose Saviour is embodied thought, whose atonement is a commercial transfer, whose Bible is a human work, whose brightest hope is the Buddhist's dream of absorption into the Eternal Spirit. But if, despising our pity, he still will glory in his error, and not content with being himself

deceived, will throw a stumbling-block in the way of the weak, we would sound in his ears the words of Him who is the light and the life of men: "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!"

ANSWER TO THE THIRD ESSAY, "ON THE STUDY OF THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY."

It is the saying of Cicero* that, nature being their leader, most men acknowledge the existence of a superior power, while at the same time he mentions two who entirely denied it. That Diagoras and Theodorus really believed their creed may fairly be questioned. A satisfied Atheist would be difficult to find. We are quite sure that unbelief as well as faith must have its doubts. It is in his heart the fool says there is no God. The question, then, as Cicero further states it†, is not whether there be a God, but whether he takes any part in the affairs of men and the government of the world, whether having created the universe he leaves it entirely to itself, or is ever present guiding and upholding it; whether he dwells alone from eternity in the light to which no man can approach, or has made a special external revelation of himself to earth. That such an external Revelation has been made is the very foundation of Christianity.

* Plerique (quod maxume verisimile est, et quo omnes duce natura vehimur) deos esse dixerunt.—*De Nat. Deo*, Lib. i. 1.

† Quod vero maxume rem causamque continet, utrum nihil agant, nihil moliantur, omni curatione et administratione rerum vacent; an contra ab his et a principio omnia facta et constituta sint, et ad infinitum tempus regantur atque moveantur.—*Ibid.*

"Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: *God was manifest in the flesh.*" This external Revelation is declared by some to be a fiction; and among them there are those who, however strange, still in some sense profess the Christian faith. That Deists should deny an external revelation is consistent with their principles; but that men should do so who speak of Christ as their Lord is indeed incomprehensible. Yet so it is. The discussion, then, of this question is one of deepest interest; and the study of the Evidences of Christianity is the most important in which the human mind can be engaged. But the sceptic has here, in one sense, an advantage over the believer. The Christian evidences are multiplied and accumulative, the full force of which can only be measured when we have traversed to some extent the wide field over which they are spread. There are questions connected with natural religion that should be considered—the nature and character of God; the state of man as a moral and accountable being; evidences, external, internal, moral, collateral; the roll of prophecy; cycles of miracles; the Jewish nation, their religion; the existence of Christianity, its nature, its doctrines, its influence, its suitability to the wants of man's heart; above all, the person, the character, the words, the works, the life, the death, of that mysterious Man who appeared on this earth, unlike to all and separate from all, who by doctrines that enlighten, and hopes that elevate, and faith that purifies, has left an indelible impress on the world; all these things must be weighed and considered if we would rightly estimate the strength and breadth of the foundation on which Christianity rests; whereas the sceptic will insinuate a doubt, or bring forward an objection against some single point, and then forgetting it has been often answered, will triumph as if he had demolished the whole fabric of truth.

It cannot be supposed that every mind will attach

the same importance to the same class of evidence. Some will lay greater stress on the external, others on the internal, others again on the moral. So also varying circumstances will give peculiar importance at different times to particular branches of inquiry, and these will vary with the progress of knowledge and the different phases of human thought and feeling in different ages. We may, therefore, naturally expect that the discussion of the Evidences will, from time to time, present some little variety. To review the present state of this discussion is the avowed object of the Essay now before us :—

" To offer some general remarks on the existing state of these discussions will be the object of this Essay " (p. 95). " The present discussion is not intended to be of a controversial kind, it is purely contemplative and theoretical; it is rather directed to a calm and unprejudiced survey of the various opinions and arguments adduced, whatever may be their ulterior tendency, on these important questions " (p. 100).

It were well had this been kept in view and acted upon, but the opinions and arguments adduced are all on one side, and that, unfortunately, on the side of infidelity; the very error deprecated in others pervades the whole performance. Instead of being, as it professes, a review of the state of the discussion of the Evidences, it is an open assault upon them, a daring attempt to overthrow one of the leading external evidences of revelation, that of miracles. The author of this Essay has passed from this earthly scene, and is beyond the reach of man's judgment; we shall, therefore, gladly, as far as possible, abstract ourselves from everything personal, and speak merely of the Essay itself. And of it we must say that, if its views and theories be embraced, then the cold and lifeless creed of Deism, if not of Atheism, is all that remains for man. Nominally it admits the idea of a God, but practically it denies Him, presenting us with a world

and a universe wholly independent of His power, His will, or His control.

A preliminary distinction is referred to as of importance in the discussion of the subject, the distinction between the external and internal evidences addressed to different parts of man's nature, his reason and his heart, his moral sense and his intellect. Christianity addresses both, it has evidence to submit to each, man's reason and intellect are the proper judges of facts and external evidence, while his higher and moral nature is brought into exercise about religious truth. But while these are distinct there is no reason why we should renounce either. And yet this very Essay which points out the distinction finds fault with those who appeal to both :—

"We continually find the professed advocates of an external revelation and historical evidence nevertheless making their appeal to conscience and feeling, and denying the exercise of reason, and charging those who find critical objections in the evidence with spiritual blindness and moral perversity; and on the other hand we observe the professed upholders of faith and internal conviction as the only sound basis of religion, nevertheless regarding the external facts as not less essential truth, which it would be profane to question" (p. 97).

And why should they not, if Christianity be an inward religion, founded on an external revelation? We refuse to divorce reason and feeling, and to separate doctrine from facts. To believe a religion without any exercise of the intellect is credulity; belief without any exercise of the affections is simply knowledge; to believe with an enlightened mind and a loving heart is to have faith. The advocates of an "external revelation" are not called on to deny the reality of an internal conviction, nor need the upholders of inward faith refuse, to reason, its exercise about external facts. But no one should dream of measuring mysteries by reason, or of judging of facts by the affections; yet of this last the upholders of an external revelation are accused.

"They avow matter-of-fact inquiry—a question of the critical evidence for alleged events—yet they pursue it as if it were an appeal to moral sentiments; in which case it would be a virtue to assent, and a crime to deny; if it be the one it should not be proposed as the other. Thus it is the common language of orthodox writings and discourses *to advise the believer*, when objections or difficulties arise, not to attempt to offer a precise answer, or to argue the point; but rather to look at the whole subject as of a kind which ought to be exempt from critical scrutiny, and be regarded with a submission of judgment in the spirit of humility and faith" (p. 98).

Now, here there is a manifest confusion of two things: such advice as this would never be given to any one who was studying the Evidences of Christianity—who, not convinced of its truth, was examining the foundation on which it rests; though it would fairly be given to *a believer*. We would say let reason be convinced that Christianity is from God—that the Bible is his revelation; *then*, should an objection or difficulty arise, should some doctrine appear dark and mysterious, or some critical difficulty be presented, here is the place for the exercise of faith and humility; and we would say, though we are unable to explain the difficulty, or comprehend the mystery, yet let us wait and believe, knowing that our knowledge is very imperfect, and our understanding very weak. But we would add, this advice should not be given even to a believer with reference to plain external facts that come within the range and province of historical investigation. To illustrate our meaning, if a question were raised as to the *fact* of the death of Christ, here neither faith nor feeling would have place; the evidence for it must be examined in order to establish its historical reality; but when passing from it as an admitted historical fact we come to inquire what Scripture reveals as to its end and design and spiritual meaning, then we would say, and rightly say, "investigate such high questions rather with our affections than with our logic." Nor in saying so, would we

"shift the basis of all belief from the alleged evidence of facts to the influence of an internal persuasion," nor "give up the evidential proof, and confess that the whole is, after all, a mere matter of feeling and sentiment." We complain that throughout the whole of the introductory remarks of this Essay, in order to mystify the discussion of external evidences, there is a palpable confusion of doctrine with facts—a confusion of the provinces of faith and reason. What excuse is there, for instance, for such writing as follows:—

"This advice may be very just in reference to *practical impressions;* yet if the question be one (as is so much insisted on) of *external facts*, it amounts to neither more nor less than a tacit surrender of the claims of external evidence and historical reality. We are told that we ought to investigate *such high questions* rather with our affections than with our logic, and approach them rather with good dispositions and right motives, and with a desire to find *the doctrine* true; and thus shall discover the real assurance of its truth in obeying it; suggestions which, however good in a moral and practical sense, are surely inapplicable *if it be a question of facts*" (p. 98).

Here the ground is shifted from the truth of doctrine to a question of facts, and because we say that in considering doctrine we should exercise a spirit of humility, it is affirmed we can no longer submit facts to the rigid investigation of logic, or are unwilling to do so. But we repeat once more, that while it is necessary to bring good dispositions and right motives to the investigation of every subject, for without these we cannot duly weigh any evidence, both reason and conscience, man's intellect and moral sense, are brought into exercise in the *study of the evidences of Christianity.* And while on the one hand that study involves questions of a moral and spiritual kind, on the other it is connected with the evidence of external historical facts. And it by no means follows that because we admit the one we resign the other; that because, with reference to what is inward and spiritual, we recognise the play of the moral sen-

timents, we give up the evidence of an external revelation addressed to the reason and intellect.

We have said that the design of this Essay is to overthrow belief in any external supernatural revelation. The revelation it admits, is the revelation of intellect, of genius, of discovery, of invention. Speaking of civilization, the use of fire, the cultivation of the soil, printing and steam, the use of the boomerang by savages, its principle in the gyroscope, it says—

"*No one denies revelation in this sense;* the philosophy of the age does not discredit the inspiration of prophets and apostles, though it may sometimes believe it in poets, legislators, philosophers, and others gifted with high genius" (p. 140).

Accordingly what is termed "the evidential school," is the object it seems most particularly to dislike, and all its efforts are directed against *external miracles*. It is said that—

"The idea of *a positive external Divine revelation* of some kind has formed the very basis of all *hitherto* received systems of Christian belief" (p. 100).

These words seem to imply that there may yet be a system of Christian belief without the idea of a positive divine revelation; but this we deny. Whatever such a system of belief may be called, it cannot assume the name of Christ, for the Christian faith professes to be a positive revelation from God, made to the world in Christ and in his Word. This external revelation is established by external evidence, and on this external evidence the defenders of Christianity have taken and rightly take their stand. The Deists of the last century and the Rationalists of the present deny this external revelation, and would wish to draw us aside from the evidence of facts to the ideal region of thought and sentiment. Now we have already admitted that the internal evidences of Christianity are most important; but we would bear in mind what

is so often repeated in this Essay, that "the evidences of religion, to be of any effect, whether external or internal, must always have a special reference to the peculiar capacity and apprehension of the party addressed;" and we do not think it a want of charity to affirm that neither the Deistical nor Rationalistic mind is capable of understanding or feeling the internal evidences of the Gospel; to stop, therefore, to discuss with them such questions, while they deny the miraculous facts on which the Gospel rests, would be, in our judgment, most injudicious and useless. The moral beauty and power of Christianity may have their weight when they see it has a claim upon their intellects; we must therefore still insist upon the external facts of Christianity, however displeasing it may be to those who deny an external revelation. Speaking of the controversy with the Deists in the seventeenth century, this Essay says:—

"The appeal was mainly to the miracles of the Gospel" (p. 102). "Assuming Christianity to be essentially connected with certain outward and sensible events, the main thing to be inquired into and established was the historical evidence of those events, and the genuineness of the records of them" (p. 103).

And this is still the main thing to be established, whatever may be said to the contrary; for if those events are true, and those records authentic, Rationalism and Infidelity stand confounded, for we believe with Butler, that "objections against Christianity, as distinguished from objections against its evidence, are frivolous*." And that this is felt to be the case is evident from the anxiety shown to set aside external testimony, and the violent assaults that have ever been made upon the miracles. Of these, the Essay before us, if not the most powerful, is certainly not the least unscrupulous.

In the attempt to set aside the evidence for them,

* Analogy, Part II., ch. iii.

there is little order and less originality. There is a constant transition from one subject to another, then a recurrence to the former one, showing a want of order that would not have been expected in a mind accustomed to mathematical investigations, while there is a wearying repetition of the same commonplace truism, that "the evidential force of miracles is relative to the apprehensions of the parties addressed" (pp. 115, 117, 118, 125). Such being the style of the Essay, we shall not be able always to follow it in consecutive order, but must endeavour to bring together and arrange its scattered elements.

If the Essay be deficient in order, it is much more so in originality. There is literally nothing in it but the long since exploded objections of Infidels, Deists, and Rationalists; and even these, it appears very evident, have been extracted from a work in which they are refuted. In Dean Trench's volume on the miracles of our Lord, there is a "preliminary essay" on the general subject of miracles, one chapter of which treats of "The Assaults on the Miracles;" and the author of "The Study of the Evidences of Christianity" appears to us to have done nothing more than to have taken the objections there ready at hand, and, entirely ignoring the answers given them, to have scattered the poison on every side around, concealing, at the same time, the antidote. That Dean Trench's work was known to him is certain, for he refers to it :—

"This has, indeed, been the common argument of the most approved divines: it is that long ago urged by Dr. S. Clarke, and recently supported by *Dean Trench*."—p. 122.

That the Preliminary Essay was open before him is equally certain, for he quotes from it (p. 134); and that the particular chapter on the Assaults on the Miracles was also before him, and laid under con-

tribution, will, we think, appear equally evident to anyone who "looks on this picture, and on that:"—

DEAN TRENCH.

"The words τέρας and σημεῖον stand linked together, not merely in the New Testament, but frequently in the Old. . . . *The distinction* between the two, as though the τέρας *were the more wonderful*, the σημεῖον the less so."—P. 5.

"It has been replied by some that, since *all is marvellous* . . . we have no right in the mighty and *complex miracle of nature which encircles us* on every side. We have no right to say that this and that are wonders, and all the rest ordinary processes of nature."—P. 9.

"There remained nothing for *the Jews* to say but that these *works were works of Hell.* 'This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the Prince of the Devils.'"—P. 58.

"It was otherwise in the heathen world, and with the 'gods many' of polytheism. So long as these lived in the minds of men, the argument from miracles was easily evaded. *The gods had spoken often by others also; Esculapius performed wonderful cures;* Apollonius went about the world healing the sick, expelling demons, raising the dead," &c.—P. 61.

"*Schleiermacher* has said that these works were *relative* miracles—miracles, in other words, for those in regard of whom they were first done."—P. 71.

". . . One of the conquerors of the New World, to make the Indians, whom he wished to

PROFESSOR POWELL.

"The distinction is always kept up between mere 'wonders' (τέρατα) and 'miracles,' or signs (σημεῖα); that is to say, *the latter* were occurrences *not viewed as mere matters of wonder.*'—P. 115.

"There are still some who dwell on the idea. . . *that all* inexplicable phenomena *are in fact miracles*, or at any rate mysteries; that *we are surrounded by miracles in nature.*"—P. 109.

"The *Pharisees* set down the miracles of Christ to *the power of evil spirits.*"—P. 116.

"Among a people entertaining an indiscriminate belief in the supernatural, the very extent of their belief may render it ineffective. The constant belief in the miraculous may neutralize all evidential distinctions. They believed readily all that he told them of the Scripture miracles, *but directly paralleled them by wonders of their own.*"—P. 118.

"*Schleiermacher* regards the miracles as only *relatively*, or apparently such, to the apprehension of the age."—P. 116.

"Columbus's prediction of the eclipse to the native islanders was as true an argument to them as

terrify, believe that, in his displeasure with them, he would at a certain hour darken the moon, when indeed he did but foreknow an eclipse of her orb."—P. 73.

"Not so the Pantheistic deniers of the miracles, who cut at their very root, denying that any miracle was possible, *since it was contrary to the idea of God.*"—P. 65.

if the event had really been supernatural."—P. 115.

"Most of those who have adopted such theories of the Divine perfections on abstract grounds have made them the basis of a precisely opposite belief, rejecting miracles altogether, on the plea that the belief in miracles is *irreconcilable with the idea of an eternal God consistent with himself.*"—P. 114.

Now we have called attention to this, because we deem it of the greatest importance that the true character of these Essays should be clearly understood, that it should be seen that they are in truth very second-rate performances, deficient both in depth and originality; and the more so, because they are pervaded by an assumption of superior knowledge, of an advanced intellectualism, which may have weight with the multitude, who are apt to take men at their own estimate. Thus, in a single page of this Essay, we read of "better informed minds," of "the increasing demands of an age pretending at least to greater enlightenment," of "a period of advanced physical knowledge," of "the increasing admission of those broader views of physical truth" (p. 126). Now while "intellect and philosophy" are in words paraded before us, we confess that in this case we have more of the ideal than the real.

Before proceeding to discuss the question of miracles, it may be well first to determine what we are to understand by one. The author of this Essay, speaking of "the idea of what is implied by the term miracle," says,

"Which is asserted to mean something at variance with nature and law."

And then adds—

"There is not the slightest analogy between an unknown or inexplicable phenomenon, and a supposed suspension of a known law" (p. 109).

With the latter statement we agree, but we dissent from the former. A miracle is not contrary to nature nor a violation of law, it is something which transcends nature, that which is above and beyond it, the result not of a more immediate but of a higher divine working than that by which the ordinary operations of nature are affected; nor is it the violation of law and order, but the bringing in of a higher law by the God of nature, proving that He has not bound himself down as Spinoza represents by an inevitable necessity to a certain unalterable mode of operation, but that He still holds in his hand the chain of cause and effect, and can introduce into that chain a new link according to his will. So again on the other hand a miracle is not a part of nature, a wonder, as Schleiermacher would have it, wrapt up in nature, an inexplicable phenomenon, which, with advancing knowledge and a wider induction, will be found to be embraced in a more general law. In a word, a miracle is neither a violation of nature, nor a part of nature, but *supernatural*, a sign that God has put forth his hand to work in a new way to reveal himself anew to man.

We shall now proceed to consider the statements of this Essay on the subject of miracles; and all that is said may be collected and discussed under the five following heads:—

I. THAT MIRACLES ARE INCREDIBLE.
II. That they are INCAPABLE OF PROOF.
III. That they are IMPROBABLE.
IV. That they are USELESS.
V. That they are IMPOSSIBLE.

We shall endeavour to write as briefly as possible

upon these heads. First, it is said that miracles are *incredible*. Now we think that nothing can be strictly said to be incredible that is not contrary to reason; a thing may be improbable, or highly improbable, but to be incredible, it must contradict reason. We assert that the highest degree of *improbability* may be overcome by sufficient evidence. Though this is denied in the Essay before us, the cases alleged to justify the denial are not things improbable but impossible. Referring to what it calls "the dictum" of Drs. Abercrombie and Chalmers, that "on a certain amount of testimony we might believe any statements, however *improbable*," it adds:—

> "So that, if a number of respectable witnesses were to concur in asseverating that on a certain occasion they had seen two and two make five, we should be bound to believe them!" (p. 141).

Can anything be more illogical? Is not the fallacy apparent? Our position is, that a statement, however *improbable*, might be believed, on a *certain* amount of testimony; this position is denied; for, says the writer, no amount of testimony could make us believe that two and two make five! or "would ever convince any one versed in mathematical and mechanical science, that a person had squared the circle, or discovered perpetual motion .... testimony can avail nothing against reason" (p. 141). Of course not. No one ever said it could. But here the question is shifted. We are speaking of that which is improbable, not of that which contradicts reason. A miracle may be marvellous, it may be incomprehensible, it may be above our reason; but it is not against reason. It is not a contradictory proposition. That the same man should be dead and alive at the same time would be a contradiction; but that a man who had been dead should be restored to life would be miraculous but not unreasonable.

But though miracles are not contrary to reason, and so not intrinsically incredible, they are, it is said, incredible by us; so incredible from our antecedent convictions, that no amount of testimony could make us believe them.

"The probability of *some* kind of mistake or deception *somewhere*, though we know not *where*, is greater than the probability of the event really happening in the way, and from the cause assigned" (p. 106).

This, we know, is just the old objection of Hume. He represented the question of miracles as a contest between two improbabilities. His axiom is, it is more improbable that a miracle should be true than that testimony should be false, and therefore no testimony can overcome the higher improbability of the truth of a miracle.

* "When any one tells me," he says, "that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consult with myself whether it is more probable that this person should either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact he relates should really have happened."

Consulting, then, with himself, upon this matter, he thinks he finds a full proof against the existence of any miracle. But why should the question be thus put? He supposes a miracle without any alleged object, without any assignable reason to give it even the slightest probability, and sets it against the testimony of a single person; but is this the case with the New Testament miracles? Do they rest upon the evidence of a single witness, or is there nothing to render them probable? We are content to meet Hume's objection by Paley's answer.

† "If twelve men, *whose probity and good sense I had long known*, should seriously and circumstantially relate to me an account of a miracle wrought before

* Hume's Philosophical Essays, Essay X.

† Paley's Evidences of Christianity, p. 8.

their eyes, and in which *it was impossible that they should be deceived;* if the governor of the country, hearing a rumour of this account, should call these men into his presence and offer them a short proposal, either to confess the imposture, or submit to be tied up to a gibbet,; if they should refuse with one voice to acknowledge that there existed any falsehood or imposture in the case; if this threat were communicated to them separately, yet with no different effect; if it was at last executed; if I myself saw them, one after another, consenting to be racked, burnt, or strangled, rather than give up the truth of their account,—still, if Mr. Hume's rule be my guide, I am not to believe them. Now I undertake to say there exists not a sceptic in the world who would not believe them, or would defend such incredulity."

To do so would be, indeed, in the highest degree unreasonable. No one of sound mind could resist such testimony as this for any alleged fact. This seems to have been felt by the writer of the Essay, for he is unwilling, as Hume did, to present the question of miracles merely as a question of testimony, but endeavours to put them out of the reach of testimony altogether; upon this we must now say a few words.

II. It is said that even though we should grant the truth and honesty of the witnesses, it does not follow that we should admit the reality of the miracle, for that testimony can only apply to the sensible fact, and to the reality of the impressions produced by it, but that if testimony be applied to connect the fact with a supernatural cause it then becomes but opinion:—

"The question agitated is not that of mere testimony, of its value, or of its failures. . . . What is alleged is a case of the supernatural; but no testimony can reach to the supernatural; testimony can apply only to apparent sensible facts; testimony can only prove an extraordinary and perhaps inexplicable occurrence or

phenomenon: that it is due to supernatural causes is entirely dependent on the previous belief and assumptions of the parties" (p. 107).

Thus it is attempted to remove miracles altogether from the province of testimony, as belonging to a region which no testimony can reach, and this theory is applied to the evidence of our own senses as well as to the testimony of others:—

"The essential question of miracles stands quite apart from any consideration of *testimony;* the question would remain the same if we had the evidence of our own senses to an alleged miracle, that is, to an extraordinary or inexplicable fact. It is not the mere fact, but the cause or explanation of it, which is the point at issue" (p. 141).

Hence it is argued, that if at the present day a well-informed person were to see some extraordinary fact, and if he were versed in physical studies—

"He would not for an instant doubt either that it was really due to some natural cause, or that if properly recorded and examined, it would at some future time receive its explanation by the advance of discovery" (p. 107).

Now we feel that unreasonable as Hume's argument about the truth of testimony was, this is infinitely more so. We confess at the present day we should be very slow to receive any very extraordinary and unaccountable fact as a miracle. We quite feel that our prepossessions or our ignorance might lead us into error. It is very possible, that from various causes, that which is only marvellous might be regarded as supernatural, and therefore we admit that, generally speaking, we should be disposed to refer an extraordinary fact, however inexplicable, to some natural cause, even though at present not understood; nay more, we admit that, supposing a supernatural event should really occur, our *senses* could assure us only of the sensible fact, but to say that in no case could we have the assurance of the presence of a supernatural power is perfectly absurd. Suppose a man were to

tell us he came with a commission from God, and that in attestation of his Divine mission he was empowered to work miracles; were he to bring us down to the coast, and if as he waved his hand above the sea the waters parted, and stood up as a wall on either side, so that a highway were opened through the deep to the opposite shore; and if as he waved his hand again, the liquid walls sank down, and the divided waters were united, and the sea again rolled on in its strength, would any one, however "versed in physical studies," think for a moment that this was merely an unaccountable fact to be explained at some future time by the progress of discovery? Assuredly not. We dismiss then, as perfectly childish, the statement that miracles are, from their very nature, beyond the reach of evidence, and that neither through the testimony of others, nor our own senses, could we have any assurance of the supernatural.

III. But again, it is said that miracles are altogether improbable, and on this ground the main argument against miracles has always been raised. We must therefore examine it more particularly. This alleged improbability is twofold; first, from our antecedent convictions; and secondly, from our experience of the constancy of nature.

First, as regards the antecedent improbability of miracles, we are told—

> "The belief in Divine interposition must be essentially dependent on what we previously admit or believe with respect to the Divine attributes" (p. 113).

In passing, we would observe, that this is not correct, for Divine interposition might be so apparent, so overwhelming, as to over-rule all our preconceived ideas about the character and attributes of God, and force us to admit its reality. The *supposed* antecedent *probability* or *improbability* of Divine

interposition, may depend on our previous views of the attributes of God, but not *belief* in it. Now Christian writers have argued from the Divine attributes, that there is no antecedent improbability against miracles, whereas Spinoza and others have come to the very opposite conclusion. His great argument against miracles is that they are inconsistent with the immutability of the Divine Being, that they are unworthy of the great Ruler of the universe, as charging him with weakness or imperfection, as if from time to time He had to interfere to correct something that was evil, or complete something that was imperfect. And we are reminded by the author of this Essay that others entertain the same views, and reject miracles altogether;

"on the plea that our ideas of the Divine perfections must directly discredit the notion of occasional interposition; that it is derogatory to the idea of infinite power and wisdom to suppose an order of things so imperfectly established, that it must be occasionally interrupted and violated when the necessity of the case compelled, as the emergency of a revelation was imagined to do. . . . . Such are the arguments of Theodore Parker, who denies miracles *because* everywhere I find law the constant mode of *operation of an infinite God*, or that of Wegscheider, that the belief in miracles is irreconcilable with the idea of an *eternal God consistent with himself*," &c. (p. 114).

Again, we are told that such writers as J. Sterling, Emerson, and Professor F. W. Newman have agreed,

"that the entire view of Theistical principles, in their highest spiritual purity, is utterly at variance with all conception of suspension of the laws of nature, or with the idea of any kind of external manifestation addressed to the senses" (p. 114).

With the reasonings or even the first principles of these writers, the author of this Essay says he does not agree; but he thinks that any one who, in the present day, would fairly reason out the question of miraculous evidence, must give a patient discussion to this class of arguments. We are prepared to do this,

though we feel that he has himself, in one sentence, sufficiently disposed of them, when he says,—

"All such Theistic reasonings, in fact, if pushed to their consequences, must lead to *a denial of all active operation of the Deity whatever;* as inconsistent with unchangeable infinite perfection" (p 114).

The fallacy of this Deistical objection is very transparent. Miracles are spoken of as if they were an awkward interruption of the harmony and perfection of God's government, provisional remedies for unforeseen evil, means of meeting an emergency in an order of things imperfectly established. But what will become of this objection if miracles be regarded not as violations of God's plan and purpose, but as essential parts of it, as embraced in the perfect law ordained by the Infinite and Eternal One? If, rising above a mere mechanical view of the universe, we see it is something more than a material machine at work for no purpose,—if we remember that mind is superior to matter, that there are spirits which God has created, and with which he has to do; then that his perfect and eternal plan should have provided that He might as He pleased draw nearer, so to speak, to those spirits, and let his finger be seen more immediately on creation, will be felt to be, instead of a mark of imperfection, a signal proof of his wisdom, power, and goodness.

"Take (says Butler*) into consideration, religion, or the moral system of the world, and then we see distinct particular reasons for miracles—to afford mankind instruction additional to that of nature, and to attest the truth of it. And this gives a real credibility to the supposition, that it might be a part of the original plan of things that there should be miraculous interpositions."

* Butler's Analogy, part ii., chap. ii.

While the author of this Essay admits that he differs from the Theistic reasoning, he misrepresents the reasoning on the side of miracles. He charges us with arguing in a circle, that we first derive our ideas of the Divine perfections from a supposed revelation, and then argue for an evidence of revelation from those perfections.

"All our higher and more precise ideas of the Divine perfections are really derived from that very revelation whose evidence is the point in question. The Divine Omnipotence is *entirely an inference from the language of the Bible*, adopted *on the assumption* of a belief in Revelation. That 'with God nothing is impossible,' is the very declaration of Scripture; yet on this *the whole belief in miracles is built*, and thus, with the many, that belief is wholly the *result* not the *antecedent* of faith" (p. 118).

We shall not dwell upon the extraordinary statement that "the Divine Omnipotence is entirely an inference from the language of the Bible." We believe it to be an inference of reason, and that "His eternal power and Godhead are clearly seen from the things that are made;" but we protest strongly against the unfounded assertion that "the whole belief in miracles is built" on "with God nothing is impossible," and that we reason in a vicious circle, arguing for miracles from the Divine perfections, and learning the Divine perfections from the Revelation of which miracles are adduced as the evidence. To say this is to affirm what is not the case. We do not argue from the attributes of God that there are miracles; but reasoning from them *we meet an objection* which asserts the improbability of miracles.

"We do not (says Paley*) assume the attributes of the Deity, or the existence of a future state, in order to *prove* the reality of miracles. That reality always must be proved by evidence. We assert only,

* Evidences of Christianity, p 2.

that in miracles adduced in support of Revelation, there is not any such antecedent improbability as no testimony can surmount."

Yet, with these words of Paley before him, the writer says,—

"Paley's grand resource is, once believe in a God, and all is easy" (p. 114).

Now Paley says no such thing. He says*:—

"Once believe that there is a God, *and miracles are not incredible.*"

He does not argue that a belief in miracles will follow from belief in a God, but that such belief will remove any such alleged improbability as would render them incredible. We go further, and would say that belief in the Divine perfections would lead us to consider miracles as probable. If there be a God, not only infinite, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, but full of mercy, goodness, and love, a God who takes an interest in the creation he has made, and in man whom he has formed; if man be a being destined for eternity, but who needs a light to guide him and point him out the way, then we affirm there is a high antecedent probability that God would interpose for such an end. This is the element entirely omitted by Hume, when he represents the case of miracles as a contest of improbabilities.

That miracles are rendered probable by the foregoing consideration is stated by Locke, in a remarkable passage which is entirely misrepresented in this Essay, and referred to for quite a different purpose from the one intended. There is a constant propensity in this, as well as in the preceding Essay, to misrepresent the authors referred to. It is important this should be continually pointed out, that we may form a just estimate of the honesty of the writers,

* Evidences of Christianity, p. 6.

and learn what value is to be attached to their statements. Thus, in the present instance, the writer is anxious to make it appear that miracles are antecedently improbable, and tells us that all in the present day admit "the antecedent incredibility of miracles in general;" and that only "in certain cases of a very special nature that improbability may be removed." And as a proof of this, adds:—

"Locke *expressly contends* that it is the very extraordinary nature of such an emergency which renders an extraordinary interposition requisite, and therefore credible" (p. 113).

Now Locke, instead of expressly contending about what is here stated, does not even name any emergency, nor is he speaking of the antecedent incredibility, or very extraordinary nature of miracles at all; he is speaking of the grounds of probability, as they are "the foundations on which our assent is built," and "the measure whereby its several degrees are regulated." These grounds are experience and testimony; and he says that the highest degree of probability is when experience and testimony concur, and that the "difficulty is when testimonies contradict common experience;" but he adds *:—

"There is one case where contrary experience lessens not the testimony." "For where supernatural events *are suitable to ends* aimed at by him, who has power to change the course of nature, then, under such circumstances, they may be the fitter to procure belief, by how much the more they are beyond, or contrary to, ordinary observation. This is the proper case of miracles, which, well attested, do not only find credit themselves, but give it also to other truths, which need such confirmation."

And this leads us to consider the second ground on which the improbability of miracles is alleged, namely,

* Locke on the Human Understanding, book iv., ch. xvi., sec. 13.

want of experience. We have, it is said, a constant and universal experience of the uniformity of nature's operations, an experience so universal as to render any interruption of them inconceivable :—

" The entire range of the inductive philosophy is at once based upon, and in every instance tends to confirm, by immense accumulation of evidence, the grand truth of the universal order and constancy of natural causes as a primary law of belief, so strongly entertained and fixed in the mind of every true inductive inquirer, that he cannot even conceive the possibility of its future " (p. 109).

To this it is sufficient to reply that the great patron of the inductive philosophy, Lord Bacon, was himself a firm believer in miracles ; nor could he see the wisdom of the conclusion that, because God generally governs the world by fixed and known laws, therefore He never has, nor never will, for a special purpose, introduce an extraordinary power. But this objection is, in truth, just the old one of Hume. This Deistical writer says * :—

" A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature, and as a firm and unalterable experience hath established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as argument from experience can possibly be imagined."

Now this argument, if argument it can be called, is either ridiculous or fallacious. When we are told that miracles are incredible because they are contrary to experience, we ask, what are we to understand by the expression " contrary to experience ? " If it be meant that miracles are contrary to *all* experience, this is simply to beg the whole question and to assume the very point in dispute : but if it be meant that miracles are contrary to the objector's experience, this, perhaps, may be admitted without our being very apprehensive of the consequences. If Hume and his followers say that miracles are contrary to universal

* Hume's Philosophical Essays. Essay X.

experience, the argument is fallacious, for they assume what we deny; if they say they are contrary to their experience the argument is ridiculous, and might tell equally against many other facts, as well as against miracles.

Again, it has been well pointed out by Paley that the argument against miracles, from the want of experience, goes upon a false assumption, namely, that if miracles were wrought on the promulgation of Christianity they would be repeated so often as to make them the objects of general experience; whereas the strongest presumption is against this, for if miracles were continually repeated they would, in fact, cease to be miracles, and would take their place in the ordinary course of nature; and, judging from analogy, we have reason to think that miracles cluster around particular epochs, and are wrought only for some great and special end. Lord Bacon says*:—

"Whensoever God doth transcend the law of nature by miracles, which may ever seem as new creations, he never cometh to that point or pass, but in regard to the work of redemption, which is the greater, and whereto all God's signs and miracles do refer."

Thus, then, the improbability against miracles, from their not being experienced, is no greater than the probability that if ever they had been performed they would be continually repeated; but there is no probability of this, and therefore there is no improbability against them from want of experience. Thus, on this ground, as well as on that of antecedent considerations, the argument against miracles fails.

IV. Once more, it is objected that miracles are useless, for that, even though their reality be admitted,

* Bacon's Theological Works. A Confession of Faith, Vol. I. p. 338.

their evidence is not conclusive, and in proof of this the case of the Jews in the time of our Lord is referred to, who acknowledged the presence of a supernatural power, but denied that it was from God.

"The Pharisees set down the miracles of Christ to the power of evil spirits" (p. 116). "With the contemporaries of Christ and the apostles it was not a question of testimony or credibility; it was not the mere occurrence of what they all regarded as a supernatural event, as such, but the particular character to be assigned to it, which was the point in question" (p. 117).

But how can this be regarded as any argument against the use of miracles? If some did not believe, many did. We know that a miracle has not of itself the power to convince the heart; but even in the case of the unbelieving Jews, it convinced them of the presence of a power superhuman. It might as reasonably be objected to Christ's words as to his works, that all did not believe. If some are so blind or ignorant as to mistake good money for base coin, is that a proof that the good is useless? Though the Pharisees, blinded by pride and bigotry and passion, said Christ had a devil, there were others who said, "No man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him." And "Many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did." And so, many of our modern sceptics have admitted the evidential force of miracles properly attested. Thus Woolston says *:—

"It will be granted on all hands that the restoring a person indisputably dead to life is a stupendous miracle; and that two or three such miracles, well attested and credibly reported, are enough to conciliate the belief that the author of them was a Divine agent, and invested with the power of God."

But another argument is employed to prove the uselessness of miracles. It is founded on the admission

* Discourse V.

that in judging of a revelation by them, we must take into consideration the character of the revelation itself; and that external testimony of miracles, if there was wanting internal excellence of doctrine, would not make us receive the revelation as from God. All must admit this to be so, for miracles might be wrought by the power of evil. We believe that Satan has been, and will again be permitted to work "lying wonders" in the earth; and therefore a miracle could not persuade us to receive that which is evil as from God. If "an angel from heaven" were to preach "any other Gospel" unto us we should not receive it. But, asks the writer,

"What is it but to acknowledge the right of an appeal, superior to that of all miracles, to our own moral tribunal?" (p. 122).

Doubtless so, but what of that? it is merely to acknowledge that man is a moral as well as an intellectual being, and that God appeals to his conscience as well as to his reason. If a man came forward working miracles, it would not necessarily prove that God was with him, but it would prove that either God or Satan was, and then we should apply the Saviour's rule, "by their fruits ye shall know them," so that as Dean Trench says*, "the doctrine is to try the miracle as well as the miracle to seal the doctrine." But what is the inference drawn from this?

"On this view, it would follow that all external attestation would seem superfluous if it concur with, or to be rejected if it oppose, these moral convictions" (p. 124).

Here we detect the fallacy. The external attestation is not superfluous, if that which it attests concur with our moral convictions, for then it seals it as from God; as no miracle could make us accept that which is evil as from God, so without a miracle

* Preliminary Essay.—The Authority of a Miracle.

we cannot accept that which is good, as coming immediately from Him. This is the use of a miracle, it is the signet with which God seals his letter. We believe, then, that Paley was right in saying that we cannot conceive a revelation to be given except by miracles; though it is stated we know not on what grounds,

"It is now generally admitted that Paley took too exclusive a view in asserting that we cannot conceive a revelation substantiated in any other way" (p. 119).

How else, we ask, could a revelation be attested? Why a revelation is in itself miraculous, so that a miracle is embraced in the very idea of a revelation. Even if it be imparted only to the mind of an individual, it is then "an invisible miracle," and it can be authenticated to the world only by a miracle that is external. Such clearly was the end for which miracles were given, and such was their use; we read "they went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, *and confirming the word with signs following*" (Mark xvi. 20). But now, because we put miracles in their right place, and assign to them their right office, we are told not only that they are useless, but *that we confess that they are useless*. And this confession is ascribed by the writer to three parties he is pleased to distinguish.

"While the highest section of Anglican orthodoxy does not hesitate openly to disavow the old evidential argument, referring everything to the authority of the Church, the more moderate virtually discredit it by a general tone of vacillation between the antagonistic claims of reason and faith, intuition and evidence; while the extreme evangelical school, strongly asserting the literal truth of the Bible, seeks its evidence wholly in spiritual impressions, regarding all exercise of the reason as partaking in the nature of sin" (p. 120).

We know not that the parties here spoken of would accept us as their champion, nor do we mean to assume the office; but we feel quite sure that one and

all would declare that their views are in this passage entirely misrepresented. Of course, not only "the highest section of Anglican orthodoxy," but all who believe that the Church is a society divinely appointed, will feel that they do not any longer need the evidential view of miracles to prove this; but when we are told that "by a school of writers of the most highly orthodox pretensions, it is *elaborately argued* to the effect that revelation ought to be believed though destitute of strict evidence, either internal or external, and though we neither see it nor know it" (p. 119), we are bound to say of this statement that it is positively untrue. Did the writer suppose that his quotations and references would never be examined? If so, he was greatly mistaken. In proof of his assertion, he quotes from "Tracts for the Times," No. X., p. 4:—

"We must be as sure that the Bishop is Christ's appointed representative as if we actually saw him work miracles, as St. Peter, and St. Paul did."

But what are the facts? Tract No. X. contains "the heads of a week-day lecture delivered to a country congregation," and the preacher, addressing a body of believers, some of whom had lately been confirmed, takes occasion to speak of the office and authority of Bishops, and of the honour and reverence due to them for their office sake, in the course of which the following passage occurs:—

* "There is a temptation which comes on many men to honour no one, except such as they themselves know, such as have done a favour or kindness to them personally. Thus sometimes people speak against those who are put over them in this world's matters, as the king. They say 'What is the king to me? he never did me any good?' Now, I answer, whether he did or not, is nothing to the purpose. We are bound

* Tracts for the Times, No. X., pp. 3, 4.

for CHRIST'S sake to honour him, *because* he is king, though he lives far from us; and this all well-disposed right-minded people do. And so *in just the same way*, though for much higher reasons, we must honour the Bishop because he *is* the Bishop—for his *office* sake; because he is Christ's minister, stands in the place of the Apostles, is the shepherd of our souls on earth while CHRIST is away. This is FAITH, to look at things not as seen but as unseen; to be as sure that the Bishop is Christ's appointed Representative, as if we actually saw him work miracles as St. Peter and St. Paul did."

Now, we put it to any one, is this "an elaborate argument to the effect that *revelation ought to be believed, though destitute of strict evidence*, either internal or external; and though we neither see it, or know it!"? or is it honest to found such a statement upon a garbled passage, detached from its context, while the real meaning and object of the author are carefully concealed? But there is a general reference without any quotation to Tract No. LXXXV., pp. 85—100, which, if possible, is still more culpable. We have carefully read through the portion indicated, which is Lecture VII., and we confidently affirm that neither in word or design does it teach that revelation ought to be believed though destitute of strict evidence. On the contrary, the whole force of the argument rests upon the truth that Revelation is from God. The subject of the Lecture is "Internal Difficulties of the Canon and the Catholic Creed Compared," and the object of it is to show that as the Bible is from God, though there are some difficulties in it, so Church doctrines may be from Him, notwithstanding similar difficulties.

* "If, in spite of these, Scripture is nevertheless from God, so again, in spite of similar apparent difficulties, the Catholic system may be from Him also."

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* Tract, No. LXXXV., p. 87.

And so the author of the Tract argues that on such grounds men might as well object to Scripture as to Catholic doctrine. And, indeed, in a remarkable way, he declares this is what the age is coming to*:—

"This is what the age is coming to, and I wish it observed. We know it denies the existence of the Church as a divine institution: it denies that Christianity has been cast into any particular social mould. Well, but this, I say, is not all; it is rapidly tending to *deny the existence of any system of Christianity either;* any creed, doctrine, philosophy, or by whatever other name we designate it."

The writer then gives a warning that we should be careful, "lest we fall in with the evil tendencies of the times in which our lot is cast," and closes with counsel to those who may have doubts upon some points, and who may not have the means of thoroughly examining them. The counsel is so wise and beautiful we cannot avoid quoting a portion of the passage† :—

Whether I can prove this or that part to my satisfaction, yet, since I can prove all in a certain way, and cannot separate part from part for certain, I cannot be wrong in taking the whole. I am sure that if there be error, which I have yet to learn, it must be not in principle, but in mere matters of detail. If there be corruption or human addition in what comes to me, it must be in little matters, not in great. On the whole, I *must* have God's revelation, and that in what I see before me, with whatever incidental errors. I am sure, on the other hand, that the way which the age takes cannot be right, for it tends to destroy revelation altogether. Whether this or that doctrine, this or that book of Scripture is fully proveable or not, that line of objection to them cannot be right which when pursued destroys Church, Creed, Bible altogether,—

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* P. 99.

† Tract, No. LXXXV., pp. 100, 101.

which obliterates the very name of CHRIST from the world. . . . This is the reflection which I recommend to all, *so far as they have not the means of examining the evidences* for the Church, Creed, and Canon of Scripture; but I must not be supposed to imply, because I have so put the matter, that those who have the means will not find *abundant evidence* for the divinity of all three."

We put it again to every honest mind, is it here "elaborately argued to the effect that revelation ought to be believed, though destitute of strict evidence, either internal or external, and though we neither see it nor know it?" Yet such is the style of the volume that is to shake the religious faith of England! Nor does the writer deal more fairly with the two other parties he names. "The more moderate virtually discredit it (the old evidential argument), by a general tone of vacillation between the antagonistic claims of reason and faith." On this we would observe, that he cannot understand the province either of reason or faith who says their claims are antagonistic, nor is it to vacillate between them to allow the claims of both, and assign to each its proper sphere; while again we are quite sure it is a libel on the "evangelical school," however "extreme," or however "strongly asserting the literal truth of the Bible," to say it regards "all exercise of the reason as partaking in the nature of sin."

Before passing from this head, we have once more to point out the method of misquotation by which this volume is distinguished. In his endeavour to show that miracles are useless, the writer says that some contend that the attestation of miracles is not irresistible, and confess that there still remains uncertainty in faith.

"Some of the most strenuous advocates of the Christian 'evidences' readily avow, *indeed expressly contend*, that the attestation of miracles is, after all, not irresistible; and that in *the*

very uncertainty which confessedly remains, lies the 'trial of faith,' which it is thus implied must really rest on some other independent moral conviction" (p. 142).

In proof of this, we read in a note, See *e. g.*, Butler's "Analogy," pt. ii. ch. 6. Now will it be believed that in this chapter, instead of *expressly contending* that the attestation of miracles is not irresistible, Butler is not arguing about miracles at all; and instead of *confessing* that the Christian evidences are uncertain, he treats of "The *supposed* deficiency in the proof of Revelation." The chapter commences thus:—

"It has been thought, by some persons, that if the evidence of revelation appears doubtful, this itself turns into a positive argument against it."

He then proceeds to make out two points:—first, that even were the evidence doubtful, this would not be a positive proof against it; and secondly, that its not appearing obvious to some men, may constitute one particular part of their trial. And he closes by saying, that all his observations are made for the sake of persons who "throw off all regard to religion *under pretence of want of evidence*." Yet the writer of this Essay does not hesitate to tell us that Butler, in this chapter, "expressly contends that the attestation of miracles is, after all, not irresistible." We shall not trust ourselves to speak of such conduct in the way that it deserves, but we believe that, upon every honest mind, it will have its due effect.

V. We come now to consider the last argument against miracles, which may, in truth, be regarded as the climax of absurdity. We are told not only that miracles are incredible, that they are incapable of proof, that they are improbable, that they are useless, but, to crown the climax, that they are impossible.

"In an age of physical research like the present, *all highly cultivated minds and duly advanced intellects* have imbibed, more or

less, the lessons of the inductive philosophy, and have at least in some measure learned to appreciate the grand foundation and conception of universal law—to recognise *the impossibility even of any two material atoms subsisting together without a determinative relation—of any action of the one on the other*, whether of equilibrium or of motion, *without reference to a physical cause*—of any modification whatsoever in the existing condition of natural agents, *unless through the invariable operation of a series of eternally impressed consequences, following in some necessary chain of orderly connection*, however imperfectly known to us" (p. 133).

This, of course, if true, settles the question, and all previous objections were useless. If it be *impossible for* GOD to alter the ordinary chain of causation, if it be impossible for any modification whatsoever to take place in the existing condition of material agents, "*unless through the invariable operation of a series of eternally impressed consequences* following in some necessary chain of orderly connection," then there can be no such thing as a miracle in the true sense of the word. But we maintain that this assertion is both philosophically and ethically false. It banishes God completely from his universe, and it invests Nature with a vitality which in itself it does not possess.

> "Some say that in the origin of things,
> When all creation started into birth,
> The infant elements received a law,
> From which they swerve not since. That under force
> Of that controlling ordinance they move,
> And need not his immediate hand, who first
> Prescribed their course, to regulate it now.
> Thus dream they, and contrive to save a God
> The encumbrance of his own concerns, and spare
> The great artificer of all that moves
> The stress of a continual act, the pain
> Of unremitted vigilance and care,
> As too laborious and severe a task."
>
> ——*The Task*, Book vi.

This is precisely the philosophy and the religion of the Essay before us, and it is nothing more nor less than the religion and philosophy of Epicurus:—

"That which is eternally happy cannot be bur-

thened with any labour itself, or impose any on another: nor can it be influenced by resentment or favour*."

But we again repeat they are both false; for what is nature?

> "Nature is but a name for an effect,
> Whose cause is God."

What are the laws of nature? They are just the constant expression of God's will; the results of the energizing power of an ever present Deity. And while the idea "that there must be a constantly acting moving force to keep it (nature) going" (p. 135), is called a "peripatetic dogma," an "exploded chimera," we call the statement that "the stability of the heavenly motions is but the type of the universal *self-sustaining* and *self-evolving* powers which pervade all nature" (p. 134)—the idle dream of the lazy Epicurean who makes his God an old man nodding on the clouds. This Essay takes for granted that all physical philosophy is on its side. Within the compass of a few pages we find the following:—"*physical* facts," "*physical* causes," "*physical* evidence," "*physical* contemplation," "physical knowledge," "cosmical philosophy," "physical research," "advanced intellects," "inductive philosophy," "physical cause," "philosophical inquirers," "physical philosophy," "*physical* truth," "physical and mathematical sciences," "cosmical philosophers" (pp. 132—134); while "would-be philosophers," "redoubtable champions," who "evince their profound knowledge of mechanical philosophy," are the terms applied to those who venture to believe in the constant agency of a present God, or that, in the language of Scripture, He "upholds all things by the

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* "Quod beatum æternumque sit, id nec habere ipsum negoti quidquam, nec exhibere alteri; itaque neque ira, neque gratia teneri."—"Cicero de Natura Deorum," lib. i. sect 17.

word of his power." There is here such an affectation of knowledge, science, and philosophy, that we deem it important to show how widely some of our best philosophers differ with him as to the nature of physical causation. They hold that there are no such things as inherent powers in matter; that power "is an attribute in a being by which he can do certain things if he wills," and that "we are unable to conceive any active power to be exerted without will." Accordingly, the laws of nature are treated as nothing more than the results of the constant agency of the Divine will.

Thus Reid says:—

* "The laws of nature are the rules according to which the effects are produced; but there must be a cause which operates according to these rules. The rules of navigation never navigated a ship. The rules of architecture never built a house. Upon the theatre of nature we see innumerable effects, which require an agent endowed with active power; but the agent is behind the scene, whether it be the Supreme cause alone, or a subordinate cause or causes."

Dugald Stewart writes:—

† "In the material universe the subjects of our observation are understood by all men to be unconscious and passive (that is, are understood to be unchangeable in their state, without the influence of some foreign and external force), and, consequently, *the order* so admirably maintained, amidst all the various *changes* which they actually undergo, not only implies intelligence in its first conception, but implies, in its continued existence, *the incessant agency of power*, executing the purposes of wise design. After what has

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* "Essays on the Powers of the Human Mind." By Thomas Reid, D.D. Vol. III., Essay I., Chap. 6.

† Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind. By Dugald Stewart. Vol. II., Chap. II., Sect. 4.

been already said, it is hardly necessary to take notice of the absurdity of that opinion, or rather of that mode of speaking which seems to refer the order of the universe to *general laws* operating as *efficient causes*. Absurd, however, as it is, there is reason to suspect that it has, with many, had the effect of keeping the Deity out of view, while studying his works."

Dr. Thomas Brown, speaking of laws, says :—

* " Which however pompous the term laws may seem, as if it denoted something different from the phenomena themselves, and paramount to them, are in truth nothing more than the expression of the most general circumstances, in which the phenomena themselves have been felt by us to agree."

† " God speaks and it is done. We imagine nothing intermediate in our highest contemplation of his power. We believe only, that when He willed creation, a world arose; and that in all future time His will to create cannot exist without being followed by the instant rise into being of whatever He may have willed; that His will to destroy anything will be in like manner followed by its non-existence, and His will to vary the course of things by miraculous appearances."

To these we must add the words of a great living philosopher, Professor Owen ‡ :—

" Everywhere in organic nature we see the means not only subservient to the end, but that end accomplished by the simplest means. Hence we are compelled to regard the great cause of all, not like certain philosophic ancients, as a uniform and quiescent mind, as an all-pervading *anima mundi, but as an active and anticipating intelligence.*"

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* " Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind." By Thomas Brown, M.D. Lect. V.

† Ibid. Lect. VII.

‡ " Classification of Mammals." Appendix A. On the Extinction of Species, p 63.

With such "would-be philosophers" as these we would wish to be numbered. We believe that their views of physical causation are true, and that the idea that there can be no change in the existing condition of the material world, "unless through the invariable operation of a series of eternally impressed consequences," is as impious as it is false, landing us practically in Atheism, resigning mankind and the world to the most rigid Fatalism, denying both the exercise of providence and the answer of prayer; in a word, embodying the very thought of the scoffers in the last days:—"Where is the promise of his coming, for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (2 Peter iii. 4).

The necessary consequence of this "physical" and "philosophical" theory is plainly avowed. Christianity must be regarded no longer as a reality, it cannot be connected with material things:—

"The more knowledge advances, the more it has been, and will be, acknowledged that Christianity, as a real religion, must be viewed apart from connection with physical things" (p. 128).

What the full meaning of this may be we cannot exactly divine; for our part we cannot view Christianity in entire severance from physical things, for the world is its sphere, an incarnate Saviour its foundation, the resurrection of the body its blessed hope. Perhaps, from what immediately follows, the meaning is that we must look upon it merely as ideal, and that it does not at all depend on any physical truth:—

"The first dissociation of the spiritual from the physical was rendered necessary by the palpable contradictions disclosed by astronomical discovery with the letter of Scripture. Another still wider and more material step has been effected by the discoveries of geology. More recently the antiquity of the human race, and the development of species, and the rejection of the idea of 'creation,' have caused new advances in the same direction. In

all these cases, there is, indeed, a direct discrepancy between what has been taken for revealed truth and certain undeniable existing monuments to the contrary" (p. 129).

The first two statements in this passage which assert a discrepancy between Scripture and the discoveries of astronomy and geology form the subject of another Essay. We shall not, therefore, consider them now, but we must say something upon the last point raised, especially as in another passage it is more fully brought out. To this passage, which is a most important one, we would direct particular attention:—

"Just a similar scepticism *has been* evinced by nearly all the first physiologists of the day who have joined in rejecting the development theories of Lamarck and the 'Vestiges;' and while they have strenuously maintained successive creations, have denied and denounced the asserted productions of organic life by Messrs. Crosse and Weekes, and strictly maintained the impossibility of spontaneous generation on the alleged ground of contradiction to experience. Yet it is now acknowledged, under the high sanction of the name of Owen, that creation is only another name for our ignorance of the mode of production; and it has been the unanswered and unanswerable argument of another reasoner that new species must have originated either out of their inorganic elements, or out of previously organized forms; *either* development *or* spontaneous generation *must be* true; while a work has now appeared by a naturalist of the most acknowledged authority, Mr. Darwin's masterly volume on 'The Origin of Species,' by the law of natural selection, which now substantiates, on undeniable grounds, the very principle so long denounced by the first naturalists—*the origination of new species by natural causes;* a work which must soon bring about an entire revolution of opinion in favour of the grand principle of the self-evolving powers of nature" (p. 139).

The subjects referred to in this passage are of the highest interest and importance; but certainly the passage itself is one which could hardly be equalled for boldness of assertion, deficiency of proof, or recklessness of misrepresentation. In the first place Professor Owen's name is made use of in order to destroy the true idea of "creation," which regards nature as the effect of a great First Cause; and his address to the

British Association in 1858 is referred to in a note to justify this reference to his name.

"It is now acknowledged, under the high sanction of the name of Owen (British Association Address, 1858) that 'creation' is *only another name for our ignorance* of the mode of production."

We shall now quote the passage referred to, and leave it to speak for itself:—

"It may be well to bear in mind that by the word 'creation,' the zoologist means a process he knows not what. Science has not yet ascertained the secondary causes that operated when 'the earth brought forth grass and herb, yielding seed after its kind;' and when 'the waters brought forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life;' and *supposing* both the fact and the whole process of the *so called spontaneous generation* of a fruit-bearing tree, or of a fish, were scientifically demonstrated, we should still retain as strongly the idea, WHICH IS THE CHIEF OF THE MODI OR GROUP OF IDEAS WE CALL 'CREATION,' VIZ., THAT THE PROCESS WAS ORDAINED BY AND HAD ORIGINATED FROM AN ALL-WISE AND POWERFUL FIRST CAUSE OF ALL THINGS*."

Comment upon this would be superfluous; such misrepresentation of an author condemns itself, and cannot but react on the character of the whole Essay. But to proceed. It is said that "*either* development *or* spontaneous generation *must be* true." Now while we feel with Owen that even if spontaneous generation were true, it would not exclude the idea of a Creator; for it matters not whether He works with or without secondary causes; we also with Owen believe that there is no foundation whatever for the theories of spontaneous generation and transmutation of species,

* "Address delivered at the Twenty-eighth Annual Assembly of the British Association, p. 42.

and instead of assenting to the assertion that either must be true, we are convinced that both are false. First, let us inquire on what ground the writer condemns "the first physiologists of the day" for maintaining the impossibility of spontaneous generation on the alleged ground of contradiction to experience? He tells us, "the *asserted* productions of organic life by Messrs. Crosse and Weekes." Let us for a moment consider the facts of this case which is so confidently adduced to establish spontaneous generation. Mr. Crosse, in the year 1837, was engaged in making experiments on electro-chrystallization, in the course of which he was surprised to find that insects presented themselves in certain circumstances under conditions usually considered fatal to animal life. To use his own words:—

"In a great number of experiments, made by passing a long current of electricity through various fluids (and some of them were considered to be destructive of animal life), acari have made their appearance; but never excepting on an electrified surface kept constantly moistened, or beneath the surface of an electrified fluid."

Several of these experiments he describes. Thus, a piece of quartz was plunged two inches deep in a glass vessel containing fluo-silicic acid, through which a current of electricity was passed for more than a twelvemonth, and at the end of some months three of these acari were visible on the piece of quartz, which was kept negatively electrified. Again, he took two ounces of powdered black flint, with which he mixed six ounces of carbonate of potassa; upon this boiling water was poured, and the solution was made to drop through a piece of porous red oxide of iron from Vesuvius, which was kept constantly electrified, and after some time these acari appeared upon this piece of iron. As soon as Mr. Crosse announced this remarkable fact he was at once, by persons having

more zeal than knowledge or discretion, denounced as an unbeliever. His reply was characteristic:—"That he was sorry to see that the faith of his neighbours could be overset by the claw of a mite." As a man of science, he simply stated the result of his experiment, others drew conclusions which he never thought of. He tells us that the simplest solution of the problem that occurred to him was, "that they arose from ova deposited by insects floating in the atmosphere, and hatched by electric action." He then imagined "that they might have originated from the water;" but on the whole he was unable to assign any positive solution of the phenomenon; but did he *assert*, as is implied, that he produced organic life? Let us hear his own statement:—

* "As to the appearance of the acari under long continued electrical action, I have never, in thought, word, or deed, given any one a right to suppose that I considered them as a creation or even a formation from inorganic matter. To create, is to form a something out of a nothing; to annihilate, is to reduce that something to a nothing. Both of these, of course, can only be the attributes of the Almighty."

He also states a remarkable fact with reference to these. "When a number of these insects congregate, ova are the result." There is, then, we believe, sufficient ground for the following important statement by Dr. Carpenter:—

† "It may be considered as a fundamental truth of physiological science, *that every living organism has had its origin in a pre-existing organism.* The doctrine of spontaneous generation, or the supposed origination of organized structures, *de novo*, out of assemblages of inorganic particles, although at different times sustained

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* Memorials, Scientific and Literary, of Andrew Crosse.

† Principles of Comparative Physiology, by W. B. Carpenter, M D. Ch. XI. of Generation and Development.

with a considerable show of argument, based on a specious array of facts, *cannot now be said to have any claim whatever to be received as even a possible hypothesis;* all the facts on which it claimed to rest, having either been themselves disproved, or having been found satisfactorily explicable on the general principle, *Omne vivum ex ovo.* Thus the appearance of animalcules in infusions of decaying organic matter, the springing up of fungi in spots to which it would not have been supposed that their germs could have been conveyed, the occurrence of Entozoa in the bodies of various animals into which it seemed almost beyond possibility that their eggs could have been introduced, with other facts of a like nature, may now be accounted for, without any violation of probability, by our increased knowledge of the mode in which these organisms are propagated."

The theory of development is, if possible, more baseless than that of spontaneous generation. True, Mr. Darwin's recent work on "The Origin of Species" strongly maintains it. But with all due respect for Mr. Darwin, we are compelled to say that instead of bringing about a revolution in physiological science, his work is by no means likely to add to his reputation as a naturalist. In the face of facts, in the face of difficulties he confesses he cannot explain, in the absence of that experience on which the true inductive philosophy builds its conclusions, where the light of science cannot lead him, he lets fancy and imagination roam. Everything is opposed to his hypothesis: the law of sterility of hybrids fixes the limits of species, the embalmed animals of Egypt prove that during 3,000 years no transmutation has taken place in our domesticated animals, the absence of a single specimen in the strata of earth of any animal in the transition state proves that such transition has never taken place, while the total absence now in nature of any such connecting link, shows that it is not taking place.

Mr. Darwin admits that if his hypothesis be true, "*It is indisputable that, before the lowest Silurian stratum was deposited, long periods elapsed, as long as, or probably far longer, than the whole interval from the Silurian age to the present day, and that during these vast and quite unknown periods of time, the world swarmed with living creatures;" though while making this admission he acknowledges that the most eminent geologists are convinced that, in the organic remains of the Silurian rocks we see the dawn of life on this planet, while "to the question why we do not find records of these vast primordial periods," he replies, "I can give no satisfactory answer." Surely, a professed disciple of the inductive philosophy, he has forgotten its fundamental law:—

† "*Homo, naturæ minister et interpres, tantum facit et intelligit, quantum de naturæ ordine, re vel mente observaverit; nec amplius scit, aut potest.*"

To the speculations of Darwin we may, then, well oppose the scientific deductions of Professor Owen:—

‡ "No known cause of change productive of the varieties of mammalian species could operate in altering the size, the shape, or the connections of the premaxillary bones which so remarkably distinguish the troglodytes gorilla, not from man only, but from all other anthropoid apes.

"The unity of the human species is demonstrated by the constancy of those osteological and dental characters to which the attention is more particularly directed in the investigation of the corresponding characters of the high quadrumina. Man is the sole species of his genus, the sole representative of his

* Darwin on Species, p. 307.

† Bacon's Novum Organum, lib. i aphor. i.

‡ Classification of Mammals, Appendix B, on the "Orang, Chimpanzee, and Gorilla, with reference to the Transmutation of Species."

order and sub-class. Thus, I trust, has been furnished the confutation of the notion of a transformation of the ape into the man."

If after this anyone will maintain the development theory of Lamarck, who boldly sketches the process by which the ourang-outang was transformed into the man, we must only leave him in the undisputed enjoyment of the relationship he claims.

After this digression upon natural philosophy, the writer returns to the subject of miracles, before closing his Essay. Following his example, we should wish to do the same, for, having been so long on the defensive, we think we are entitled to turn the argument for a little, and show that all difficulties do not lie on the side of belief. We would observe, then, that Christianity exists as a religion in the world; moreover, it is the only religion which rested its claims, and demanded to be received upon the allegation of miracles *. Now, it is incumbent upon those who may deny miracles to account for this, or at least, if they are unable to do so, to propose something by which the alleged miracles of the Gospel history are to be explained: the writer of the Essay evidently felt this, for to it, in conclusion, he addresses himself. Let us well consider his explanation:—

"To conclude: an alleged miracle can only be regarded in one of two ways; either (1) abstractedly, as a physical event, and therefore to be investigated by reason or physical evidence, and referred to physical causes, possibly to *known* causes, but at all events to some higher cause or law, if at present unknown; it then ceases to be supernatural, yet still might be appealed to in support of religious truth, especially as referring to the state of knowledge and apprehensions of the parties addressed in past ages; or (2) as connected with religious doctrine regarded in a sacred light, asserted on the authority of inspiration. In this case it ceases to be capable of investigation by reason, or to own its dominion; it is accepted on religious grounds, and can appeal only to the principle and influence of faith. Thus miraculous narratives become invested

* Butler's Analogy, part ii., ch. vii. 3.

with the character of articles of faith, if they be accepted in a less positive and certain light, as requiring some suspension of judgment as to their nature and circumstances, or perhaps as involving more or less of the parabolic or mythic character; or, at any rate, as received in connection with, and for the sake of the doctrine inculcated" (p. 142).

Thus a miracle may be regarded from a twofold point of view, as an alleged fact to be subject to the examination of reason, or as a part of our religious belief proposed for reception by faith. If it be submitted to the investigation of reason and physical evidence, then we are told it must be referred to some known cause, or at all events if unknown to some natural law; at the same time, it is added, though really not supernatural, it may be appealed to in support of religious truth, especially when the parties addressed are ignorant. If, on the other hand, it is not required that the alleged miracle should be considered abstractedly, so that there may be a suspension of judgment as to its real nature, then we may piously admit it as a part of our religious mythology. Such is the way in which it is proposed to account for the Gospel miracles. Now we have already observed that the peculiarity of the Gospel miracles is that upon their evidence Christianity claimed to be received by the world. Both our Lord and his Apostles appealed to them. When John sent two of His disciples to Christ, saying, "Art Thou He that should come? or look we for another?" He answered, "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised" (Luke vii. 22); and to the Jews He said, "I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father hath sent Me" (John v. 36). Again, "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not; but if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the

works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in Me, and I in Him" (x. 37, 38). In the study of the Evidences, then, the Gospel miracles must be regarded as one of the grounds of faith, and not the object of it. They claim to be investigated as facts by reason and evidence. What account, then, is to be given of Christ as a professed worker of miracles? That he palmed as miracles on the ignorance and credulity of the world what were merely tricks or natural operations. We pause to ask, do men who speak thus believe that He was the Son of God? Can they even believe in his Divine mission?

Again, the nature of the alleged miracles was such as not to allow of this solution. It is impossible that the Apostles could have been deceived; no effort of mingled affection and imagination could possibly have led them to believe that the miracles really took place if they did not, or invest the merely natural with the character of the supernatural. For example: they not only tell us that they saw Christ walking on the sea, but that one of their number stepped out of the ship and walked on the waves to go to Him. No force of imagination can account for this. If it happened it was a miracle, if it did not, the Apostles were impostors. Once more, Christ not only professed to work miracles Himself, but to confer the power of doing so on others. We read,—"These signs shall follow them that believe: in My name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." Again we say no imagination could lead the Apostles to suppose they possessed these miraculous powers if in fact they did not.

We would now, in bringing this discussion to a conclusion, reduce the question to a plain and simple issue. The life of Christ begins and ends with an

alleged stupendous miracle. "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, . . . received up into glory" (1 Tim. iii. 16). Now talking about physical laws, and antecedent convictions, and so forth, will not do; this is merely evading the question. We ask, do the writers of these Essays believe in the miraculous conception? Do they believe that God was manifest in the flesh? They perhaps may say this is a mystery which would require explanations. Very well, then, we pass to the closing miracle, which simply embraces a question of fact. The Apostles tell us that Christ rose from the dead the third day, that they saw Him, saw Him often, that they talked with Him, touched Him, that He taught them, gave them a commission, commanded them to bear witness to the world of His resurrection; and finally, that while conversing with Him on the Mount, He lifted up his hands and blessed them, and as He blessed them He was taken from them, and they saw Him go up bodily into heaven, and gazed on Him till He passed into the clouds. Now we ask the authors of these Essays, do they or do they not believe that this really took place? If they do, their volume is so much waste paper; if they do not, let them say so, and then we shall know we have Infidels, not Christians, to deal with. Let them make the election; either miracles are true, or Christianity is a lie.

While, then, the author of this Essay says of marvels, "Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat," we would add of a miracle, "Idque evenit non temere nec casu, sed quod præsentiam sæpe DEUS suam declarat."

ANSWER TO THE FOURTH ESSAY, "SÉANCES HISTORIQUES DE GENÈVE." THE NATIONAL CHURCH.

If we are to judge of conscience by the conduct of some who profess to submit themselves to it as their supreme rule, we fear a very unfavourable opinion must be formed of it as a guide. That men who hold the views advanced in this volume should still continue ministers of the Church of England reveals a state of moral obliquity hardly conceivable; that men who deny external revelation, the reality of prophecy, the possibility of miracles, the supernatural inspiration of Scripture, the guilt and corruption of human nature, the doctrine of an atonement, should still continue to minister at the altar, and eat the bread of a Church whose Liturgy, and Articles, and Homilies, and Creeds proclaim these distinctive truths of Christianity with the fulness and clearness of authoritative teaching, is, indeed, a moral phenomenon which entirely transcends our ethics. It is clear, however, that they are not quite at ease; not, indeed, if we are to judge by the writer of the "Essay" now before us, that conscience gives them any trouble, but they chafe under any restraint, and desire permission not only to think what they please, but to say and teach what they please. The author takes occasion of a question discussed at Geneva as to whether the individualist or

multitudinist principle supplies the true basis of the Church, not only to express his opinion in favour of a national establishment embracing in its communion persons differing very widely in moral and spiritual attainments; but to make an appeal for the removal of every test and restriction in the National Church, and to demand that its ministers be permitted to believe anything, or every thing, or nothing, just as they please; while, at the same time, he plainly intimates that if these demands are not conceded, and all restrictions removed, modern ingenuity can find a way to evade them. Indeed, the plan is described with a minuteness of detail, and with such an evident degree of satisfaction, as to leave the impression that the writer is persuaded he is describing some admirable discovery, and doing a most meritorious act, utterly unconscious that he is making a most painful exhibition of himself, surpassing the dishonesty of Loyola, and throwing the casuistry of the Jesuits into the shade. The principle which he maintains throughout is, that a National Church should profess no distinct faith, and that its ministers should not be bound by articles or creed.

To quiet our apprehensions for the safety of the Church when such notions are abroad we are comforted by the assurance that we need not be afraid. Though about to use his knife with very unsparing hand in probing our "traditions," and dissecting our "*traditional Christianity*," like a kind surgeon he tells us there is no danger; and that if only we submit quietly to it we shall survive the operation.

"Neither as a spiritual society, nor as a national institution, need there be any fear that the Church of this country, which has passed through so many ordeals, shall succumb, because we may be on the verge of some political and ecclesiastical changes" (p. 147).

Now we assure him we are not in the least alarmed lest the Church should fall because this volume of

Essays has been given to the world. Nor are we afraid that its arguments will affect the faith. It has stood much severer shocks; sharper wits and deeper thinkers have assailed it, but it still remains. The Church's temporalities may perish, her faith never; her endowments may be destroyed, but still the promise is sure, "Lo, I am with you always." Days of trial may come on, the enemies of the truth may unite to disturb the Church's peace, darkness may gather round us, but we believe that the candle which was lit in England at the Reformation will by God's grace, never be put out.

But, while we are assured the Church is not going to fall, we are warned not to resist the progress of thought; we are reminded that the Jews, in the days of Christ and his Apostles, were fighters against God in refusing their teaching, that the Romans in the time of Theodosius resisted the new religion with an appeal to ancient customs, so our fathers resisted Wycliffe and Cranmer, and opposed the English Bible and the Reformation; we should take heed, therefore, not to oppose rationalism, lest in our blindness we call that heresy—

"which is really a worshipping the God of the fathers in a better way. Nor should we content ourselves with simply transmitting to those who shall follow us, traditions which have descended to ourselves, if we can transmit something better" (p. 148).

Again, we are reminded that "old things are to pass away," and therefore, "where signs of the times are beheld foretelling change," it behoves us to consider "the best method of adjusting old things to new conditions." What those signs of the times are is plainly intimated,—"the wide-spread doubts respecting traditional Christianity which prevail in our own day." That infidelity exists is, unhappily, a fact that cannot be denied; it always did, and it always will, it is the natural growth of the human heart; and as time goes on we have reason to expect that it will lift itself with

a bolder front, and speak with a louder voice, for "the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, . . . having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim. iv. 1, 2). Weeds torn from the rock of truth, and scattered by every blast, drift down the stream of time to warn those who are on life's rough sea of the perils that beset their faith. But infidelity can never be popular, it may gratify the pride of intellect, but it cannot satisfy the human heart. Idolatry overspread the world, infidelity never can. Man wants something more than the cold speculations of philosophy, he wants a living religion in contact with the necessities of his spiritual being. He wants the bread of life, the stones of a negative theology will never supply food for his soul. It may be the fact that of the educated and uneducated many are alienated from Christianity, but that it is "from the Christianity which is ordinarily presented in our churches and chapels," as distinguished from the Christianity of the Bible, we deny; on the contrary, just in proportion as the Christianity of the New Testament taught by Apostles, and purified at the Reformation from the corruption of ages, is preached in our churches and chapels, in that proportion are the affections of the laity generally engaged, and their co-operation in every good work secured. Again, that some of the clergy are dissatisfied with the Church's formularies, the Essay before us affords an unhappy proof. That others would be glad to see some alterations need not be denied, but that the infection of "German inoculation" has spread to any extent we do not believe. We feel sure that, however the clergy may differ upon other points, whatever variety of opinion may exist among them, the great body of them are united upon this, that the negative theology is not theology at all.

The writer seems very anxious it should not be

supposed that the present Scriptural movement in this country is to be traced to the influence of German rationalism. He assures us it is "of genuine English growth," though differing from the gross, radical, and destructive infidelity of Paine and Hone. There is a certain amount of truth in this, for German rationalism was itself but the offshoot of English deism in the last century; and now that it is dying out in Germany, it is being transplanted to its original soil. It is found to be a weed that will not flourish long in one place, it requires to be frequently removed. When first it sprang up in this country it was robust and gross; being transferred to Germany, and brought under the culture of philosophical speculation and criticism, it became more refined, and now it again appears among us in its more delicate form. It may, for a while, take root in the atmosphere of quiet speculation and learned leisure, but it can never live in contact with the active Christianity of our day; by deathbed scenes and on fields of missionary labour, whether at home or abroad, it must die.

When we inquire into the source of this sceptical movement, we are told it has sprung up "in the presence of real difficulties," difficulties about some "doctrines," "a distrust of the old arguments for, or proofs of a miraculous revelation;" "a misgiving as to the authority, or extent of the authority, of the Scriptures" (p. 151), so that it is to be regarded as "the result of observation and thought, not of passion." Men are more knowing than they were a generation ago, popular knowledge has increased, our views of the world and its teeming population have been enlarged, Eastern regions have been opened up, with their empires, nations, cities, tribes, men of flesh and blood like our own, of whom our forefathers little dreamed. Such are the hints by which we are prepared for the disclosure of difficulties which, in our day, press with such force upon thoughtful minds,

as to lead them to question our "traditional Christianity." Well, doubtless, these difficulties must be something very serious; it must be something new and startling, that is to shake the faith of eighteen centuries. Has anything been discovered that must give its death-blow to Christianity? Has any new question arisen that must inevitably overthrow revelation? Yes, we tremble to state it, but it can no longer be concealed. "We have recently become acquainted—intimate—with the teeming regions of the far East," and here is the insurmountable difficulty,—

"In what relation does the Gospel stand to these millions? Is there any trace on the face of its records that it even contemplated their existence? We are told that to know and believe in Jesus Christ is, in some sense, necessary to salvation. It has not been given to these. Are they, will they be hereafter, the worse off for their ignorance?" (p. 153.) We cannot be content to wrap this question up and leave it for a mystery, as to what shall become of those myriads upon myriads of non-Christian races" (pp. 153, 154).

Now that the worst is known, we may breathe more freely. It now appears that the world is larger than our forefathers supposed, and there are more people in it than they thought; while the Gospel records have neglected to give us the Census of A.D. 1861, or, in fact, any Census at all. "*We are told*, that to know and believe in Jesus Christ, is, *in some sense*, necessary to salvation." What, then, is to become of non-Christian nations? We cannot wrap this question up, and leave it for a mystery. But suppose we must, what then? Suppose that, after all that can be said, the difficulty, such as it is, remains the same as it ever was, that it is nothing new, that it may be urged as an objection against the system of Providence as well as against that of revelation, and that the principle which it is said can remove it in a measure is freely conceded, what then becomes of this monster before which the Gospel of Christ

is to fall, and in the presence of which scepticism springs up in giant strength? Let us consider how this difficulty is proposed to be solved,—

"If our traditions tell us that they are involved in the curse and perdition of Adam, ... we are disposed to think that our traditions cannot herein fairly declare the words and inferences from Scripture; but if on examination it should turn out that they have, we must say that the authors of the Scriptural books have in those matters represented to us their own inadequate conceptions, and not the mind of the spirit of God" (p. 154).

Thus the "verifying faculty" is brought into exercise; if "the Scriptural books" represent matters in a way of which it does not approve, we must only conclude that their authors give us their own inadequate conceptions. But will this verifying process really remove the difficulty, or is it even necessary? Not according to the author's own showing, for he says,—

"If, indeed, we are at liberty to believe *that all shall be equitably dealt with according to their opportunities*, whether they have heard or not of the name of Jesus, then we can acknowledge the case of the Christian and non-Christian populations to be one of difference of advantages" (p. 154).

Well, if he had only consulted the Scriptures he might have found that the very principle he speaks of is there asserted, and the liberty desired fully conceded. Christ himself says,—"That servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke xii. 47, 48). Again, St. Paul, speaking of the very subject of God's dealings with the Gentile world, declares that He has left the nations without excuse by the revelation given *to* them in creation, and *in* them in conscience; nevertheless, that they shall not be judged by a law which

they have not received, but by the law written in their hearts. Thus the very principle contended for is admitted, and therefore this difficulty never should have been named; instead of being something new, it has often been felt, but has been shown to press as heavily against natural as against revealed religion. "An objection against revelation" (says Butler) "from its not being universal, is often insisted upon as of great weight*;" but this objection rests upon the supposition "that it cannot be thought God would bestow a favour upon any unless he bestowed the same upon all." A supposition, he adds, "which we find contradicted not by a few instances in God's natural government of the world, but by the general analogy of nature together." He then shows how in nature and Providence God does bestow all his gifts—health, strength, riches, &c.—"with the most promiscuous variety among creatures of the same species;" and says that anything that might seem to bear hard against God's moral administration would be removed if we would keep in mind "*that every one shall be dealt equitably with.*" At the same time he declares, that "this, however, doth not by any means imply that all persons' condition here is equally advantageous with respect to futurity." And this is the difficulty, such as it is—a difficulty which is not in the slightest degree removed by saying that all shall be dealt with "according to the opportunities."

That such is the case the writer admits. He says that if the principle that all shall be equitably dealt with be acknowledged, "the question then is one of difference of advantages." Well, the principle is acknowledged, but is the difficulty removed? No; for he adds,—

"Of course *no account can be given* of the principle which determines the unequal distribution of the Divine benefits" (p. 154).

* "The Analogy," part ii. ch vi.

Just so, and in this lies the whole difficulty. It is a matter of fact that God does, both in things temporal and things spiritual, distribute his gifts unequally, and of this no account can be given but that it is his will; and whoever, therefore, objects to this in his work of grace, must equally do so in the dealings of his Providence. The author of this Essay rightly says, "the exhibition of the Divine attributes is not to be brought to measure of numbers or proportions;" it were well had he borne this in mind, for he makes the whole difficulty rest in numbers and proportions. He admits that in the abstract it "may be as great concerning a small number of persons unprovided for as concerning a large one," but then it does not "force itself on the imagination" of so many. He admits the difficulty is not "*new in itself*," but it is new as to "*the great increase in numbers of those who feel it.*" And so, he adds, there arises a practical urgency for the discovery of a solution, "if we would set many unquiet souls at rest;" though in the same breath we have been told that no account can be given of the principle that lies at the very root of the whole question.

But we must not suppose that this is the only difficulty that is about to overthrow our "traditional Christianity." "From the same source of the advance of general knowledge respecting the inhabitancy of the world issues another inquiry concerning a promise, prophecy, or assertion of Scripture." In fact—

> "St. Paul says of the Gentile world, 'But I say, have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world' (Rom. x. 18); and speaks of the Gospel which was preached to *every nation* under Heaven (Col. i. 23), when it has never yet been preached even to the half" (p. 155).

We need not dwell upon the misquotation in the latter passage, for it is really immaterial; but St. Paul does not say the Gospel was preached "to every

nation," but "in the whole creation," ἐν πάσῃ κτίσει. But we really find it hard to believe that the writer is serious in speaking of this as a difficulty. St. Paul, in the Romans, to meet an objection, quotes from Psalm xix., in which the progress of God's word is compared to the course of the sun in the heavens which shines upon all lands, and in doing so does not merely make an accommodation of the passage; but takes it in its context and literal bearing. And as Dean Alford well observes*,—

"As to the assertion of the preaching of the Gospel having gone out into all the world, when as yet a small part of it only has been evangelized,—we must remember that it is not the *extent*, so much as the *universality in character*, of this preaching which the Apostle is here asserting; that word of God, hitherto confined within the limits of Judæa, had now broken those bounds, and was now preached in all parts of the earth. See Col. i. 6, 23."

To this we would add, even supposing the apostle did not quote from the Old Testament, and was not speaking generally of the universality of the Gospel's publication, but that the texts referred to must be taken in the strictness of the letter, what follows? Why, the awful discovery is made, that "the Scripture writers *had no such knowledge as is given to ourselves of the amplitude of the world!*" (p. 157). This we fear must prove fatal! especially as there are two other "real difficulties," in the presence of which modern scepticism has arisen. Let us hear them.

"It has often been appealed to as an evidence of the supernatural origin of Christianity . . . . that it so soon overspread the world . . . . But it requires no learning to be aware that neither then nor subsequently have the Christians amounted to more than a fourth part of the people of the earth; and it is seen to be impossible to appeal any longer to the wonderful spread of Christianity in the three first centuries as a special evidence of

* Alford, on Rom. x. 18.

the wisdom and goodness of God. So, likewise, a very grave modification of an evidence heretofore current must ensue in another respect . . . . It has been customary to argue that, *à priori*, a supernatural revelation was to be expected at the time when Jesus Christ was manifested upon the earth . . . . The state of the world, it has been customary to say, had become so utterly corrupt and hopeless under the Roman sway, that a necessity and special occasion was presented for an express divine intervention; our recently enlarged ethnographical information shows such an argument to be altogether inapplicable to the case" (pp. 155, 156).

But in what way does our enlarged ethnographical information render the *à priori* argument inapplicable? Why, it is said, considering the state of China and India, we should have thought "a greater necessity for a special divine intervention existed in the East." Well, might we not remind the writer that the revelation of the Gospel was given to the East as well as to the West, that tradition tells us that in the Apostolic age it was carried even as far as India; or might we not remind him of his own words that no account can be given of "the unequal distribution of the divine benefits?" But we really are not disposed to dwell upon these points; for suppose that everything he here says is granted, we ask, are these difficulties that are to overthrow Christianity? According to his own showing they are not difficulties at all, but merely supposed evidences, one of which must be given up, and the other "gravely modified." We are, in truth, amazed that when a writer in the present day comes forward, telling us we are on the verge of great changes—that old things must pass away—that traditional Christianity must give place to something better—that this scepticism is the result of thought, and has been produced by real difficulties; these, in the end turn out to be—what? First, the old question about the heathen; secondly, that St. Paul quotes the xixth Psalm on the subject of the universality of the publication of the Gospel, showing, it is said, that he was ignorant of geography and

ethnology; thirdly, that the spread of Christianity in the three first centuries was not so striking as to justify our appealing to this as an evidence of its supernatural origin; fourthly, that India and China needed a revelation as much as Greece or Rome. These are literally the only difficulties and objections mentioned. We are told, indeed, "there are many other sources of the modern questionings of traditional Christianity;" but as they "cannot now be touched upon," we are not bound to suppose that they are more formidable than the ones that are named.

The writer having thus revealed the overwhelming difficulties which must cause the doctrinal statements of every school, whether Calvinistic, or Lutheran, or sacramental, to "be thrown into the background, if not abandoned," proceeds to this, the real object of his Essay, which is to deny the existence of all distinctive truth, and to claim for himself and others, as ministers of the Church of England, the liberty to believe and to teach whatever they may please. He introduces this by a discussion of the principle of multitudinism and the question of a national establishment. With these questions, important as they are, we have now nothing to say, except so far as they are attempted to be made the foundation of a theory to which they do not lend the shadow of support. However opposed anyone may be to the principle of multitudinism, or of an Establishment, we feel sure it will not be said they imply the abnegation of all Christian truth, or assert an unrestricted licence of belief; yet this is the point to which this Essay endeavours to lead us. We are told that the Apostolic Churches were multitudinist, and we are therefore asked to believe that there was no form of faith which they were to receive, no "traditions" which they were to hold fast. To this we might simply reply that St. Paul, speaking of "the love of the truth," and "belief of the truth," in contrast with error and believing "a lie," adds,

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold *the traditions* (τὰς παραδόσεις) which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 Thess. ii. 15). To establish the principle of the Essay, it is said, first, that various theological schools admit they cannot claim the highest antiquity for their most important dogmas, and secondly, that in the apostolic age doctrine was considered of very little importance. To both these statements we give a positive denial. Even the Church of Rome does not claim the power of teaching any new doctrine; the office she assumes is that of "defining what has always been the faith of the Catholic Church *." So that when the writer says that the Jesuit Petavius and others admit that the doctrine of the Nicene and Athanasian creeds "is not to be found explicitly in the earliest Fathers, nor even in Scripture, although provable by it," he fails to prove his assertion; for if a doctrine is said to be provable by Scripture, there is claimed for it the highest antiquity. Nor is he more fortunate when he says of justification by faith—

"It never was the doctrine of any considerable portion of the Church till the time of the Reformation. It is not met with in the immediately post-Apostolic writings, nor in the Apostolic writings, except those of St. Paul, not even in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is of the Pauline or Paulo-Johannean School. The faith, at least, of that Epistle, 'the substance of things hoped for,' is a very different faith from the faith of the Epistle to the Romans" (pp. 159, 160).

It seems rather a strange proof that justification by faith is not of the highest antiquity, to say it is not met with "in the Apostolic writings, *except those of St. Paul!*" Seeing that they form by far the largest portion of the Epistles, we should have thought this would be quite sufficient, and even if as is asserted it be not found in the Epistle to the Hebrews, this only proves

* Lectures on the Catholic Church. By the Right Rev. Dr. Wiseman. Lectures III.

that there are more truths than one to be revealed. It would be easy to give a *Catena Patrum* from the Apostolic age down to the Reformation, through Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, St. Ambrose, St. Basil, Theodoret, Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, to prove that justification by faith was ever held and taught by the best and holiest in the Church, but let the truth and accuracy of the writer's statements be tested by the following example. He says the doctrine of justification by faith "is not met with in the immediately post-Apostolic writings." In reply to this we should wish to direct his attention to St. Clement's Epistle to the Corinthians. This Clement is mentioned by St. Paul as his fellow-labourer (Philip. iv. 3), and in an Epistle to the Corinthians, the genuineness of which is universally admitted, he thus writes * :—

"So we also, being called by his good will in Christ Jesus, are justified not by ourselves, nor by our wisdom, understanding, piety, or good works, which in purity of heart we have performed, but through faith, through which the Almighty God has justified us from the beginning, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Whether, then, we are to ascribe the statement that the doctrine of justification is not met with in the immediately post-Apostolic writings, to ignorance or misrepresentation matters little, in either case we see that too much value is not to be attached to the words of the writer. But he now proceeds to endeavour to prove that in the early Church, doctrine was regarded as comparatively of little importance. He says :—

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* Καὶ ἡμεῖς οὖν διὰ θηλήματος αὐτοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ κληθέντος, οὐ δι' ἑαυτῶν δικαιούμεθα, οὐδὲ διὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας σοφίας, ἢ συνέσεως, ἢ εὐσεβείας, ἢ ἔργων ὧν κατειργασάμεθα ἐν ὁσιότητι καρδίας· ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς πίστεως, δι' ἧς πάντας τοῦ ἀπ' αἰῶνος ὁ παντοκράτωρ Θεὸς ἐδικαίωσεν· ᾧ ἔστω ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν.—Clementis Epis. ad Corinth. sec. 32.

" The nearer we come to the original sources of the history, the less definite do we find the statements of doctrines, and even of the facts from which the doctrines were afterwards inferred. And at the very first, with our Lord Himself and His Apostles, as represented to us in the New Testament, morals came before contemplation, ethics before theoretics " (p 160).

Here, again, the boldness and strangeness of the writer's unproved and unfounded assertions amaze us. Our Lord as we before have said, did not fully reveal the whole mystery of the faith; this was the office of the Spirit when He was given to the Church. But when that Spirit guided the Apostles into all truth; with them the very reverse of what is stated is the case, doctrine came first, then Christian duty, theoretics before ethics. The preaching of Peter and Paul in the Acts consisted in proclaiming the doctrine of forgiveness through faith in a crucified and risen Saviour. To the fact of the resurrection they ceased not to give evidence. In the Epistles to the Romans and Ephesians, for example, the broad foundation of Gospel truth is first laid, that on it the edifice of Christian practice may then be raised. Thus Olshausen begins the second part of his Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians with these words*:—

" After the predominantly doctrinal exposition, St. Paul now brings forward the ethical exposition, which, however, is naturally also continually penetrated with and supported by the doctrinal element."

Again, let us take Tertullian's apology, and read that passage in Chapter xxi. beginning, " It is necessary, therefore, to say a few things concerning Christ as God." And we find him declaring his divinity, his sonship, his being of one substance with the Father, his miraculous conception (Hunc ex Deo prolatum didicimus, et prolatione generatum, et idcirco filium Dei, et Deum dictum ex unitate substantiæ). He

* Olshausen, Comment. on Eph. iv.

then declares that by his word he cast out devils, gave sight to the blind, cleansed the lepers, raised the dead, stilled the tempests, walked upon the waves, showing that He was God; that the chief men of the Jews, exasperated at his doctrine, delivered him to Pontius Pilate, and by clamour extorted from him his crucifixion; that being pierced, he himself dismissed his soul with a word, anticipating the office of the executioner; that at the very moment of his death the sun withdrew his light, a fact which they had written in their own annals*; that the Jews surrounded the sepulchre with a strong military guard; that on the third day there was an earthquake, the stone was rolled from the sepulchre, and He arose; that He remained forty days with His disciples teaching them what they should teach; and at length, having commissioned them to preach the Gospel throughout the world, was taken up into heaven. With the epistles, then, of the New Testament before us, and with such a detailed statement of the facts of the Gospel history by an early Christian apologist, what ground, we should like to know, is there for the assertion that the nearer we come to the original sources of the history, the less definite is the statement of doctrines, or even of the facts on which they rest?

But, again, it is said that the comparative unimportance of doctrine may be learned from the fact that both our Lord and St. Paul deal more severely with moral defects than with doctrinal error.

"Our Lord, although he expressly taught a resurrection, and argued with the Sadducees on the subject, never treated them as aliens from Israel, because they did not hold that doctrine: is much more severe on the proud defects and hypocrisies of the Pharisees, than upon the doctrinal defects of the Sadducees" (p. 164).

Again, he says that even in the Christian Church

* Et tamen eum mundi casum relatum in arcanis vestris habetis.—Tertulliani Apologeticus, Cap. xxi.

there were those who denied the resurrection; and though St. Paul ever represents it as the fundamental article of the faith, yet he does not expel such, but reasons with them, while in an extreme case "he sanctioned excommunication for the cause of immorality." The conclusion he comes to from this is that the good liver, who disbelieved the resurrection, is no less of a Christian than the evil liver, who believed it, and that though "we can only say they were both bad Christians," yet both are to be retained within the Church. Now in this there is a certain degree of truth; for though the person who denies the faith cannot be called a Christian at all, we all feel that, in one sense, evil in life is worse than error in doctrine. We feel there is connected with it greater moral depravity, though even this feeling may be carried too far; for if a man will plead as an excuse of error that it is his misfortune, not his fault, we know there are those who do the same for their evil living, and throw the blame upon their nature. Besides, there is a more intimate connection between a man's moral and mental condition than is generally supposed. Christ says, "If any man will do his will (if any man *willeth* to do his will (*ἐὰν τις θέλῃ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ποιεῖν*), he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God" (John vii. 17). There are such things as sins of ignorance: nor can anyone reasonably say that he is not justly chargeable with them, unless, laying aside all prejudice, he has diligently set himself to the inquiry after truth. Again, we admit that the primitive Church did not approach the ideal of perfection, either in doctrine or morals, and that the multitudinist principle implies that there may be contained in the Church "persons of the strangest and most incongruous beliefs, and of the most unequal and inconsistent practice;" yet no one will say that this altogether excludes the exercise of discipline. St. Paul's dealing with the case in the Church at Corinth is a sufficient proof of this.

And this brings us immediately to the point before us. The fact referred to, that the Apostle dealt more severely with moral delinquency than with doctrinal error, is wholly inapplicable to the case, for an important distinction is entirely concealed, which changes the whole question, the distinction between *the members* and *teachers* of a Church. It might well be a question what degree of error in doctrine should exclude from Church *membership*, but it is quite a different question what degree should exclude from Church *teachership*. Every Church rightly concedes a greater freedom and liberty of opinion to its members than to its teachers; yet it will be seen that, because Paul dealt gently with the members of the Church who were led into error, the author of this Essay argues that doctrine is comparatively unimportant, even in those who occupy the position of teachers—an inference perfectly unjustifiable and fallacious; for how does Paul speak of, and deal with error in such? He declares that, though a man were clothed with the purity of an angel, if he teach false doctrine, he is "accursed;" while, speaking with the tenderness of a spiritual father to the Galatian Christians, who were seduced from the simplicity and truth of the faith, he says of those who were their seducers, "I would they were even cut off which trouble you." And "if any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Again, how does Peter speak of false teachers? "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be *false teachers* among you, who privily shall bring in *damnable heresies*, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2 Pet. ii. 1). So also St. John: "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the *doctrine of Christ*, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine,

receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed" (2 Ep. 9, 10). And the story recorded by Irenæus of St. John fleeing from a bath in Ephesus, where he found Cerinthus, proves that, not only by words but by his conduct, he marked his abhorrence of false teachers. We thus see what an evil thing error in doctrine was regarded by the Apostles, and how they would not tolerate it in the teachers of the Church.

We deny, then, that the principle of doctrinal limitation is, as this writer asserts, at variance with the principle of multitudinism. He regrets that while Constantine inaugurated the one he should have introduced the other, and that "the *fluid state*" of Christian opinion in the first century "became gradually hardened, and finally lost for many ages by the sanction given by Constantine to the decisions of Nicæa." The view of the writer as to the degree of fluidity that should be allowed to Christian opinion appears from what he immediately adds:—

> "We cannot now be very good judges whether it would have been possible, together with the establishment of Christianity as the imperial religion, to enforce forbearance between the great antagonisms which were then in dispute, and to have insisted on the maxim that neither had a right *to limit the common Christianity to the exclusion of the other*. At all events a principle at variance with a true multitudinism was then recognised (p. 166).

From this it evidently appears that the writer thinks, if it were possible, Arianism ought to have been recognised as part of "the common Christianity." Failing to connect the fluid state of Christian opinion with the multitudinist principle, he proceeds to speak of the question of a National Church in the hope of finding in it some support for his theory, and certainly some of his ideas on this subject are not a little extraordinary. His views of the world and the heathen nations are precisely those propounded in the first Essay. The heathen religions as well as Christianity

were all engaged in the work of civilization, and influencing the national life.

"But the primitive Christians could scarcely be expected to see that ultimately the Gospel was to have sway in doing more perfectly that which the heathen religions were doing imperfectly" (p. 169).

The Christian in the earliest age naturally regarded the heathen state as belonging "to the kingdom of Satan," and not to that of God. And considering that all its offices were consecrated to heathen divinities, he looked upon it as "a society having its origin from the powers of darkness, not from the Lord of light and life." But this was a mistake. True, this is the view given of the world in the First Epistle of St. John, but not so by St. Paul. "The horizon which St. John's view embraced was much narrower than St. Paul's" (p. 168). St. Paul travelled more, he saw more of men and cities, his experience was larger, and therefore his charity wider. If John's love for the brethren was more intense, Paul's love, which embraced all men, was more catholic. "With John 'the whole world lieth in wickedness,' while St. Paul exhorts 'prayers and supplications to be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority.'" Now it is true that St. Paul does exhort us to make prayers and supplications for all men, nevertheless his description of the world is precisely the same as that of St. John. He speaks of the Gentiles who walk "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Eph. ii. 2; iv. 18).

The heathen religions being thus represented as instituted by God, having to do with the development of national life, and a national church being essential for its full completion, such a Church, we are told,

appeared not only among the Jews but among other nations as civilization advanced.

"It has been usual, but erroneous, to style the Jewish constitution a theocracy in a peculiar and exclusive sense, as if the combination of the religious and civil life had been confined to that people" (p. 169). "The distinction between the Jewish people and the other nations, in respect of this so-called theocracy, is but feebly marked on both sides. For the religious element was much stronger than has been supposed in other nationalities, and the priesthood was by no means supreme in the Hebrew state" (p. 170).

True, the title of "the Lord's people" occurs in the Hebrew Scriptures with appeals to Jehovah as their protector and judge; but "so it is with polytheistic nations; they are the offspring of the gods; the deities are their guides and guardians, the authors of their laws and customs." "It will, of course, be said the entire difference is no more than this—the object of worship in the one case was the true God, in the other cases idols and demons." But we are told every unprejudiced person will know, that while the Hebrews obscured the true conception of God, by ascribing to him passions, the better Pagans did not believe the stories invented about their gods. We should be disposed however to say there was more difference between the cases than the comparative spirituality of the conceptions entertained of the Deity. This great difference is entirely forgotten, or at least set aside, that God called Israel in a special manner to be his people; that he visibly and miraculously interposed to save them, and separate them from the nations; that their laws, and institutions, and worship were all revealed, and appointed by Him, so that Moses could say to them —"Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live; or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great

terrors, according to all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes." (Deut. iv. 33, 34.) Such are the facts that made Israel a theocracy—a theocracy like unto which there was never anything, before or since, in the world. We suspect, however, that the authority of Moses will have but little weight with the author of this Essay. But to proceed: as all nations have, in some form or another, exhibited the development of a public religion,

"A National Church need not, historically speaking, be Christian; nor, if it be Christian, need it be tied down to particular forms which have been prevalent at certain times in Christendom" (p. 173).

In fact, the office of a National Church is simply "to assist the spiritual progress of the nation, and of the individuals of which it is composed in their several states and stages," without expecting that all should be of the same standard; nor should it, by attempting "to define itself otherwise than by its own nationality," "provoke the individualist element into separatism," and this, we are told, it inevitably will do,

"If, while the civil side of the nation is fluid, the ecclesiastical side is fixed; if thought and speech are free among all other classes, and not free among those who hold the office of leaders and teachers of the rest in the highest things" (p. 174).

Such is a general view of the author's idea of a National Church. He returns to it again, and speaks more plainly. It is now sufficient to say, that he regards it simply as a state machinery for the purpose of influencing the national life; that to bring its influence to bear upon as many as possible, it should liberate itself from "traditional symbols" and "doctrinal limitations;" that religious opinion should not be hardened or crystallised, but "fluid;" and that this perfect unrestricted freedom of thought and speech should be enjoyed equally by all—by the teachers of the Church as well as its members.

From the general question of a National Church, the writer passes to the application of his views to the case of the Church of England, and he prepares his way by some preliminary remarks upon the liberty of opinion that Church leaves her members on the great and fundamental subject of inspiration. His own views of inspiration are free enough; he tells us there are some things in the New Testament not only difficult but impossible to reconcile, and reminds us that

"good men may err in facts, be weak in memory, mingle imagination with memory, be feeble in inferences, confound illustration with argument, be varying in judgment and opinions" (p. 179).

The subject of inspiration, however, he does not discuss, and therefore we shall not enter upon it here, but confine ourselves to his remarks upon the view which he thinks the Church of England takes of it. He commences by saying it has been the boast within the Church of England that it is founded upon the "Word of God," but that this is

"a phrase which begs many a question when applied to the canonical books of the Old and New Testament; a phrase which is never applied to them by any of the scriptural authors" (p. 175).

We would just observe upon this in passing, that it would be hard for any of the authors of Scripture to have applied the term the "Word of God" to the canonical books, for the Canon was not complete until their own writings were added, nor were the books collected into one until after their death. But St. Paul does apply that term to what the Church had heard from his lips, "because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth THE WORD OF GOD" (1 Thess. ii. 13). But not only are we told that none of the Scriptural authors apply the phrase, the Word of God, to the canonical books, but

" in that which may be considered the pivot Article of the Church this expression does not occur, but only 'Holy Scripture,' 'Canonical Books,' 'Old and New Testaments.' It contains no declaration of the Bible being throughout supernaturally suggested, nor any intimation as to which portions of it were owing to a special divine illumination, nor the slightest attempt at defining inspiration, whether mediate or immediate, whether through or beside, or overruling the natural faculties of the subject of it, nor the least hint of the relation between the divine and human elements in the composition of the biblical books" (p. 175).

It is true, as is here stated, that the Sixth Article does not give any definition of inspiration, nor does it intimate what portions are inspired and what not, and for this simple reason, that our Reformers held the old notion, that "ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God." Again, we admit, the phrase, the word of God is not applied to the Scriptures in the Article, but it calls them "holy," which plainly implies that they are regarded as God's word; nor is the teaching of the Church of England on this subject merely left to implication, for twice the term, the Word of God, is applied to the Holy Scriptures in the Thirty-sixth Canon, and throughout the Homilies it is the name by which they are invariably called*—"God's word," "God's true word," "God's holy word," "the revelation of the Holy Ghost," "the Scripture of God." Such is the language of the Church whose "silence" is said to be a matter of rejoicing. Again, as to the teaching of the Article; in it "very much is wisely left open;" its declaration is partly negative and partly positive:

"As to its negative part, it declares that nothing—no clause of creed, no decision of council, no tradition or exposition—is required to be believed on peril of salvation, unless it be Scriptural; but it does not lay down that everything which is contained in Scripture must be believed on the same peril. Or it may be expressed thus: —The word of God is contained in Scripture, whence it does not follow that it is co-extensive with it" (p. 176).

* Homily, A Faithful Exhortation to the Reading of Holy Scripture.

We find no difficulty in exposing the fallacies that pervade these Essays; here is a palpable one. It is argued that because the Sixth Article does not declare that everything contained in Scripture must be believed on peril of salvation, therefore it teaches that there are some things in Scripture not the word of God; but this by no means follows, unless it be true that every word of God is essential to salvation—a proposition no one will admit, for God is pleased to reveal many things for our comfort and edification which are not essential for the salvation of our souls. Every word of God may be "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction," though not necessary, for a man to be saved. Once more, in order to clear away the repressive authority of Scripture, we are informed that—

"Many evils have flowed to the people of England, otherwise free enough, from an extreme and too exclusive Scripturalism. . . . . A Protestant tradition seems to have prevailed, unsanctioned by any of our formularies, that the words of Scripture are imbued with a supernatural property, by which their true sense can reveal itself even to those who, by intellectual or educational defect, would naturally be incapable of appreciating it There is no book, indeed, or collection of books, so rich in words which address themselves intelligibly to the unlearned and learned alike. But those who are able to do so ought to lead the less educated to distinguish between the different kinds of words which it contains, between *the dark patches of human passion and error, which form a partial crust upon it*, and the bright centre of spiritual truth within" (p. 177).

With the "Protestant tradition" mentioned we are not acquainted. We know of no tradition that teaches "that the words of Scripture are embued with a supernatural property;" but we believe that those words are peculiarly the instrument by which the Spirit of God works, so that the Word of God is called "the sword of the Spirit." And *this* tradition is sanctioned by the Homily*:—

* Homily, A Faithful Exhortation to the Reading and Knowledge of Holy Scripture. First part.

"The words of Holy Scripture be called the words of *everlasting life*, for they be God's instrument, ordained for the same purpose. They have power to turn through God's promise, and *they be effectual through God's assistance*, and being received in a faithful heart, they have ever an heavenly spirit working in them; they are lively, quick, and mighty in operation, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and enter through, even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, of the joints and the marrow."

Having thus prepared his way, the writer proceeds to that which is in truth the great object of this Essay, to remove every doctrinal restraint, to claim for the ministers of the Church a perfect freedom of religious opinion, to claim for them exemption from all subscription to any creed or article of faith; and then, in case this should be denied, he proceeds ingeniously to point out how, by equivocation and mental reservation, and taking words in a non-natural sense, men can still subscribe, though they do not believe. We can say unaffectedly it is with pain we enter upon this part of the Essay, for we cannot do so without making an exposure of the very worst immorality. It is humiliating, truly humiliating to human nature, to find a gentleman, a clergyman, inventing devices by which the most solemn obligations may be evaded; and openly recommending, in order to share or retain the Church's emoluments, a course of dishonesty which, we venture to affirm, if practised in worldly matters, would subject the offender to legal penalties, or would at least exclude him from the society of honourable men. Painful as this is, we feel it will be productive of good; it will have the effect of destroying the power for evil which this volume might otherwise possess, and of causing it to sink into merited oblivion. We are persuaded the more it is known the more harmless it will prove; that, when it is understood that, as in the case of this

Essay, principles of truth and honour are violated, men will turn with indignation from such a shameful insult offered to their moral sense. And so this unrighteous attempt to destroy the faith of the nation will come to nought.

The writer commences by saying that, if the National Church would be true to the multitudinist principle, the same freedom of opinion which is enjoyed by the English citizen must be conceded to the English Churchman, and that that liberty must be granted equally to ministers as to people;

> "It is a strange ignoring of the constitution of human minds to expect all ministers, however much they may know, to be of one opinion in theoreticals, or the same person to be subject to no variations of opinion at different periods of his life" (p. 180).

To this we would say, such cannot be expected. So long as men's minds are differently constituted some variety of opinion must be allowed, nor can it be supposed that, however matured a man's views may be, some alteration in them may not take place; but this is true of men as members of the state as well as of a Church, and why permit it to be offered as the plea for a principle in the Church which would not be tolerated for one moment in the world? Men have a variety of opinions upon many subjects, politics, government, law, medicine, as well as religion, but would the man be considered sane who would therefore argue there should be no principles of Government, no legal code, no *materia medica*, or make it a ground of complaint that he cannot be a member of the government, and yet openly avow principles subversive of its policy; that he cannot walk the courts of law, or sit on the bench of justice and plead and decide causes, not according to precedent, but according to his fancy, or that he cannot be a Fellow of the College of Physicians, and yet administer deadly poisons. Take, then, the very lowest view of the Church, the view which seems to be taken of it in this Essay, that

it is but a machine or instrument in the hands of the State; grant it to be a society at all, and where is the reason that the members of that society, and especially its ministers, are not to be bound by any code or principles whatever? It will be said, on the question of religion there should be greater liberty than on any other, here freedom of conscience is man's birthright. Granted; and to the private individual there should be, and there is wisely conceded, the greatest liberty compatible with outer membership. He ultimately is, in truth, responsible for his religious opinions only to God, but it is very different with the man who desires to be recognised as a teacher of others, and to be accredited with that responsible office in the Church. To the Republican we would say, hold your principles as strongly as you please, but do not accept office under a monarchy. To him who considered the laws of England unjust and immoral we would say, seek to have them if possible repealed, but till then do not profess your assent or promise faithfully to administer them. So to the man who does not heartily believe the creeds and Articles of the Church of England we would say, you are not compelled to subscribe to them; but do not be guilty of the baseness of giving to them your assent for the purpose of entering her ministry, and then turn round and confess your assent was but feigned, and endeavour to explain away your act of subscription. Or, if having honestly entered that ministry your views have become changed, openly confess it, but at the same time resign your position.

Such a course as this, however, does not appear at all to commend itself to the author of this Essay. His views are more prudential, and he is rather disposed quietly to consider what liberty is conceded, to take as much as is given, and then to devise ingenious plans for setting aside those restraints to which he has submitted himself by his own voluntary

act. He admits that "great openings for freedom" exist, though there are some restraints or appearance of restraints, which require to be removed.

"As far as opinion, *privately entertained*, is concerned, the liberty of the English clergyman appears already to be complete. For no ecclesiastical person can be obliged to answer interrogations as to his opinions, nor be troubled for that which he has not actually expressed" (p. 180).

This is a consolation for the man who is base enough, outwardly, to profess what privately he does not believe. The clergyman of the Church of England is assured that though he does not believe a single article of the creed, he can get into no trouble if he will only keep his mind to himself, for no one has a right to question him as to his opinions; and to satisfy his mind on this point, the judgment of Chief Justice Popham and Coke is referred to as decisive. But our author is not content with this, he must have liberty not only to think what he pleases, but to speak what he thinks.

"Still, though there may be no power of inquisition into the private opinions either of ministers or people in the Church of England, there may be some interference with the expression of them; and a great restraint is *supposed* to be imposed upon the clergy by reason of their subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles" (p. 181).

Thus we are brought to the question of subscription; and here it is that "restraints or appearance of restraints" occur. It certainly is generally "*supposed*" that when a clergyman subscribes the Thirty-nine Articles he believes them, that when he declares they are agreeable to the Word of God he believes the doctrines they embody are true, but this, it would seem, is a mere vulgar prejudice. Subscription to the Articles is not so binding as some simple people think; and even a clergyman who "*privately*" thinks the Articles teach but the antiquated dogmas of a traditional theology, may safely subscribe them. For, in the first place,—

" It is more difficult than might be expected, to define what is the extent of the legal obligation of those who sign them; and in this case the strictly legal obligation is the measure of the moral one. Subscription may be thought even to be inoperative upon the conscience by reason of its vagueness. For the act of subscription is enjoined, but its effect or meaning nowhere plainly laid down; and it does not seem to amount to more than an acceptance of the Articles of the Church as the formal law to which the subscriber is *in some sense* subject" (p. 181).

All that a man need trouble himself about is what the strict letter of law binds him to, for though it is generally supposed that the known intention of the party requiring subscription is morally binding on him who subscribes, in this case we need not consider the moral, but merely attend to the strictly legal obligation; and this, "by reason of its vagueness," may be thought wholly "inoperative" on the conscience.

We will suppose now a young man in one of our universities, intended for the ministry, has strongly imbibed the rationalistic views contained in this volume of Essays. There is a good piece of church preferment in his family, but he has been led "to a distrust of the old arguments for a miraculous revelation," in fact, he does not believe "traditional Christianity," and he has some hesitation upon the question of subscription; his conscience tells him that he ought not by a lie to gain admission into the ministry of a Church whose faith he does not believe, in order that he may eat her bread. He resolves to ask advice of the Vicar of Great Staughton, and seek from him a resolution of his doubts. We will enter with this youth into the vicar's study, and take the liberty of recording the conversation that takes place:—

Youth.—What obligation is imposed on the clergy by subscription to the Thirty nine Articles? Can one who does not believe them conscientiously subscribe?

Vicar of Staughton.—My young friend, you need not let conscience trouble you in the matter. Subscription is so vague that it is "inoperative upon the conscience." All that need be considered

is "the strictly legal obligation" supposed to be imposed by the ecclesiastical and civil laws.

Youth.—But these laws appear to me very binding. The Fifth Canon is entitled "Impugners of the Articles of Religion established in this Church of England Censured." "Whosoever shall hereafter affirm that any of the nine-and-thirty Articles, &c. are in any part superstitious or erroneous, or such as he may not with a good conscience subscribe unto, let him be excommunicated," &c.

Vicar of Staughton.—O, make yourself easy about the excommunication; you may laugh in your sleeve at that, if you keep within the letter. What is to impugn, Sir?—that's the question. "*We need not stay to consider what the effects of excommunication might be,* but rather attend to the definition which the canon itself supplies of 'impugning.' It is stated to be the affirming that any of the Thirty-nine Articles are in any part 'superstitious or erroneous.' Yet an article may be very inexpedient, may be unintelligible, may be controversial, may unnecessarily revive dead controversies—all or any of these without being erroneous; and though not superstitious, some expression may appear so," &c. (p. 182).

Youth.—Well, I can understand how an act might appear to be superstitious, and yet not really be so; but that an "expression" should not be what it appears I am unable to comprehend. However, do you really tell me that I can, as the canon requires, subscribe "with a good conscience" an Article I believe to be inexpedient, unintelligible, mischievous, useless, and apparently superstitious?

Vicar of Staughton.—Of course you can; "the Fifth Canon does not touch the affirming any of these things" (p. 182).

Youth.—But there is another Canon, the thirty-sixth, "which contains two clauses explanatory, to some extent, of the meaning of ministerial subscription,—"That he *alloweth* the Book of Articles," &c. and "that he *acknowledgeth* the same to be agreeable to the Word of God."

Vicar of Staughton—You must not attach too much importance to words. "We 'allow' many things which we do not think wise or practically useful, as the less of two evils, or an evil which cannot be remedied.... Many acquiesce in, submit to, 'allow' a law as it operates upon themselves which they would be horror-struck to have enacted" (pp. 182-183).

Youth.—But then he says "that he *acknowledgeth* the same to be agreeable to the Word of God."

Vicar of Staughton.—Attend to the "distinctions," young man; attend to the "distinctions." "Some distinctions may be founded upon the word 'acknowledge.' He does not maintain, nor regard it as self-evident, nor originate it as his own feeling, spontaneous opinion, or conviction; but when it is suggested to him, put in a

certain shape, &c. he is not prepared to contradict; and he acknowledges—many other better and wiser men than himself have acknowledged the same thing—why should he be obstinate ?" (p. 183).

Youth.—But, after all, it is said that the Articles are "agreeable to the Word of God." And this is a strong statement.

Vicar of Staughton.—Yes; but there is a way of evading even this, for "this cannot mean that the Articles are precisely co-extensive with the Bible, much less of equal authority with it as a whole .... If their terms are Biblical terms, they must be presumed to have the same sense in the Articles which they have in the Scripture; and if they are not all Scriptural ones, they undertake in the first Article, not to contradict the Scripture" (pp. 183. 184). Now, by the principle of IDEOLOGY, a most fruitful principle, Sir, hereafter to be explained, we may make Scripture mean anything; and so as the terms in the Articles are presumed to have the same sense as in the Scriptures, we may make the Articles mean anything. That's clever, is it not?

Youth.—Well, I cannot exactly say; perhaps so. But, Rev. Sir, is there not also "a statute, a law of the land, which forbids, under penalties, the advisedly and directly contradicting any of them by ecclesiastics, and requires subscription with declaration of assent from beneficed persons"?

Vicar of Staughton.—Ah, you are too scrupulous, young man; you will get wiser as you grow older. Who would mind an old statute? "This statute (13 Eliz. c. 12), *three hundred years old*, like many other old enactments, is not found to be very applicable to modern cases; its provisions would *not easily be brought to bear* on questions likely to be raised in our own days. THE MESHES ARE TOO OPEN FOR MODERN REFINEMENT!" (p. 185).

We must here interrupt the conversation. "*The meshes are too open for modern refinement!*" We declare this is the most disgraceful sentence that was ever penned by a clergyman when applied to the possibility of his evading those obligations imposed upon him, both by the civil and ecclesiastical laws, and his own solemn oath; to reason with him upon the dishonesty of his equivocating about the meaning of the words "assent," "allow," "acknowledge" would be useless; to dwell upon it is unnecessary; the moral sense of the Christian public will estimate it as it deserves. But the author has not yet fully developed his system of equivocation and mental reservation. Doubtless he

remembers, though he has not mentioned it, that the thirty-sixth canon, which requires subscription to the statement that the Articles are "agreeable to the Word of God," required him, "for the *avoiding of all ambiguities*, to subscribe in this order and form of words, setting down both his Christian and surname, viz.—"I. N. N. *do willingly* and EX ANIMO, subscribe to," &c. We suppose it is that, remembering this, he still thinks it necessary to add something to show that the meshes are sufficiently wide. For this purpose he makes a threefold division of the Articles, and suggests considerations by which their meaning can be entirely evaded.

"Not to repeat concerning the word 'assent' what has been said concerning 'allow' and 'acknowledge,' let the Articles be taken according to an obvious classification" (p. 185).

The threefold division is :—

I. The first five Articles which speak of "the Divine Personalities."

II. The Articles "concerning the rule of faith and the sufficiency of Scripture," which he terms "the pivot Articles."

III. "The Articles which have a Lutheran and Calvinistic sound."

First, with reference to the first five Articles a mystical kind of language may be employed :—

"Forms of expression, partly derived from modern modes of thought on metaphysical subjects, partly suggested by a better acquaintance than heretofore with the unsettled state of Christian opinion in the immediately post-Apostolic age, may be adopted with respect to the doctrines enunciated in the five first Articles, *without directly contradicting*, impugning, or refusing to assent to them, but *passing by the side of them*—as with respect to the humanifying of the Divine word and to the Divine personalities" (p. 186).

In speaking of these great truths we can use metaphysical, indefinite, unmeaning language, which, without directly contradicting, will pass by them. Thus, instead of saying, in the plain and honest

language of the Second Article, that "the Son, which is the very and Eternal God, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance," we can speak of the "*humanifying of the Divine Word!*"

"Then those which we have called the pivot Articles are happily found to make no effectual provision for an absolute uniformity, when once the freedom of interpretation of Scripture is admitted; they cannot be considered as interpreting their own interpreter" (p. 186).

But here we detect a fallacy; an important distinction is forgotten. The articles *are* to interpret their own interpreter, and that without any "circular proceeding." It is true the Church of England bases her Articles upon the Scriptures, and recognises the right of private or individual judgment, but she proposes her Articles to those who would enter her ministry, as embodying her views of the great fundamental truths of Christianity, and she does this in order to secure uniformity of belief among her authorised ministers. She says, here are the views of divine truth held by that Church whose ministry you would enter; they are professedly based upon the word of God; it is possible they may be false, but true or false they contain the dogmatic teaching of the Church; it is for you to consider whether you agree with them; here exercise your judgment, examine them by Scripture; if you do not think they "are agreeable to the word of God" do not subscribe them, no one asks you. But if you do, you are expected to do so "ex animo," according to their plain literal meaning, and you are not afterwards, by quibbling upon words, to give to the Articles any meaning you please, on the plea that they can only mean what Scripture means, and that you are at liberty to interpret it according to your fancy. *For you*, where the Articles speak they are the Church's interpretation of Scripture.

But lastly we are told that—

" the Articles which have a Lutheran and Calvinistic sound are found to be equally open, because they are, for the most part, founded on the very words of Scripture; and these, while worthy of unfeigned assent, are capable of different interpretations " (p. 186).

One of the words said to be capable of different interpretations is "faith." We would remind the writer that the Eleventh Article refers to the Homilies for a fuller exposition of the Church's teaching, and that the Second Homily treats of the nature of faith, so that if language is at all capable of expressing ideas, no double sense of the term can be admitted.

By means, however, of the alleged ambiguity of words, the writer appears, much to his own satisfaction, to have set himself free, as a clergyman of the Church of England, from all doctrinal restraint. We might be curious to know, why, when occupying such a favourable position, he is not satisfied, and of what he has to complain? This thought has occurred to himself. "If, however, the Articles of Religion and the law of the Church of England be in effect liberal, flexible, or little stringent, is there any necessity for expressing dissatisfaction with them, any sufficient provocation to change?" To this reasonable question we fail to discover any answer, except that "obsolete tests" and "antiquated rules" should be repealed. What he objects to is not only restraint but the appearance of restraint. Let the Articles stand, to be for the clergy what they are for the laity—"articles of peace"—but away with subscription, abolish this "invidious distinction between the clergy and laity." "We must liberate ourselves from the dominion of an unwise and really unchristian principle." Besides, what use is it?

" It is evident that the act of signature to the Thirty-nine Articles contributes nothing to the exclusion from the Church of Romish views " (p. 188).

After "Romish" read, "or Infidel," and the sentence will be equally true. What then? Take

away every bolt and fastener because thieves sometimes break in. Wolves sometimes creep into the fold, therefore remove from it every door and fence. "No act of subscription can supply this defect of stringency in the formulas themselves." "The meshes are too open," some slippery eels are sure to go through, therefore cut away the net entirely and fish with the hoop! Besides—

"No promise can reach fluctuations of opinion and personal conviction" (p. 189).

Certainly; but we have always thought that a promise should reach a man's conscience and affect his conduct; and that if he be admitted to an office on the profession of holding certain opinions, if he has reason to change his opinions he should resign his office. And this we are simple enough to believe every honest man would do, and faithful enough to declare it is what the writers of at least some of these Essays should do, and bold enough to affirm that if the Church of which they are ministers, has not the power to compel them to do it, the sooner she seeks for that power the better for her own honour and safety.

The author intimates pretty plainly, that while he now demands only the abolition of subscription, and is willing to leave the Articles themselves protected against direct contradiction or impugning by the second section of the Statute of Elizabeth, this is but a temporary compromise, and a step towards sweeping away from the Church every remnant of distinctive truth.

"Considering the practical difficulties which would beset any change, any attempt at a relaxation of the clerical test should *prudently* confine itself *in our generation*, to an abolition of the act of subscription" (p. 189).

So that the position which from prudence he is now prepared to occupy is described in the following significant words:—

"They would be willing to be subject to the law forbidding them *to teach* Arianism or Pelagianism, as what *sensible* man in our day would desire to teach them? but they do not like *to say*, or be thought to say that they *assent to a certain number of anti-Arian* and anti-Pelagian propositions" (pp. 189, 190).

The conscience of the man, who from prudential motives is willing to accept this position, must be indeed trained in some new and peculiar school of morals.

While the writer says that even for Congregational Churches "doctrinal limitations" are not essential, his arguments against them are drawn from the position of a National Church. And these arguments are certainly extraordinary. The National Church "is as properly an organ of the national life as a magistracy, or a legislative estate;" and to put any barrier in the way of an entrance upon its functions, "not absolutely required by *public policy*, is to infringe upon the birthright of citizens." Then again, the usufruct of its endowments should "circulate freely among all the families of the nation." And

"it evidently belongs to the popular interest that this circulation should be free from all unnecessary limitations and restraints,—speculative, antiquarian, and the like" (p. 193).

Again, in order to recruit for the national ministry "from the whole of the nation," "no needless intellectual or speculative obstacles should be interposed," while we are reminded of "the points of speculation and of form which separate Dissenters from the Church of England," and are told that

"If this statement concerns Dissent itself on one side, it concerns the Church on the other, or rather those who so limit the terms of its communion as to provoke, and—as human beings are constituted—to necessitate separation from it" (p. 197).

But, we ask the writer, is he so profoundly ignorant of the religious sentiment and feeling, both within and without the National Church, that he ventures upon such an argument as this in favour of the

removal of all doctrinal limitations? Does he really mean to tell us that, if the Articles of the Church of England were swept away, the Nonconformists, who are now separated from her, would flock to her communion? No; differing from her as they do on many points, conscientiously objecting as some do to the very principle of an Establishment, we are sure that a large body of Dissenters feel for her respect and affection, because of the very faith contained in her Articles; and that if that link between them and her were broken, they would then indeed cry, and justly cry, "Down with her, down with her even to the ground." Besides, arguing even upon his own low level, what does he imagine would be the effect within the bosom of the Church of the adoption of his latitudinarian principles? Does he think it would bring peace? We tell him nay, but rather division. We tell him that if ever the sad day for England should come when Infidelity succeeds in destroying in the National Church distinctive Christianity, and if it were felt that the evil were irreparable, the Church of England would be hopelessly torn, for none who were unwilling to sacrifice divine truth to worldly prudence would remain another hour in her communion.

Again, we would ask how far is he prepared to carry his principle? In order to embrace (if it were possible) a whole nation, how wide will he make his terms of communion? or will he have any terms at all? He himself says,—

"It is not to be expected that terms of communion could be made so large as by any possibility to comprehend in the National Church the whole of such a free nation as our own" (p. 196).

We quite agree with him, but why not if the principle he contends for be true, or if there be any sense whatever in his Essay? At all events, how far

will he go, will he put any limit? Is the Atheist to be excluded? is the Deist to be excluded? is the Socinian to be excluded? is the—we will whisper it—is the Rationalist to be excluded, the man who calls the atonement "a commercial transfer," is he to be excluded? Of course not, this would be "to infringe upon the birthright of the citizens!" The fact is, this writer forms altogether a worldly, human view of the nature and office of the Church. With him it is a mere instrument of the State, their offices "nearly coincide." Doctrine does not concern the State, neither should it the Church.

"It cannot concern a state to develop as part of its own organization a machinery or system of relations founded on the possession of speculative truth. Speculative doctrines should be left to philosophical schools. A National Church must be concerned with the ethical development of its members. And the wrong of supposing it to be otherwise is participated by those of the clericality who consider the Church of Christ to be founded as a society on the possession of an abstractedly true and supernaturally communicated speculation concerning God, rather than upon the manifestation of a divine life in man" (p. 195).

Here is the error in all its deformity that pervades this volume of Essays, the attempt to separate religious life from religious belief. It is just the sentiment uttered by Pope:—

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight,
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

If by "the ethical development of its members" be meant their religious and spiritual development, how can it be effected without faith? There can be no "manifestation of a divine life in man" without the revelation of divine truth concerning God. If the Church does not possess abstract truth concerning God, supernaturally communicated, who, we ask, was Christ, or what was the doctrine He revealed? The words betray a deeper scepticism than is avowed. If

the State wishes to ally itself to the Church of Christ it at least does honour to itself; but if that alliance is to destroy the Church's divine commission, and to rob her of the sacred deposit committed to her, better far that she should throw it off, and witness if need be in sackcloth, than, shorn of her strength and dishonoured, to dwell in the palaces of princes. We believe, indeed, that not only a national Church, but every Church, should make the terms of communion as wide as is consistent with truth. In non-essentials let there be differences of opinion, in essentials there must be unity of faith. The legions of Rome, though differing in many particulars, all took and were bound by the one *sacramentum;* though the Church's garment may be of divers colours, the robe of Christ is without seam.

"In vesta varietas sit, scissura non sit."

But the Church is threatened unless she consent to rend her garment, she is warned of the danger of arraying against her in a position of hostility "those who distinguish themselves in science and literature in a scientific and literary age;" she is reminded "that many personal and social bonds have retarded hitherto an issue which, from time to time, has threatened a controversy between our science and theology," and that she will be "most damaged by a scientific criticism of a *supposed Christianity* common to it with other bodies" (p. 198). Our reply to this threat is simply this. The Church has no wish to provoke such a controversy, but should it arise, strong in the belief of the truth of that Christianity which she holds in common with other bodies, she will calmly await its approach, and have no fear for its result. Some of the noblest intellects that, not to say England, but the world has produced, have learned their Christianity from the Bible; and

Locke, and Bacon, and Boyle, and Newton, have, in the spirit of little children, sat at the feet of revelation to be taught. And therefore, without meaning anything disrespectful, we venture to predict that should the "deplorable day" spoken of arrive, compared with these names they who shall be found arrayed against Christianity, will be pigmies indeed. We would remind the writer of the words of the great master of philosophy, "*a little* philosophy maketh men apt to forget God, as attributing too much to second causes; but *depth* of philosophy bringeth a man back to God again."

In bringing his Essay to a close, the author gives the finishing touch to the plan he proposes for evading every doctrinal restraint, and develops the theory of Ideology which places him in a position immeasurably above those who are fettered by the little prejudice of supposing that the words of Scripture have really any meaning.

"The ideal method is applicable in two ways: both to giving account of the origin of parts of Scripture, and also in explanation of Scripture. It is thus either critical or exegetical. . . . And without falling into fanciful exegetics, there are parts of Scripture more usefully interpreted ideologically than in any other manner, as, for instance, the history of the temptation of Jesus by Satan" (pp. 200, 201).

Thus the ideologian may regard everything as a myth; he need not attach any historical reality to Scripture; the temptation of Christ, and the miracles of Christ, have for him just "the same spiritual significance," whether they be fictions or facts. He stands on an eminence from whence he can look down with contempt on the trifles by which others are disturbed, while at the same time he pities them for the difficulties in which they are involved. He may be thought sceptical—"he is sceptical as to the historical value of related facts;" but to him

the historical value is "quite secondary," "and consequently discrepancies in narrative, scientific difficulties, defects in evidence, do not disturb him as they do the literalist." It is admitted that the application of this principle may be pushed too far, and not only that it may be, but that it has been. "Strauss resolves into an ideal the whole of the historical and doctrinal person of Jesus," and "has substituted a mere shadow for the Jesus of the Evangelists" (p. 200). But on what ground can the writer object to Strauss? The German rationalist only carries out consistently the principle he himself admits, and the method he adopts. Strauss makes Jesus but an ideal man—his whole history an idea. But once admit the principle, and who is to say, or who can say, where it is to stop? Does the author gives us any rule to guide us safely in its application? Here it is: "Liberty must be left to all as to the extent in which they apply the principle" (p. 201).

So that every man must determine for himself whether he is to regard Christ as a myth or not. Now, though the writer condemns Strauss for carrying his critical ideology to excess, he is in truth not a whit behind the German in scepticism. With him the question of the descent of mankind from one common parent is one of perfect indifference, and he confesses that whether the birth of the Saviour be ideal or not, does not trouble him. "Some may consider the descent of all mankind from Adam and Eve as an undoubted historical fact; others may rather perceive in that relation a form of narrative, into which in early ages tradition would easily throw itself spontaneously." This tradition would be "the concrete expression of a great moral truth," the brotherhood of nations, and the community of all in suffering frailty "and in moral corruption;" but,

then, "the force, and grandeur, and reality of *these ideas*" are not in the least impaired, "even though mankind should have been placed upon the earth in many pairs at once, or in distinct centres of creation" (p. 201). Of course the writer has a supreme contempt for the doctrine of "original sin," as explained in Article IX. of his Church, to be "the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of *Adam*." The man who can apply ideology to the formularies of the Church as well as to the doctrines of Christianity, will not allow such teaching to be a restraint to his freedom of thought. Again, as to the person and history of Christ he says—

"Let us suppose one to be uncertain whether our Lord were born of the house and lineage of David, or of the tribe of Levi, and even to be driven to conclude that the genealogies of him have little historic value; nevertheless, *in idea*, Jesus is both son of David and son of Aaron. . . . . In like manner *it need not trouble us*, if, in consistency, we should have to suppose both AN IDEAL ORIGIN, AND TO APPLY AN IDEAL MEANING TO THE BIRTH IN THE CITY OF DAVID" (pp. 202, 203).

We leave it to acuter minds than ours to determine how this differs from the infidelity of Strauss. Nor shall we attempt to argue the principle with a man who can take refuge in an idea, and elude your grasp by presenting you with a shadow.

The inevitable consequence of this theory is that Christianity cannot be regarded as a reality, and that even if we have any prospect of the future, it is not distinct—

"But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it."

And this is the conclusion to which the author comes; he declares that "Jesus Christ has not revealed his religion as a theology of the intellect, nor as an historical fact" (p. 204); while he plainly avows that

that for which he looks is the dream of the Deist and the hope of the ungodly—the dream and hope of Universalism! We shall conclude by quoting the last words of his Essay:—

"The Roman Church has imagined a *limbus infantium;* we must rather entertain a hope that there shall be found after the great adjudication receptacles suitable for those who shall be infants, not as to years of terrestrial life, but as to spiritual development—nurseries as it were, and seed grounds where the undeveloped may grow up under new conditions—the stunted may become strong, and the perverted be restored. And when the Christian Church in all its branches shall have fulfilled its sublunary office, and its Founder shall have surrendered His kingdom to the Great Father—*all, both small and great, shall find a refuge in the bosom of the Universal Parent,* to repose or be quickened into higher life in the ages to come, according to His will" (p. 206).

Alas! that a minister of the Gospel of Christ, one who has undertaken to preach that only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," should be found thus trifling with men's souls, and speaking to them false peace. Time, and time only, is the seedtime for Eternity. Above the portals of the tomb there is written:—

Ὁ ἀδικῶν, ἀδικησάτω ἔτι·
καὶ ὁ ῥυπῶν, ῥυπωσάτω ἔτι·
καὶ ὁ δίκαιος, δικαιωθήτω ἔτι·
καὶ ὁ ἅγιος, ἁγιασθήτω ἔτι.—Rev. xxii. 11.

From this idle dream, this baseless vision of universalism, we turn to another prospect sketched not by the spirit of ideology, but by the pen of inspiration. "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they

were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." Revelation lifts for us the veil from off the future, and instead of telling us of the stunted becoming strong, and the perverted being restored, gives us glimpses of the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched, as well as of the white robed multitude standing perfect and without fault before the throne of God; and as we gaze upon these scenes with solemn awe and adoring reverence, there is borne to our ears the echo, from the depths of eternity, of the wail of lost spirits and the hallelujahs of the redeemed. If the Bible is true, there is no heaven, if there be no hell.

ANSWER TO THE FIFTH ESSAY,

MOSAIC COSMOGONY.

"NATURAL PHILOSOPHY, after the Word of God, is the most certain cure of superstition, and the most approved nourishment of faith. Therefore is it deservedly given to religion as a most faithful handmaid, since the one manifests the will, the other the power of God *." Such is the language of him who earned for himself the title of "the Master of Wisdom." It is as true as it is beautiful, and beautiful as it is true. Science is, indeed, the handmaid of religion; robed as a priestess of Nature she stands in the temple of Creation, ministering at the altar of truth, and dedicates all her offerings to God. Nature and revelation are both from Him; and having the same author, their language must be the same. However difficult it may be to harmonize their utterances, even though it should seem impossible to reconcile every apparent difference, we may rest assured that the difficulty is in ourselves, and that as knowledge increases, and science advances, it will be found an easy matter "to

* Philosophia naturalis, post verbum Dei certissima superstitionis medicina est; eademque probatissimum fidei alimentum. Itaque merito religioni donatur tanquam fidissima ancilla: cum altera voluntatem Dei, altera potestatem, manifestet."—*Bacon, Novum Organum*, lib. i. aphor. 89.

conciliate the finger and the tongue of God, his works and his word."

"Christianity has everything to hope, and nothing to fear, from the advancement of philosophy." So said the great and good Chalmers, in the presence of the most learned body in Europe, and no position short of this is worthy of Christianity to take. There was a time when the friends of revelation looked with suspicion on the discoveries of science. They were afraid lest the facts of nature might be found irreconcilable with the statements of Revelation, lest some witness might be summoned from the heavens above, or from the earth beneath, to invalidate the testimony of the Word of God. But such a spirit as this was wholly unworthy of the cause for which it was jealous. It argued but half faith in the truth of revelation and the Divine origin of Christianity. In the aphorism of Lord Bacon, already quoted, that great philosopher notices the prevalence of this spirit in his day *. "Others, finally, appear alarmed lest researches into Nature shall bring to light something that, especially among the unlearned, may subvert or weaken religion"—a fear which, he says, "appears to savour of a wisdom altogether animal:" "as if, in the recesses of their breasts, men mistrusted the certainty of religion, and therefore feared that danger impended from a search after truth in nature." And it must be confessed that this feeling has not yet entirely disappeared. There are some who still regard with apprehension the progress of scientific discovery, but just in proportion as science opens up to us the mysteries of nature, and knowledge unfolds to us the meaning of revelation, those apprehensions

* Alii denique soliciti videntur, ne in naturæ inquisitione aliquid inveniri possit, quod religionem (præsertim apud indoctos) subvertat, aut saltem labefactet, &c.—Novum Organum, lib. i., aphor. 89.

are removed. We now smile at the fears of a former age, and they who follow us will doubtless regard with no less wonder the trifles by which we have been disturbed.

Past experience then should teach us greater faith and deeper wisdom, nor should the story of Galileo be without its moral. When the Copernican system was propounded, the fathers of the Church, more pious than wise, were filled with consternation. They thought that the theory of the earth's motion was opposed to Scripture and subversive of revelation, and in their unenlightened zeal they forced Galileo to retract what they called heresy. But as the aged philosopher went forth from the presence of his inquisitors, having signed his recantation, stamping on the ground he muttered, "it moves for all that!" And so it does, yet we believe that no sensible man now imagines that religion has suffered from the discovery; nor is the Bible felt to be less the inspired word of God because it is written "the world also is established that it cannot be moved."

The question connected with Genesis and geology is now passing through a similar phase. When first geology began to attract the attention of the learned, the sceptic and believer regarded its then very partial disclosures with far different feelings. The infidel rejoiced at discoveries which, as he thought, supplied to him weapons with which successfully to assail the truth of the Mosaic record, and so of revelation altogether. The believer, on the other hand, though feeling that heaven and earth should pass away sooner than the word of God could fail, trembled at the daring impiety that would dig into the bowels of the earth, and seek to decipher the records engraven by the hand of time upon the rocks, in the hope of finding something that would invalidate the record written on the page of inspiration by the finger of God. And he feared lest in the infancy of the science

some apparent discrepancy between the two records might be found. The lines of Cowper show at once the suspicion with which the study was regarded by good men, and the object with which too many engaged in it :—

> " —— Some drill and bore
> The solid earth, and from the strata there
> Extract a register, by which we learn
> That He who made it, and revealed its date
> To Moses, was mistaken in its age."
>
> ——*The Task*, Book iii.

But since that time geology has advanced with rapid strides to the position of a noble science, and in its progress difficulties have been cleared away; not only has every objection been answered, and every fear removed, but here, on the chosen battle-field of infidelity, the noblest triumphs have been won, and truth has gathered some of its mightiest weapons of defence. Thus geology has completely put to silence the scepticism of Hume; it opens to us earth's mighty tomb, and as it guides us amid the ruins of buried worlds points not to one but to several creations, each exhibiting a higher degree of wisdom and power than the preceding, thus furnishing us with that very experience which Hume said* was necessary, but admitted would be sufficient to justify our concluding that the Creator was infinitely perfect. But it does more, " it adds historical fact to philosophical inference;" it does that which no mere abstract reasoning ever could do—it pronounces with the voice of authority that every living organization had a beginning; it conducts us to the cradle of the human race, and says now man was born, and thus it brings " the infinite series" of the infidel to an end. Revelation may now, therefore, regard geology not as a foe to be

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* Hume's Philosophical Essays, Essay XI.

conciliated, but as a faithful witness, whose testimony, the more closely it is examined, is found to be the more decisive on the side of truth. And so we believe, that instead of spending all our time and strength in answering objections, and devising theories for reconciling Genesis and geology, we can now take a step in advance, or rather turn the argument, and appeal to geology as furnishing the most important evidence on the side of revelation.

That this is felt to be the case is evident from the altered tone and language of the objector. It is no longer imagined or hinted that revelation is overthrown by the discoveries of science, but only intimated that our views on some points must be modified. The author of this Essay assumes from the very first that on the subjects of astronomy and geology the language of Scripture is quite at variance with the discoveries of modern science, and we certainly were not prepared for a repetition of the objection by which Galileo was overborne, that

> "The Hebrew records, the basis of religious faith, manifestly countenance the opinion of the earth's immobility, and certain other views of the universe very incompatible with those propounded by Copernicus" (p. 207.)

Nor did we think that "the sacred penman's ignorance of the fact that the earth does move" implied in the text, "The world is established, it cannot be moved," would in our day have even been referred to. It is true it is accompanied by the admission that it is not a very serious objection; still, as he has raised it, we would observe that the difficulty, however slight, is in this case one of man's own making, for really the passage does not refer at all to the question as to whether the earth is at rest or in motion. When the Psalmist says "the world also is established, that it cannot be moved" (Ps. xciii. 1), he speaks of its stability and preservation, not of motion; and the words "cannot be moved" (בַּל־תִּמּוֹט) have the same

force and truth whether, according to the Ptolemaic system, it is the sun, or according to the Copernican system, the world that is in motion. The verb מוֹט (*nutare, vacillare*) signifies to totter, to threaten to fall, to be unsettled, and frequently the very expression is in the Psalms applied to the man who trusts in the Lord; thus—"The King trusteth in the Lord, and, through the mercy of the Most High, he shall not be moved" (בַּל־יִמּוֹט) Ps. xxi. 7. Now it would be just as reasonable to say that this declaration is incompatible with any motion in a man, as that it is so with any motion of the earth.

But here it may be important to make a general remark upon the language of Scripture, in its application to subjects which involve scientific truth. It has been continually said, as it is indeed in this Essay, that it displays an ignorance of the facts of nature, and of the discoveries of modern science, from whence there is drawn the inference that the Scriptures, or at least portions of them, are not inspired. Thus the writer says—

> "Either the definition and idea of divine revelation must have been modified, and the possibility of an admixture of error have been allowed, or such parts of the Hebrew writings as were found repugnant to fact must have been pronounced to form no part of revelation" (p. 209).

In support of this statement that the language of Scripture is manifestly repugnant to the laws of nature and facts of science, the declaration of Joshua that the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day, is often appealed to. Now if the objection has any force it must not be confined to this case, but must be applied equally to many other passages of the Bible. We read of the sun rising and going down, and our Lord himself tells us that our Heavenly Father "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good." But the simple answer to this is, that there is no *real* contradiction between

science and Scripture, no more than between science and our own popular language when we speak of sunrise and sunset. The slightest reflection should convince us that the very nature and object of revelation require that in speaking of natural phenomena it should employ the popular language of mankind, which describes things as they appear to the senses. The object of revelation is not to impart general scientific knowledge; nor does inspiration communicate physical discoveries, but enables the sacred writer faithfully to record an event as it appeared. Had any other language been adopted, revelation would have been unintelligible until the age of advanced scientific knowledge had arrived; and we cannot suppose that strictly scientific language should be employed, unless the Scriptures were meant to be a text book for teaching the physical sciences, which it is hardly reasonable to admit. This explanation appears to be considered by the author of the Essay satisfactory at least with reference to astronomy, but he denies that it holds with regard to geology:—

"It can scarcely be said that this chapter (Genesis i.) is not intended in part to teach and convey at least some physical truth, and taking its words in their plain sense it manifestly gives a view of the universe adverse to that of modern science" (pp. 208, 209).

Now we agree with the writer that the first chapter of Genesis is intended at least in part to convey some physical truth. It not only reveals the great fact of creation, the truth which, after all, is an object of faith, that in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth; but it also gives us a sketch, brief indeed, but still a sketch of those mighty epochs or stages of creation by which God prepared this earth to be a habitation for man. But while we not only admit but affirm this, we believe that, far from "giving a view of the universe manifestly adverse to that of modern science," it gives an account of

creation which has not hitherto been discredited by the discoveries of geology.

The Essay informs us that "the school-books of the present day, while they teach the child that the earth moves, yet assure him that it is a little less than six thousand years old" (p. 210). With the school-books referred to, we are not acquainted. We should like to see the modern school-book that assures the child that the earth is less than six thousand years old; it would indeed be a literary curiosity. At all events, the Scriptures assure us of no such thing, and the student of revelation is as fully convinced as is the student of nature that the age of the world may be counted not by thousands but perhaps myriads of years. Indeed, the author admits, notwithstanding the teaching of the school-books, that "no well-instructed person now doubts the great antiquity of the earth any more than its motion." Accordingly he says that "modern theologians have directed their attention to the possibility of reconciling the Mosaic narrative with those geological facts which are admitted to be beyond dispute." The examination of these plans of reconciliation is the proposed object of the Essay. "We have put pen to paper to analyse some of the popular conciliation theories." He complains that

> "We find them at variance with each other, and mutually destructive. The conciliators are not agreed among themselves, and each holds the views of the other to be untenable and unsafe" (p. 211).

But here, at the very outset, we wish strongly to urge that the Essay raises a false issue altogether—an issue that does not, in the slightest degree, touch the real question; for granting that all that is said of the conciliation theories be true, does it prove that conciliation is impossible? It is one thing to show that the modes of conciliation hitherto proposed are

not perfectly satisfactory; it is quite another thing to prove that Genesis and geology are plainly and positively contradictory, and until this can be done, it were wiser for the objector to hold his peace. To say, that in the effort to bring out to view the harmony between Scripture and science, "the ground is perpetually being shifted, as the advance of geological science may require," is simply to say what may freely be admitted, that our knowledge of the meaning of revelation, and of the discoveries of geology, was not from the first perfect; and if advancing science shows that a theory hitherto considered satisfactory, must be modified or abandoned, are we to be told that this is a conclusive proof that the Bible contains "erroneous views of nature?" Why the very fact that several modes of reconciling the Mosaic narrative with geological facts "have been deemed more or less satisfactory," is a sufficient evidence that there can be no very violent or apparent contradiction between them. Besides, even if it were shown that all difficulties could not be removed, that no perfectly clear theory of conciliation, free from every objection, could be proposed, does it become the modesty of true science, is it agreeable to the spirit of the inductive philosophy, immediately to conclude that the voice of revelation is opposed to the voice of nature, and that the records of Genesis and geology are contradictory? Are we sure that we yet fully understand the teaching of either? Has geology yet unfolded to us all its lessons? Has every chapter of this great volume been studied? Has every page been turned over? Are we certain that its record is perfect? Let us hear the opinion on this subject of a writer to whose views and speculations this volume of Essays attaches considerable weight and importance.

"For my part (says Mr. Darwin), following out Lyell's metaphor, I look at the natural geological

record as a history of the world imperfectly kept, and written in a changing dialect; of this history we possess the last volume alone, relating only to two or three centuries. Of this volume only here and there a chapter has been preserved, and of each page only here and there a few lines. Each word of the slowly changing language in which the history is supposed to be written, being more or less different in the interrupted succession of chapters, may represent the apparently abruptly changed forms of life entombed in our consecutive but widely separated formations*."

Now for ourselves we confess we are not prepared to regard the geological record as so imperfect and fragmentary as it is here described. But if there be any ground at all for speaking of it in such language as this, is it not more reasonable and probable to suppose that as by the light of the torch of science man endeavours to read these fragments of the stony pages of earth's history he should be unable fully to decipher them, or that as he stumbles amid the ruins of buried worlds he should miss his step, than that Scripture should err, which is declared to have been given by inspiration of God?

The object of this Essay is, as it states, to examine the most popular methods of harmonizing the Mosaic account of creation with the facts of geology. The writer confines himself to two of these, and endeavours to prove that neither of them is tenable. But as a preliminary to this he first gives a brief sketch of the facts of astronomy and geology. He then turns to the Mosaic record, and fastens upon some points which he pronounces to be wholly at variance with the former, and on this he founds his refutation of the

* Darwin on the Origin of Species, ch. ix. Imperfection of the Geological Record.

modes of conciliation to which he directs attention. Now we shall analyze closely his examination of the Scripture narrative, and consider the objections raised by him; and we think we shall show that they are unfounded, and on the face of them exhibit manifest proofs of the incapacity of the writer to treat of such a subject.

He commences by saying with reference to the account of Creation in Genesis,

> "It must be observed that in reality two distinct accounts are given us in the book of Genesis, one being comprised in the first chapter and the first three verses of the second, the other commencing at the fourth verse of the second chapter and continuing till the end" (p. 217).

When the writer means by two distinct accounts that "we have here the productions of two different writers," and says, "this is so philologically certain that it were useless to ignore it," however useless it may be we must take leave to deny it. There is not the slightest ground for his statement. There is first given in Genesis a brief account of the general work of creation. This is contained in chap. i.—ii. 3. Then the history of man is taken up by the sacred writer, and fuller details are given of his creation, inasmuch as he appears as the great masterpiece of God's workmanship, with whose wondrous history Revelation and the destinies of earth are henceforth to be connected. But upon the question thus raised by him, the writer does not insist, if it be admitted, as we are ready to do, "that the account beginning at the first verse of the first chapter, and ending at the third verse of the second, is a complete whole in itself" (p. 217), thinking it sufficient for his purpose to inquire "whether this account can be shown to be in accordance with our astronomical and geological knowledge." For this purpose he goes consecutively

through the various parts of the history, as it records the work of each of the six days of creation. He begins by noticing the fact that in the Hebrew there are two different words, both of which are in the English version translated "created." This is a point of considerable importance, though the writer endeavours to set it aside. The words are בָּרָא *(bara)* and עָשָׂה *(hasah)*. Now the very fact that two words are used, and that, sometimes in the very same sentence, in describing the work of creation, is alone a proof that they have different significations, and so their distinctive meanings are preserved in their use throughout the narrative; *bara* being applied to the act of creation, *hasah* to the ordering or appointing or perfecting what had been created. Upon this distinction, as we shall see, some important points turn, and therefore the writer is anxious to make it appear that the two words are used promiscuously.

"It has been matter of discussion amongst theologians, whether the word 'created' (Heb. *bara*), here (Gen. i. 1), means simply shaped or formed, or shaped and formed out of nothing. From the use of the verb *bara* in other passages, it appears that it does not necessarily mean to make out of nothing, but it certainly might impliedly mean this in a case so peculiar as the present" (p. 218).

Now without attempting to decide on this discussion, what we maintain is that throughout this narrative the distinction between the two words is constantly observed; *bara* signifying to create, *hasah* to set or appoint, or order, or form. We have the two words connected and contrasted in one passage, Gen. ii. 3, בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת (*bara Elohim la-hasoth*, "God created and made"); here the distinction is strikingly marked, unless we are prepared to say that they are a mere tautology. The Latin Vulgate renders it, "Quod creavit Deus ut faceret," thus marking the distinction between *bara* and *hasah*, as it does throughout the whole of the first chapter, by the corresponding

words *creavit* and *fecit*. We read in Poole on the passage*:—

"*Creavit ut faceret*, i. e., that he might perfect it, and fit and appoint it for his own peculiar use. . . . . *Creavit* (he created), that is to say, on the first day out of nothing, that *faceret* (he might make), from it the works of the following days."

And in proof of the meaning of the word *hasah*, there is a reference to 2 Sam. xix. 24:—"And Mephibosheth, the son of Saul, came down to meet the king, and *had neither dressed* his feet, *nor trimmed* his beard, &c." In this verse, "neither dressed" "nor trimmed" are the translations of the same words וְלֹא־עָשָׂה (*velo-hasah*), putting it beyond dispute that *hasah* does not signify to create. The verses referred to in a note by the writer of this Essay, in order to prove that the words are used indiscriminately, prove the very opposite, they are verses 26 and 27 of the first chapter. "And God said, let us *make* (hasah) man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion &c.;" so God *created* (bara) man in his own image, in the image of God *created* (bara) he him; male and female *created* (bara) he them." In the 26th verse, we hear God taking counsel not simply to create man, but to set him forth, and appoint him with dominion in the earth; but in the next verse the act of creation is recorded, and three times the word בָּרָא (*bara*) is repeated. This distinction between the words is important, as we shall see hereafter.

"The earliest state of things," as described in the second verse is then noticed.

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* *Creavit ut faceret*, i. e., ut perficeret, et ad certum suum usum aptaret et destinaret. Hoc *facere* significat. *Creaverat ut perficeret*, Belg. ut opus illud ex quo nunc est ordine disponeret; ut aptaret et ornaret. Id. עָשָׂה Sign. 2 Sam. xix. 24. *Creavit* scil. die primo ex nihilo, ut *faceret* ex eo opera sequentium dierum.—Poli Synopsis in Gen. ii. 3.

"According to the received translation, 'The earth was without form, and void.' The prophet Jeremiah uses the same expression to describe the desolation of the earth's surface occasioned by God's wrath, and perhaps the words empty and waste would convey to us at present something more nearly approaching the meaning of *tohu va-bohu*, than those which the translators have used" (pp. 218, 219).

The words "empty and waste" do perhaps give us more nearly the meaning of the original. Some think the Septuagint rendering expresses it more fully—*ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατασκεύαστος* (invisible and unfurnished). This would well agree with the statement, "darkness was upon the face of the deep."

The writer's comment on the last clause of the second verse, "The spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," must be noted.

"The earth itself is supposed to be submerged under the waters of the deep, over which the breath of God—the air or wind—flutters, while all is involved in darkness" (p. 219).

We have here a good specimen of the author's critical exegesis. The spirit of God is explained to be "the breath of God," and this last is "the air or wind." It is true, indeed, that the word רוּחַ (*ruach*) signifies wind, as well as breath, soul, spirit; but we defy a single passage to be produced where the words רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים (*ruach Elohim*) signify anything but the Holy Spirit of God; it is thus understood by the Fathers and the most learned Rabbins. The word "moved," מְרַחֶפֶת (*merachepheth*), has also an important meaning,—it signifies agitation, and incubation, as a bird broods upon its nest. It comes from the verb רָחַף (*rachaph*), which, according to Gesenius, signifies "to be moved with affection; Piel, to brood over young, to cherish young as an eagle* (Deut. xxxii. 11); figuratively of the Divine

* רָחַף *Commotus* est teneri amoris affectu . . . . Pi. *incubuit* pullis, *fovit* pullos (aquila) (Deut. xxxii. 11), translate de *spiritu divino*, qui rudi terræ moli incubabat fovens et vivificans.—*Lexicon.*

Spirit who brooded over the shapeless mass of the earth, cherishing and vivifying." Thus the Spirit of God is represented as exercising his quickening power, impregnating the waters, so to speak, with the first germs of life.

We come now to the first objection which the author brings against the Mosaic history. He says:—

"The first special creative command is that which bids the light appear . . . . thus light and the measurement of time are represented as existing before the *manifestation* of the sun, and this idea, although repugnant to our modern knowledge, has not in former times appeared absurd" (p. 219).

And why should it be absurd, if, as he admits,

"The water which now enwraps a large portion of the face of the globe must for ages have existed only in the shape of steam, floating above and enveloping the planet in one thick curtain of mist" (p. 214).

While the earth was thus enveloped in a cloud of steam, would there not be light everywhere diffused, though the direct rays of the sun would not appear? That there should be light without the manifestation of the sun is too familiar a phenomenon to permit the idea to be regarded as "repugnant to our modern knowledge." But when the writer adds, "that the natural and primary meaning of the verse is that light existed *before* and independently of the sun," he simply assumes that the sun was not created until the fourth day, which, as we shall see, has not any foundation in truth.

Another argument to prove that the Mosaic record is opposed to scientific truth is taken from the work of the second day, the formation of the firmament. The sacred historian is represented as describing the formation of "a solid vault," in which the sun and stars are set, and the writer says that,—

"No *quibbling* about the derivation of the word *rakia*, which is literally something beaten out,, can affect the explicit description of

the Mosaic writer, contained in the words 'the waters that are above the firmament,' or avail to show that he was aware that the sky is but transparent space" (p. 220).

Now, even if the Mosaic writer were not aware of this, suppose it be granted that he thought that the firmament was "a solid vault," this would not affect the question, for it is not necessary that the inspired penmen should understand clearly the meaning of what they write. The question is, does the language of Scripture really describe it to be a solid vault? If this be the case, then we must admit that it is not scientifically correct. That such is the case is not, indeed, asserted by the writer, though implied in a passage evidently borrowed from Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible." We shall give both passages, from the Dictionary and the Essay:—

MR. GOODWIN'S ESSAY.

"The work of the second day of creation is to erect the vault of heaven (Heb. *rakia*; Gr. στερέωμα; Lat. *firmamentum*) which is represented as *supporting an ocean of water* above it. The waters are said to be divided, so that some are below, some above the vault. . . . . It is said to have pillars (Job. xxvi. 2), foundations (2 Sam. xxii. 8), *doors* (Ps. lxxviii. 23), and *windows* (Gen. vii. 2).

DR. SMITH'S DICTIONARY*.

"This term was introduced into our language from the Vulgate, which gives *firmamentum* as the equivalent of the στερέωμα of the LXX. And the *rakia* (רָקִיעַ) of the Hebrew text (Gen. i. 6) . . . . the *rakia* was created to *support the upper reservoir* (Ps. cxlviii. 4); . . . . In keeping with this view, the *rakia* was provided with *windows* (Gen. vii. 2) and *doors* (Ps. lxxviii. 23)."

Now it is quite true that the Hebrew verb רָקַע (*raka*) means to expand by beating; but it does not follow that *rakia*, the firmament, which is derived from it, must therefore mean a solid vault beaten out; on the contrary, "it is generally regarded as expressive of simple expansion." And even if the idea of the

* Dictionary of the Bible. By William Smith, LL.D. Art. "Firmament."

word did embrace material solidity, we must remember that much of the language of Scripture is figurative and poetical. Job says, "Hast thou spread out (*tarekia*) the sky as a molten looking-glass?" (xxxvii. 18). And Ezekiel says, "The likeness of the firmament (*rakia*) was as the colour of the terrible crystal;" "and above the firmament was the likeness of a throne, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man" (i. 22, 26); while Moses says, "They saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet, as it were, a paved work of sapphire stone, and, as it were, the body of heaven in his clearness" (Exod. xxiv. 10). When Ezekiel then speaks of the firmament that was over the heads of the living creatures, upon which the throne rested, and was thus the sapphire pavement under Jehovah's feet, are we to suppose that he spoke of a material floor? As well does Milton, who, after describing the cherubim who wheel the chariot of God, says—

> "Over their heads a crystal firmament,
> Whereon a sapphire thrown, inlaid with pure
> Amber, and colours of the show'ry arch."
>
> ——*Paradise Lost*, vi. 157.

Or Cowper, who thus addresses the stars:—

> —"Tell me ye shining hosts
> That navigate *a sea* that knows no storms,
> Beneath *a vault* unsullied with a cloud."
>
> ——*The Task*, Book v.

Besides, not to speak of figurative or poetic language, if you always carry the full meaning of a word into its derivatives you will often be led into error, and it would be found that, in more cases than in the word firmament, words would not harmonize with scientific truth. This is well pointed out in the very article of Smith's Dictionary, from which our author borrowed his objection about the *rakia*. Speaking of the very objection it says:—

"In truth the same absence of philosophic truth may be traced throughout all the terms applied to this subject, and the objection is levelled rather *against the principles of language* than anything else. Examine the Latin cœlum (κοιλον), the 'hollow place,' or cave scooped out of solid space, or our 'heaven,' *i.e.* what is heaped up; the Greek ουρανος similarly significant of height (Polt. Etym. Forsch. I. 123); or the German 'himmel,' from *heimeln*, to cover—the 'roof' which constitutes the 'heim' or abode of man; in which there is a large amount of philosophical error."

We thus see how absurd it is to say that Scripture really describes the firmament as a solid vault because it speaks of its doors and windows, or because it is derived from a word which signifies to beat out. And that it was not intended to be so described appears from the very objection, for observe the author argues that the words "the waters that are above the firmament" plainly show that the Mosaic writer thought the firmament was a solid vault, and was not aware that it is but transparent space. But if this were so, if he thought it was a solid floor supporting the clouds, how could he represent it also as the receptacle of the sun and stars, for the slightest observation would show that these last are much higher than the clouds? We believe, then, that this objection about the solid vault is perfectly puerile.

The third and last objection raised against the Mosaic record is founded on the alleged creation of the sun on the fourth day, in fact, it is but a repetition of the first objection already noticed with reference to the creation of light.

"On the fourth day, the two great lights, the sun and moon, are *made* (Heb. *hasah*), and *set* in the firmament of heaven to give light to the earth, but more particularly to serve as the means of measuring time, and of marking out years, days, and seasons. This is the most prominent office assigned to them (v. 14—18). The formation of the stars is mentioned in the most cursory manner.

It is not said out of what materials all these bodies were made; and whether the writer regarded them as already existing, and only waiting to have a proper place assigned them, may be open to question" (Pp. 220, 221).

Here the writer speaks as if the sun, moon, and stars were represented as made and set in the firmament on the fourth day; but this is by no means the case. The creation of these heavenly bodies is recorded in the very opening verse of Revelation, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Does he forget that a little before he had stated, "the phrase 'the heaven and the earth' is evidently used to signify the universe of things" (p. 218)? We have already abundantly shown that the Hebrew verb עָשָׂה *(hasah)* does not signify to create, but to make, finish, perfect, constitute, appoint, ordain, prepare. We would give one or two additional examples. "And he took butter and milk and the calf which *he had dressed*" (עָשָׂה) (Gen. xviii. 8); "And Samuel said unto the people, it is the Lord that *advanced* Moses and Aaron" (1 Sam. xii. 6). In the margin, for "advanced" we read *made;* in the Hebrew it is עָשָׂה. Once more, speaking of the house of Jonathan, and of Jeremiah being confined in it, it is said, "for they *had made* (עָשׂוּ) that the prison" (Jer. xxxvii. 15). In these passages we see that the word signifies to prepare, to ordain, or advance, to appoint. On the fourth day, then, God made the glories of the heavens appear, and ordained them in their several courses, to order the seasons, and rule the night and the day,—

> "for yet the sun
> Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
> Sojourned the while."
>
> ——*Paradise Lost*, Book vii. 247.

Hitherto, though the earth enjoyed the influence of the sun, it was so enveloped by a thick curtain of cloud, that the direct rays of the sun did not penetrate

or reach it, but now this curtain is rolled aside, and the heavens, in all their grandeur and magnificence, appear, the bright orb of day shines in unclouded splendour, while the moon and stars sit like a diadem of glory on the brow of night. How truly ridiculous, then, is it to hear the author of this Essay add, after saying it may be a question whether the Mosaic writer regarded the heavenly bodies as already existing, and only waiting for a "proper place" to be assigned them :—

"At any rate, their allotted receptacle, the firmament, was not made until the second day, nor were they set in it until the fourth" (p. 221).

If they already existed when there was no receptacle for them, we should like to know where they were kept till the fourth day. But so completely has the idea taken possession of his mind that the firmament is a solid vault in which the stars were set as nails, that he cannot conceive that from the beginning the stars shone through the depths of space; though not till the second day was there an atmosphere round the globe; and not till the fourth day did the direct rays of light reach the earth through its covering of cloud. In connection with this the author makes a remark by which he evidently intends to suggest an additional difficulty, but which strongly confirms the truth of our views; after saying that the stars were not set in the firmament until the fourth day, he adds :—

"Vegetation, be it observed, having already commenced on the third, and, therefore, independently of the warming influence of the sun" (p. 221).

True, indeed, the characteristic of the third day is its luxuriant vegetation, but this was by no means independent of the warming influence of the sun, for though its rays were veiled, its heat was felt just as now when we have a close atmosphere and clouded sky. Besides at that period the tepid waters on the

surface of the globe must have constantly exhaled heated vapour, and thus the very conditions necessary for the production of the rank luxuriant vegetation of the carboniferous era were present, *heat*, *moisture*, and *shade*.

We have thus examined the only objections that have or can be urged against the Mosaic record, and to what do they amount? Just two fictions; one that the firmament is declared to be a solid vault; the other, that the sun, moon, and stars are said not to have been created till the fourth day; fictions to which the objector's own fancy, and not the Word of God, has given birth. How, baseless, then, is the statement that the Mosaic record contradicts the facts of geology. If it be so, why is it not plainly shown? why are not some other proofs produced than these childish ones that crumble at the touch of the most obvious criticism? Till this be done we will believe that what one who was no sciolist in geology said of it is true:—

* "Rightly understood, I know not a single scientific truth that militates against even the minutest or least prominent of its details."

When, then, every attempt has failed to establish any real contradiction between Genesis and geology, when the objector is unable to point out a positive discrepancy between the facts of science and the records of revelation, we need not be careful though it were shown that every effort hitherto made to trace their perfect harmony has failed, or even that it is not possible to form a theory to which some objection might not be made. It is enough for us to know that there is such a harmony, that the two records cannot be proved to be at variance. It would be unreasonable to suppose that in a revelation so brief as is that of the first chapter of

* Hugh Miller, The Testimony of the Rocks, Lect. IV.

Genesis—not intended to teach physical sciences, though, we believe, intended to make known the sublime mystery of creation—a subject so vast, embracing the origin of all things, the history of ages, the beginning and progress of life upon this planet, could or would be so fully detailed as to leave no point unexplained, no question upon which a difficulty could be raised. It would be absurd to expect that the whole history of the globe as it is written on the rocks, that every truth recorded on those vast and stony pages, should find a place in the brief narrative of Moses. But it is a marvellous proof of the inspiration of that narrative that in it, that history is epitomised and given as it were in miniature; and that as science and scriptural knowledge advance, so that both the facts of geology and the teaching of Genesis are better understood,. the enemies of revelation are now compelled to acknowledge that, to a certain extent, an agreement exists between them. This is confessed by the author of the Essay, though he is careful to remind us that "the agreement is far from exact." We shall therefore proceed to consider his objections to what he terms "conciliation theories," and we shall then endeavour to show that the agreement is more exact than he is willing to allow. He confines himself to the discussion of two of those theories: one, that connected with the name of Chalmers; the other, that which, though not originated, has been recently more fully developed by Hugh Miller.

"Two modes of conciliation have been propounded, which have enjoyed considerable popularity, and to these two we shall confine our attention. The first is that originally brought into vogue by Chalmers, and adopted by the late Dr. Buckland, in his 'Bridgewater Treatise,' and which is probably still received by many as a sufficient solution of all difficulties" (p. 224).

We are aware that some, to whose opinions the greatest weight must be attached, think that the

theory alluded to can still be maintained; suited however as it was, when propounded by the eminent Scotch divine, to the then existing state of geological knowledge, it does not appear to us fully to meet the facts which are now made familiar by the progress of that science. Nor need we be at all concerned at this, as we before observed, for we are not contending for the infallibility of interpreters, but for the truth of the Mosaic narrative. The principle of the theory is briefly this: the first verse of Genesis announces the creation of the universe by God "in the beginning." When that beginning was we are not told; "the writings of Moses do not fix the antiquity of the globe." The second verse describes the state of the earth on the evening of the first day of the six in which God prepared it as a habitation for man; between these two periods ages and ages of undefined duration passed, in which earth must have been inhabited by living creatures, and during which the physical operations which geology reveals were going on; but of these it is said we have no notice in Genesis. The second verse regards the earth in its last great ruin, all life obliterated, and light eclipsed; till at length, in the third verse, God arises to bring life, and beauty, and order, out of this dark and confused chaos, and in six natural days accomplishes his work, and creates the vegetable and animal life that is now upon this planet. Such is the idea of the first theory which, as we have said, when proposed, was sufficient to show that there need be no necessary contradiction between geology and Scripture; but this was by excluding from Genesis all reference to the ages in which the facts of geology were accumulated, and therefore it could never appeal to that science as we do this day to witness to the truth of revelation. But while we do not maintain this theory, we would notice the objection urged against it in this Essay. Referring to the question

he had previously touched upon with reference to the meaning of the word *bara*, the writer says:—

"But the difficulty of giving to it the interpretation contended for by Dr. Buckland, and of uniting with this the assumption of a six days' 'creation,' such as that described in Genesis, at a comparatively recent period, lies in this, that the heaven itself is distinctly said to have been formed by the division of the waters on the second day. Consequently, during the indefinite ages which elapsed from the primal creation of matter until the first Mosaic day of creation; there was no sky, no local habitation for the sun, moon, and stars, even supposing those bodies to have been included in the original material" (p. 226).

We really find it hard to believe that this objection can be seriously urged; it is but the repetition of the objection before made to the Mosaic record itself, on the ground that if the sun had been created in the beginning, or even on the first day, its "allotted receptacle" was not made until the second day, nor was it placed in it till the fourth; so now it is argued that ages could not have elapsed between the primal creation and the six days of the Mosaic history, because the sun would have had no local habitation. But does not the first verse, which describes the primal creation, say that in the beginning God created the heaven? Does the writer really think that the regions of space in which are the sun and stars were framed on the second day out of the waters, or that this is stated to be so? It is the formation of our atmospheric heaven that is described by the division of the waters, and not those distinct regions of space, above which surely no waters of our globe were ever gathered. The alleged objection to Dr. Buckland's view is, then, after all, a truth; for from the beginning the sideral heavens were raised above the earth, even before our atmospheric heavens were formed.

But though this objection to the theory be frivolous, there is, in fact, a serious one, which deserves consideration. The theory supposes that, at the

commencement of the first day of creation, the earth was the tomb of extinct races; that after being for ages the abode of life, the habitation of successive tribes of living creatures, it was reduced to a chaotic state of death and darkness, so that all life perished from off it, thus leaving a mighty chasm between the creations of past ages, and the more recent ones of the human period. But geology seems to have shown that from the first dawn of life upon the planet until man appeared, a chain of life stretches across the gulf of time, broken indeed here and there in its links, but still rendered continuous by new formations.

"It is," says Hugh Miller*, "a great fact, now fully established in the course of geological discovery, that between the plants which, in the present time, cover the earth, and the animals which inhabit it, and the animals and plants of the later extinct creations, there occurred no break or blank, but that, on the contrary, many of the existing organisms were contemporary during the morning of their being, with many of the extinct ones during the evening of theirs. We know further, that not a few of the shells which now live on our coasts, and several of even the wild animals which continue to survive amid our tracts of hill and forest, were in existence many ages ere the human age began. Instead of dating their beginning only a single natural day, or at most two natural days, in advance of man, they must have preceded him by many thousands of years."

It would follow from this, that a theory which represents the present creation as the work of six natural days, and which cuts it off by an unbridged stream of death from the past, does not satisfy the recent demands of science.

We proceed now to the second theory noticed in

* The Testimony of the Rocks, Lecture III., The two Records.

the Essay, which though objected to equally with the former by the writer, in truth not only meets all the requirements of the facts of geology, but shows a perfect harmony existing between them and the Mosaic record. This theory is that which, as we have already said, though not first proposed by Hugh Miller, has been by him fully and beautifully developed. It regards the first chapter of Genesis as a brief account of the work of creation from the beginning down to the time when man appeared upon the earth made in the image of God. According to it we have, in the opening language of Revelation, not only an announcement that in the beginning the universe was created by God, but also the history of our globe traced from its primæval state of chaos downward along the mighty roll of ages, during which the Divine power was in activity, creating and fashioning it as the home of that being who was to be its ruler and head. Now of course, as we already observed, it would be absurd to expect that every discovery of geology should have been revealed in Genesis; that in a few verses of the word of God, the history of indefinite ages should have been recorded as it is on the rocks. We may, therefore, readily admit that creations have taken place, and convulsions happened, and strata been formed, of which no mention is made. But what we maintain is that, amid unnumbered changes, and multiplied formations, and numerous periods, the geologic ages are divided into three grand and distinctly marked epochs of creation, and that to these epochs what may be called the three creation days of Genesis correspond; these three creation days declaring that vegetable and animal life appeared on the earth in the exact order which naturalists have independently arranged. While geology also proves that the works of the other three days connected not with earthly creations, but with changes in the firmamental heavens, were and must have been effected at the very periods assigned in

the Mosaic record. Hugh Miller confines himself to establish the remarkable correspondence existing between the three geological periods, and the three creation days, while his works furnish hints and facts which enable us to trace a beautiful and marvellous agreement between what Genesis tells us with reference to the three other days, and geology proves must have taken place, an agreement if possible more striking, because not at first sight so visibly marked.

We shall first consider the three great geological periods spoken of by Hugh Miller, and in doing so we shall direct attention chiefly to the portions of his work referred to or quoted in the Essay. After remarking "that it has been held by accomplished philologists that the days of the Mosaic creation may be regarded, without doing violence to the genius of the Hebrew language, as successive periods of great extent," he proceeds :—

"Waiving, however, the question as a philological one, and simply holding, with Cuvier, Parkinson, and Silliman, that each of the *six* days of the Mosaic narrative in the first chapter was what is assuredly meant by the *day* referred to in the second—not natural days, but lengthened periods—I find myself called on, as a geologist, to account for but three of the six. Of the period during which light was created —of the period during which a firmament was made to separate the waters from the waters—or of the period during which the two great lights of the earth, with the other heavenly bodies, became visible from the earth's surface, *we need expect to find no record in the rocks.*"

This is true in one sense, for as they were periods distinguished by heavenly phenomena, not earthly creations, earth's strata would have no direct visible records of them; yet, as we shall see, the facts of these phenomena, the formation of light on the first day, of the firmament on the second, and the heavenly

bodies becoming visible on the fourth, are strikingly witnessed to by the vegetable and animal organisms existing in those periods. But Hugh Miller, confining himself to the three great epochs characterized by distinct types of life, proceeds :—

" The geologist, in his attempts to collate the Divine with the geologic record, has, I repeat, only three of the six periods of creation to account for—the period of plants, the period of great sea monsters and creeping things, and the period of cattle and beasts of the earth. He is called on to question his systems and formations regarding the remains of these three great periods, and of these only. And the question once fairly stated, what, I ask, is the reply? All geologists agree in holding that the vast geological scale naturally divides itself into *three* great parts. There are many lesser divisions—divisions into systems, formations, deposits, beds, strata; but the monster divisions, in each of which we find a type of life so unlike that of the others, that even the unpractised eye can detect the difference, are simply three—the PALÆOZOIC, or oldest fossiliferous division ; the SECONDARY, or middle fossiliferous division ; and the TERTIARY, or latest fossiliferous division."

He then describes the prominent and distinguishing features of these divisions. This description is quoted at length in the Essay. We must also give some extracts from it : —

" In the first or Palæozoic division we find corals, crustaceans, molluscs, fishes, and in its later formations a few reptiles. But none of these classes of organisms give its leading character to the Palæozoic ; they do not constitute its prominent feature, or render it more remarkable as a scene of life than any of the divisions which followed. That which chiefly distinguished the Palæozoic from the Secondary and Tertiary periods was ITS GORGEOUS FLORA. It was emphatically the period of plants—of ' herbs yielding seed after their

kind.' In no other age did the world ever witness such a flora; the youth of the earth was peculiarly a green and umbrageous youth—a youth of dusk and tangled forests, of huge pines and stately araucarians, of the reed-like calamite, the tall tree-fern, the sculptured sigillaria, and the hirsute lepidodendron. &c.

"The middle great period of the geologist—that of the Secondary division—possessed, like the earlier one, its herbs and plants, but they were of a greatly less luxuriant and conspicuous character than their predecessors, and no longer formed the prominent trait or feature of the creation to which they belonged. The period had also its corals, its crustaceans, its molluscs, its fishes, and, in some one or two exceptional instances, its dwarf mammals. But the grand existences of the age—the existences in which it excelled every other creation, earlier or later—were its huge creeping things, its enormous monsters of the deep, and, as shown by the impressions of their footprints stamped upon the rocks, its gigantic birds. It was peculiarly the age of egg-bearing animals, winged and wingless. Its wonderful *whales*, not, however, as now, of the mammalian, but of THE REPTILIAN CLASS, ichthyosaurs, plesiosaurs, and cetiosaurs, must have tempested the deep; its creeping lizards and crocodiles, such as the teleosaurus, megalosaurus, and iguanodon —creatures some of which more than rivalled the existing elephant in height, and greatly more than rivalled him in bulk—must have crowded the plains or haunted by myriads the rivers of the period; and we know that the footprints of at least one of its many birds are of fully twice the size of those made by the horse or camel." &c.

"The Tertiary period had also its prominent class of existences. Its flora seems to have been no more conspicuous than that of the present time; its reptiles occupy a very subordinate place; but ITS BEASTS OF

THE FIELD were by far the most wonderfully developed, both in size and numbers, that ever appeared upon earth. Its mammoths and its mastodons, its rhinoceroses and its hippopotami, its enormous dinotherium and colossal megatherium, greatly more than equalled in bulk the hugest mammals of the present time, and vastly exceeded them in number." &c.

Nor is this a mere fanciful description, an arbitrary arrangement for which there is no real foundation. He brings us to the British Museum, whose noble gallery is stored with the exhumed remains of former ages, and as he conducts us through its compartments he points out to us, as he did to the wondering mechanics, the organisms of the three great geological periods. We there have arranged before our eye, as in the annexed diagram (No. I.), the order of creation, and the types of life which in succession were dominant in the earth. First we see the remains of the gigantic flora of the primary period. We proceed to the second division, and there we behold the great sea monsters and creeping things, the lizards and winged dragons that tenanted the land, and sea, and air. We proceed to the third division, and we meet the skeletons of the huge mammals, the beasts of the earth after their kind, while at the head of this division our eye is attracted by the skeleton man entombed in the limestone of Gaudaloupe. And when these have left their impression on our minds, and we turn to the Mosaic record and read of the three great days of creation of things on earth; that on the first God created "herbs and trees yielding seed after their kind;" that on the second He created fowl to fly above the earth, creeping creatures and sea monsters; that on the third He created the beasts of the earth and cattle after their kind; while, last of all, He formed man; we feel it is not without reason that Hugh Miller asks

" whether the Mosaic account of creation could be rendered more essentially true than we actually find it to the history of creation geologically ascertained ?"

Now we may well inquire how does the writer of the Essay attempt to meet these remarkable facts? He is, in truth, compelled to admit them; though, to save appearances, he brings one or two trifling objections, which, being easily removed, leave the demonstration confessedly unassailable. He says :—

" Now these facts do certainly tally to some extent with the Mosaic account, which represents fish and fowl as having been produced from the waters on the fifth day, reptiles and mammals from the earth on the sixth, and man as made last of all. The agreement, however, is far from exact, as, according to geological evidence, reptiles would appear to have existed ages before birds and mammals, whereas here the creation of birds is attributed to the fifth day, that of reptiles to the sixth. There remains, moreover, the insuperable difficulty of the plants and trees being represented as made on the third day, that is, more than an age before fishes and birds, which is clearly not the case " (pp. 239, 240).

Again, further on, he writes :—

" Thus, by dropping the invertebrata, and the early fishes and reptiles of the Palæozoic period, as inconspicuous and of little account, and bringing prominently forward the carboniferous era which succeeded them as the most characteristic feature of the first great division, by classing the great land rēptiles of the secondary period with the moving creatures of the waters (for in the Mosaic account it does not appear that any inhabitants of the land were created on the fifth day), and heeding the fact that terrestrial reptiles seem to have preceded birds in their order of appearance upon earth, the geologic divisions are tolerably well assimilated to the third, fifth, and sixth Mosaic days " (p. 246).

In both these passages the same objection is stated. While in the first passage he mentions another which he calls insuperable, but which in part is false, and in part is answered by himself; he says plants and trees are " represented as made on the third day—that is, more than *an age before fishes and birds*, which is clearly not the case." When a person undertakes to write upon any subject, especially when he brings

objections against the matured views of an author who is a master of his science, he should be cautious in his words. Plants, even those of the third day, were made an age before birds. The first appearance of birds is in the Lias formation, and there only by their footprints. No fossil remains of them are found earlier than the chalk. Again, it is true indeed that fish were made before the third day, and so were plants, but both were comparatively insignificant; hence, as the writer himself observes, "the fishes of the Palæozoic age are dropped as of little account." He should, therefore, have remembered, that Miller speaks not of all vegetable and animal life as it appeared from the hour that the Spirit of God brooded on the waters, but of the prominent creations by which the three periods are distinguished; and accordingly it is true that the age of plants preceded the age of fish. But his chief objection, the one he twice repeats, is that the Mosaic account represents reptiles as having been created on the sixth day, while geological evidence proves that they existed ages before mammals. But he himself saw that this is no objection, he saw the answer to it, and in trying to hide it he makes it known, for he says that the great geologic divisions may be tolerably assimilated to the third, fifth, and sixth Mosaic days. But for this "the *great land reptiles* of the secondary period" must be classed "with the *moving creatures* of the waters" of the fifth day; this is so, but to this he objects, "in the Mosaic account it does not appear that any inhabitants of the land were created on the fifth day" (p. 246). Here is his error and mistake, for the secondary period was distinguished by its threefold reptiles, marine, terrestrial, and winged saurians. Its marine saurians were huge monsters, the Icthyosaurus and Plesiosaurus, amphibious reptiles that swarmed forth from the waters, creeping sometimes on the shores and swampy margins of rivers and lakes, while even the terrestrial reptiles,

the Iguanodon and the Megalosaurus, were adapted to the water as well as land. Accordingly the Mosaic account of the fifth day is, that on it the waters swarmed forth reptiles, that fowl were made to fly through the open heaven, and that God created great sea monsters. The word translated "bring forth abundantly," יִשְׁרְצוּ (*jisheretsu*), signifies to bubble forth; it is applied, Psalm cv. 30, to the bringing forth from the waters frogs upon the land of Egypt; again, the word translated "moving creature," שֶׁרֶץ (*sherets*), signifies "a REPTILE," this is the marginal reading, and is continually rendered creeping thing in our version (Gen. vii. 21, Levit. v. 2, &c.), while, again, the word translated "great whales," תַּנִּינִם (*tanninim*), signifies "sea monsters;" thus, in Isaiah xxvii. 1, it is translated "the dragon," and is said to be in the sea. Such being the meaning of the words, we ask what more accurate description could there be given of the creations of the secondary period than this in the Mosaic record of the work of the fifth day?

But now this whole interpretation of the first chapter of Genesis is assailed on another and more important ground. It evidently assumes that the six days are not literal days of four and twenty hours, but vast geological periods. And arguing from this, the writer thinks he has overthrown the whole system.

"Although there is a superficial resemblance in the Mosaic account to that of the geologists, it is evident that the bare theory that a 'day' means an age, or immense geological period, might be made to yield some rather strange results" (p. 240).

Then, referring to Hugh Miller's statement that philologists hold that the days of the Mosaic creation may be regarded as lengthened periods without doing violence to the Hebrew language, he says, "We do not believe that there is any ground for this doctrine," yet he adds in the very next sentence:—

"The word 'day' is certainly used occasionally in particular phrases, in an indefinite manner, not only in Hebrew, but other languages. As for instance, Gen. xxxix. 2: 'About this time'—Heb., literally, 'About this day'" (p. 240).

We may then confidently affirm that, without doing violence to Scripture, we may understand by a day some period of undefined duration, but which stands connected with particular events. Thus we read of "the day of salvation," of "the day of the Lord;" and in one verse of the Mosaic record it clearly is used in this sense: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were created in *the day* that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens" (ch. ii. 4). Two objections, however, are urged by the author against regarding the six days of creation as lengthened periods of duration. The first is made by Archdeacon Pratt, in his "Science and Scripture not at Variance," from whence it is quoted. It is founded on the fact that the work of creation on six days is made the ground of the institution of the Sabbath day.

"Archdeacon Pratt, treating on the same subject, says (p. 41, note):—'Were there no other ground of objection to this mode of interpretation, I think the wording of the fourth commandment is clearly opposed to it: Ex. xx. 8, Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. (9.) Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work. (10.) But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it, thou shalt not do any work, &c. (11.) For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.'

"Is it not a harsh and forced interpretation to suppose that the six days in v. 9 do not mean the same as the six days in v. 11, but that in this last place they mean six periods? In reading through the eleventh verse, it is extremely difficult to believe that the *seventh* day is a long period, and the *Sabbath* day an ordinary day; that is, that the same word, day, should be used in two such totally different senses in the same short sentence, and without any explanation" (p. 241.)

Now we believe that this, instead of presenting a

real difficulty, affords a strong confirmation of the truth of the very theory objected to. In six days, we are told, the Lord made heaven and earth, and *rested the seventh day*. But did God rest from his work of creation only for four-and-twenty hours? No; this is God's rest: ever since man was created He has ceased from his works. His day of rest, is the world's day of labour—a lengthened period,—and so His days of working were lengthened periods. But during the world's day of labour, God has divided man's short span of life into brief periods of service, and ordained that as He, with whom a thousand years are as a day, worked for six vast periods and rested the seventh, so man should work every six of *the days* of his life, and rest every seventh. And we cannot but note the marked distinction (Exod. xx. 11), where it is said that the Lord rested the *seventh* day, but for man sanctified the *Sabbath* day. And this view of God's working and rest is established by the reasoning in the fourth chapter of Hebrews.

But another objection is brought by the writer of the Essay which it is necessary to consider, because our whole argument rests upon this theory that a "day" means a geological period. After saying that such a theory "might be made to yield some rather strange results," he asks, "what becomes of the evening and morning of which each day is said to have consisted? Was each geologic age divided into two long intervals, one all darkness, the other all light?" This certainly at first sight appears to be a difficulty, but it is only apparent. Two answers may be given to it, by either of which it is entirely removed. One is that suggested by Coleridge and adopted by Hugh Miller, and worked out by him at considerable length. It is drawn from the supposed mode in which the Revelation was given to Moses, viz. by vision. The idea is that the whole of what he describes in the first chapter of Genesis was

made to pass before him in a series of prophetic visions revealing the past; that the six great periods of creation were presented like the magnificent pictures of a diorama; that like a series, so to speak, of dissolving views, these pictures succeeded each other, darkness closing in on one, and then the next brightening up before the Seer's vision, it in turn to have the curtain of night drawn around it, till at length the whole work of God's creation, the mighty events of ages, were revealed to Moses in a vision of six succeeding days of morning and evening. Now we believe that this view of the way in which this Revelation was conveyed is not only possible, but highly probable. We know that God has thus revealed himself to his servants. The Book of Revelation is one series of visual representations—prophetic pictures which passed before the eye of the exile in Patmos. "I looked," "I saw," "He showed me," is the language in which St. John continually intimates the visions that were vouchsafed to him. St. Peter in a vision saw a great sheet let down to earth, in which were all manner of beasts and creeping things and fowls of the air. Daniel by a series of visions learned the history and destiny of nations, visions which Gabriel calls "the vision of the evening and morning." And to bring this still nearer, Moses himself received from God in a vision the pattern of the tabernacle and all its furniture, while at the same time He spake unto him, "See that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount" (Heb. viii. 5). Does it not then seem more than probable that this Revelation concerning the creation was communicated to Moses, not by an insensible though miraculous impression on his mind, but by visible representations and an audible voice, which wrapt him, like Peter, in a trance, that both the eye and ear of the sacred writer were engaged, and that he here records the things he

had seen and heard? We may add that the whole style and form of the narrative seem to justify this view; and were it necessary we could point out several incidental circumstances that may be explained by it. Accordingly it is the view held not only by Hugh Miller, but by Chalmers, Pye Smith, Dr. Kurtz, Professor Hitchcock, and other learned and eminent writers. And be it observed, that it completely disposes of the question, "What becomes of the evening and morning of which each day is said to have consisted?" For then, whether or not Moses was aware—and this is a matter of no consequence—that each of his visions of the evening and the morning corresponded to a lengthened period in the ages of creation, he describes accurately what he had seen.

But now we wish most particularly to declare that the truth of our interpretation of Genesis does not depend upon the truth of this view. Moses may or may not have received this revelation by vision, and yet the theory that a "day" means an age will remain unchanged; for, taking the language of Scripture literally, it is not true that each day is said to have consisted of the evening and the morning. We have the literal rendering of the original given in the margin, "And the evening was, and the morning was." The words in the Hebrew are וַיְהִי־עֶרֶב וַיְהִי־בֹקֶר יוֹם אֶחָד—literally, "And evening was, and morning was, day first." Does this say that the first day was composed of a single evening and morning? By no means; it rather seems to intimate that from the moment when God said, "Let there be light," there was, by the earth's rotation, a succession of day and night throughout the geologic periods.

We have thus fairly stated every objection that has been hitherto brought, and we have, we trust, answered each and all. We feel confident that no unprejudiced person who sets himself thoroughly to

DIAGRAM II.

STRATA.	PLANTS	ANIMALS.	FISH.	GEOLOGIC AGES.	DAYS.	GENESIS.
Recent	....	MAN.....	.....	....	VI	God said, let us make man.
Pleistocene .	... .	Ursus Hyæna—Elk		Age of Mammals		Let the earth bring forth the living creatures, Cattle and Beast.
Pleiocene ...	.....	Mammoth Mastodon Megatherium				
Miocene	.....	Dinotherium				
Eocene	.....	Palæotherium Anoplotherium				
Cretaceous or Chalk	.....	Hylæosaurus Iguanodon	Fish in great numbers Ctenoid Cycloid		V	
Upper Middle..... Lower Oolite	.....	Megalosaurus Pterodactyles....	... .	Winged Creatures		Let the waters bring forth Reptiles, and Flying Creatures, and Sea Monsters.
Upper Middle Lower..... Lias	....	Plesiosaurus Ichthyosaurus	.....	Sea Monsters		
Triassic	.....	Great Reptiles		Age of Reptiles		
Permian				Sun, and Moon, and Stars appear.	IV.	God made two great Lights
Carboniferous.	Sigillaria Lepidodendron Calamites Palm Trees			Sun's rays hidden Gigantic Flora	III	Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb, and fruit trees, after his kind.
Devonian or Old Red Sandstone	Ferns Coniferæ Gymnogens	Reptiles—Lowest Order Air breathing Batrachians	Ganoid	First evidences of general land vegetation Great Convulsions		Let the dry land appear.
Upper Middle Lower Silurian	Algæ	Vertebrata Fishes Invertebrata Radiata Articulata. Mollusca	Placoid	Trilobites with eyes Zoophytes devoid of eyes	II.	God divided the waters that were under the firmament from the waters above Let there be a Firmament.
Cambrian				First appearance of life	I	Let there be Light The Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. Darkness on the face of the deep.
Gneiss				Azoic		
Base of Non-Stratified Rocks						Earth without form and void.

understand the subject, will conclude that Genesis and geology are opposed; but that, on the contrary, it will be acknowledged that a remarkable agreement exists between the records of both. This has been already seen in the three great periods during which plants, reptiles, and animals were created, corresponding to the Third, Fifth, and Sixth of the Mosaic days. To these three, Hugh Miller confined his attention; but he pointed out that the first, second, and fourth days have also their corresponding periods in the geologic ages; and his works, and those of other geologists, supply the materials by which a beautiful and perfect harmony may be established between them. This has been done in an interesting little book, "Sermons in Stones," by D. M'Causland, though the third and fourth days are not correctly distinguished. We will endeavour, as briefly as possible, to give a view of the whole, from the first dawn of life upon our planet until the creation of man. And we shall be enabled to do so the better by means of the annexed diagram (No. II.) It may be considered as a matter of certainty that our globe was once a fluid mass, its lowest rocks being rendered plastic by the action of heat. It is an *oblate spheroid;* the form, it has been proved, a fluid globe in rotation would assume, the centrifugal force making the diameter somewhat greater according to the velocity than the axis of rotation. Such was its condition when, in THE BEGINNING, God created it. By the process of radiation, its outer surface became gradually cooler, and its matter condensed. Thus the shell or crust of the earth was formed which now confines the inner molten mass, and is the base on which the stratified rocks were laid. This inner crust is of no regular formation, but an agglomeration of mineral substances combined in a state of crystallisation. During this process of refrigeration, the gases of the molten mass which, under the action of intense heat,

lose their affinity, became chemically united, and thus, by the combination of oxygen and hydrogen, waters covering the globe were formed. While the ocean being even at its surface at boiling heat, a dense and thick volume of steam surrounded the globe, wrapping it in impenetrable darkness. Such is the testimony of geology and science as to the original state of the earth, and the same is the testimony of Scripture. "*The earth was without form and void* (or empty and waste), AND DARKNESS WAS UPON THE FACE OF THE DEEP."

And here it may be well to observe, that while many if not all of these operations were effected by what are termed natural causes, these secondary causes must be immediately ascribed to the Great First Cause. His creative power was in exercise. "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth." This is the work in which God is described as being engaged, when it is said, "THE SPIRIT OF GOD BROODED UPON THE FACE OF THE WATERS." The Spirit of God impregnated the dark waters with the first germs of life. Accordingly, towards the close of this period, at the top of the Azoic or Cambrian rocks, the first dawn of life upon our planet is perceived in the shape of zoophytes and molluscs of very low organization. Meanwhile the surface of the earth became cooler, and the temperature of the waters lower. The dark curtain of steam that veiled the globe gradually became less dense, till at length the rays of the sun created in the beginning penetrated through, and shed a dim diffused light upon the waters, and which, as the first great period drew to a close, became clearer; so that as the earth revolved upon its axis, there was now a succession of light and darkness. "AND GOD SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHT, AND THERE WAS LIGHT. AND EVENING WAS, AND MORNING WAS,—*DAY FIRST.*"

II.

Now, instead of a globe enveloped in steam, there was a world on which light every morning rose. There were seaweeds and fish in the seas; Trilobites also, with eyes of beautifully-formed lenses, showing that light reached them in the deep, and Placoid fish, clothed in armour of enamelled plates, fitted for tepid seas. As the Silurian ages rolled by, the masses of watery vapour were collected together above, and formed in the upper regions into dense clouds, while a transparent atmosphere encircled the earth; for "GOD SAID, LET THERE BE A FIRMAMENT (margin, expansion) IN THE MIDST OF THE WATERS, AND LET IT DIVIDE THE WATERS FROM THE WATERS,"—*DAY SECOND.*

III.

Then a period was ushered in which all geologists agree was one characterized by great natural convulsions. Hitherto, though rocky islands and bleak and barren mountain-tops may have appeared, yet the waters circled the earth, but now by volcanic agency many of the most important mountain ranges were upheaved, the waters of the great deep were gathered together into their channels, and land clothed with rich vegetation appeared. Here, in the Devonian period, we learn, on the authority of Sir R. Murchison, the first traces of land plants are to be found, scanty indeed at the beginning, but gradually increasing as we ascend upward to the coal formation, till at last, in the Carboniferous era, we are surrounded by its vast and luxuriant flora, its ferns, its mosses, its enormous Lepidodendrons, its gigantic Sigillaria; for God had said, "LET THE WATERS BE GATHERED TOGETHER UNTO ONE PLACE, AND LET THE DRY LAND APPEAR. LET THE EARTH BRING FORTH GRASS, THE HERB YIELDING SEED AFTER HIS KIND, AND THE TREE

YIELDING FRUIT AFTER HIS KIND, WHOSE SEED WAS IN ITSELF UPON THE EARTH,"—*DAY THIRD.*

IV.

And now a period followed, comparatively of short duration, having but few organic remains, but in which geology and science demonstrate an important change must have taken place. It is certain that up to the close of the Carboniferous era the direct rays of the sun had not reached the earth. Various scientific considerations and geological facts tend to this conclusion. The rank and succulent nature of the vegetation of the period shows that the conditions of climate and atmosphere in which it was developed were those of great heat, shade, and moisture. And to secure these conditions the earth must have been encircled by a densely clouded firmament. It is known from tropical plants being uniformly distributed over all latitudes, that throughout the Carboniferous period, at least, a tropical and uniform temperature was spread over the whole earth; there were *no seasons*, no winter, no isothermal lines, the one climate was at the equator and the poles. This was caused by the internal heat predominating over the influence of the sun, and the surface heat of the globe being prevented by the covering of cloud from radiating into space. The still warm seas then sent up streams of hot damp vapour, and thus, during this period, there was that moist, hot, clouded atmosphere by which its rank luxuriant vegetation was produced. Again it will be seen that during the same period no land animals existed, with the exception of some few reptiles of the lowest order, and for this reason that the atmosphere was unsuited to a higher grade of animal life, as it must have been highly charged with Carbonic acid gas. This gas is composed of Carbon, which nourishes vegetable, and Oxygen which nourishes animal life;

by the action of the sunbeams plants have the power of decomposing these elements, retaining the Carbon for the formation and strengthening of their own fibre, while they exhale the Oxygen for the nourishment of animals. This power of decomposition ceases with the withdrawal of the sun's rays, so that the very existence of animal life depends upon the vegetable creation being brought under the influence of the direct light of the sun. The world, then, must now be prepared for the races of animals that were to be created, and there is abundant evidence that during the Permian age it was so; now the atmosphere was suited for air breathing animals; instead of some few semi-ichthyic reptiles, links between the fish and the true reptile, there now appeared the forerunners of the giant race that existed in the succeeding age; while the plants and trees are of a much harder tissue, and exhibit those season rings which are only produced by the action of the sunbeam. In short, everything proves that at this period the direct rays of the sun reached the earth, that the seasons commenced their course, and that the sun now fulfilled its appointed offices for the earth; in a word, that God appointed the two great lights in the firmament to be for SIGNS AND FOR SEASONS, AND FOR DAYS AND YEARS,—*DAY FOURTH*.

V.

Then follow the Trias, Lias, Oolitic, and Cretaceous formations, which have justly been called the age of reptiles, when earth, air, and sea swarmed with life, when the ocean had its monsters, and birds of enormous size traversed the margins of the lakes, and strange winged creatures flew through the air, and huge reptiles crawled forth from the rivers; for God had said, LET THE WATERS SWARM OUT THE REPTILE THAT HATH BREATH OF LIFE, AND FOWL THAT MAY FLY ABOVE THE EARTH; AND GOD CREATED SEA-

MONSTERS, AND EVERY CREATURE THAT CREEPETH, AND EVERY WINGED FOWL,—*DAY FIFTH.*

VI.

As the Cretaceous period advanced the age of reptiles declined, these monsters disappeared, and the last great stage of creation is reached. Animals of a new and higher organization were formed, and at last this age was crowned by the masterpiece of God's workmanship, MAN; for God said, LET THE EARTH BRING FORTH THE LIVING CREATURE, CATTLE AND THE BEAST OF THE EARTH AFTER HIS KIND; AND GOD SAID, LET US MAKE MAN IN OUR IMAGE, AFTER OUR OWN LIKENESS,—*DAY SIXTH.*

Now we would ask any one to cast his eye over this brief sketch, and say, with such remarkable coincidences as we have pointed out, with such a wondrous harmony existing between the two records, have we not reason for regarding geology as a field from whence the noblest proofs of the truth of revelation may be drawn? And may we not hope that, if the time anticipated by Professor Hitchcock has not already come, it at least is drawing nigh, *"when the horizon, where geology and revelation meet, shall be cleared of every cloud, and present only an unbroken and magnificent circle of truth"? If the Mosaic account be not an inspired record, how can the agreement that confessedly exists to a certain extent between it and the facts of geology be accounted for? The writer of the Essay must of course propose something, and he has a ready invention. We may regard it as

"the speculation of some early Copernicus or Newton, who devised a scheme of the earth's formation, as nearly as he might in accordance

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* Hitchcock's Religion of Geology, Lect. ii.

with his own observations of nature, and with such views of things as it was possible for an unassisted thinker in those days to take" (p. 247).

Seeing that in those days the science of geology was wholly unknown, that the strata of earth was unexplored, this Hebrew Newton, in *observing nature*, must have possessed some marvellous instrument that revealed to him the bowels of the earth. We can only say of such a theory,

" Credat Judæus Apella;
Non ego:"

it requires a greater amount of credulity than we possess, to believe it. And when, to the objection to this view, " that the writer asserts so solemnly and unhesitatingly that for which he must have known that he had no authority," it is answered that the spirit of true science has taught us " modesty of assertion," but that " the early speculator was harassed by no such scruples" (p. 252), we are disposed to think that most people will regard this reply as equally devoid of sense and piety.

The comparatively recent origin of man cannot be doubted, though there are some who think that his birth must be dated earlier than the period assigned to it. And the question has been recently opened by the discovery of arrow heads and other flint implements in formerly supposed pre-Adamite formations, as in gravel-pits at Amiens, and other places. Space forbids us entering on this subject at any length. We shall only observe that he would be indeed a rash speculator, and an utter stranger to the true spirit of inductive science, who would venture to found any theory upon such uncertain data. A little reflection would convince us that there may have been in many quarters a great displacement of the more recent strata at the deluge, " when the fountains of the great deep were broken up," and that by

inundations, torrential actions, and in a variety of other ways human remains may have become mingled with those of extinct animals. Thus Hugh Miller remarks:—

"From various causes, the geologic evidence regarding the period of man's first appearance on earth is singularly obscure. That custom of 'burying his dead out of his sight,' which obtained, we know, in the patriarchal times, and was probably in use ever since man came first under the law of death, has had the effect of mingling his remains with those of creatures that were extinct for ages before he began to be. The cavern once a haunt of carnivorous animals, that in the first simple ages of his history had furnished him with a shelter when living, became his burying-place when dead; and thus his bones, and his first rude attempts in pottery and weapon-making, have been found associated with the remains of the cave-hyæna and cave-tiger, with the teeth of the ancient hippopotamus and the tusks of the primeval elephant*."

Bearing upon this subject we may mention, that in the year 1833, Mr. Darwin and Admiral FitzRoy, in a few hours dug out of the surface gravel of a sea-beach at Blanco Bay, on the south-east coast of America, as many fossil bones as enabled Professor Owen to describe eight previously unknown mammals. These fossils were in a gravel beach between high and low water mark. Again, in 1839, Admiral FitzRoy dug from scarcely below the surface of a gravel pit close to Bedford, the tusk of a fossil mammoth six feet long. And Sir Woodbine Parish sent to England a whole skeleton of a gigantic megalonix found in superficial alluvium near Buenos Ayres. Now these and similiar facts are of some importance, for they

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* Testimony of the Rocks. Lect. II.

tend to deprive of weight the supposed evidence for an earlier creation of man than that generally received from his remains being found with the fossils of such animals. They seem to establish one of two things—either that these fossils have been disturbed, and moved out of their original and earlier deposits, or that these animals existed at a more recent period than is generally assigned to them.

With regard to the flint implements we would observe :—

1.—All Geologists are not yet agreed as to whether they are human workmanship or not. It is certainly remarkable that they should be so common, and yet that there is no decisive evidence of human remains having been found with them.

2.—Were their human origin clearly proved, all the circumstances connected with their geological position are not so fully ascertained and so certain as positively to militate with our received chronology.

3.—And this is the most important, even though it could be shown that the time of man's appearing upon earth must be dated somewhat earlier than it is, it would not in the slightest degree destroy the perfect harmony that exists between the two records.

That such a harmony exists has we submit been sufficiently established. At the same time we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not propose this "*conciliation theory*" as infallible, nor upon its truth would we make the truth of Scripture to depend. Let it be borne in mind that should the progress of science hereafter show that this theory must be abandoned, it will prove not that Genesis and Geology are *opposed*, but only that we may not have sufficient knowledge to enable us fully to reconcile them.

We would now conclude by saying a few words upon the wondrous thoughts which geology suggests with reference to the future of the world and of man,

confirming, as they do, the bright and glorious hopes which are given us by revelation. We see that through a lapse of ages God was preparing this earth as a habitation for man, and that life, beginning with the lowest form, gradually advanced onward and upward by successive stages, till at length a Being appeared, the head of God's world, holding a middle place between earth and heaven, having a spirit like the angels and a material body like the animal, but a body which was the great archetype towards which all created life gradually tended. And here, for the last time, we must refer to a passage in the Essay, where the writer, referring to the truth that man was made in the image of God, says :—

> " A phrase which has been explained away to mean merely ' perfect,' ' sinless,' although the Pentateuch abounds in passages showing that the Hebrews contemplated the Divine Being in the visible form of a man " (p. 221).

Now we have no wish so to spiritualize or explain away the meaning of the words. We believe they refer not merely to man's soul, but also to his body, inasmuch as God in human form was afterwards and for ever to be revealed. Professor Owen, in his treatise on " The Archetype and Homologies of the Vertebrate Skeleton," shows that, through the various stages of animal life, fish, reptiles, birds, and animals, there has been a gradual approach towards the human organisation, that, as he expresses it, " Nature has advanced with slow and stately steps, guided by the archetypal light, amidst the wreck of worlds, from the first embodiment of the vertebrate idea, under its old ichthyic vestment, until it became arranged in the glorious garb of the human form." And what is the conclusion which this true philosopher comes to from this ? Not that man is but a frog or an ape in its highest state of development, but that the human form was, before man existed, the

grand archetypal idea in the Divine mind. And, taking this in connexion with the statement that man was made in the image of God, and with the truth that God was manifest in the flesh, we believe we have in it nature's witness to the Christian's hope—that, robed in the nature of man, Deity shall be revealed as creation's head; "that on the rainbow-encircled apex of the pyramid of created being the Son of God and the Son of Man shall sit enthroned for ever in one adorable person;" that this world shall undergo another change, and be purified by fire; and that man, in a higher state of being, redeemed and glorified, shall stand on "a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

ANSWER TO THE SIXTH ESSAY, "TENDENCIES OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN ENGLAND, 1688–1750."

Some men have the art of multiplying words without meaning, of writing at considerable length without conveying many ideas, or leaving on the mind any distinct impression as to what is intended. They can bring you through a long labyrinth of references, and introduce you to a great variety of authors, but in the end you find yourself as wise as when you first committed yourself to their guidance; after reading and re-reading their lengthy effusions, you rub your eyes and ask—What is it all about? This happy art seems to be possessed in the highest degree by the author of the Essay of which we are now to speak. Whether it arises from the nature of the subject he has chosen, or from his peculiar mental constitution, or from both, we are compelled to say that a more confused composition we have never read, presenting a striking contrast to the simple and elegant writing by which the volume is certainly for the most part distinguished. Without order, without point, without beauty, you might read this Essay over and over, and in the end fail to discover what it really is intended to prove, or deny, or teach. Yet here and there

the author's mind and object appear, and in the very last passage of the Essay we find, perhaps, a clue to all that goes before. It is as follows:—

"Such appears to be the past history of the Theory of Belief in the Church of England. Whoever would take the religious literature of the present day as a whole, and endeavour to make out clearly on what basis Revelation is supposed by it to rest—whether on Authority, or on Inward Light, on Reason, on self-evidencing Scripture, or on the combination of the four, or some of them, and in what proportions—would probably find that he had undertaken a perplexing but not altogether profitless inquiry" (p. 329).

The object of the Essay, then, appears to be to give a sketch of the history of religious thought in England, and with this view to show that the basis of faith is uncertain, and that any one would be involved in perplexity who would attempt to determine the grounds of religious belief. Accordingly, throughout it "the Evidential School," as it is called, is depreciated, and the Deists of the eighteenth century are favourably contrasted, both intellectually and morally, with the eminent men who in that day were raised up by God to roll back the tide of infidelity that threatened to deluge the nation, and sweep away every ancient landmark of the faith. The writer commences by saying that this state of religious opinion in the present day is to be ascribed to the influence of three agencies:—1. Toleration; 2. The Evangelical Movement; 3. Rationalism. It is to this last that attention is particularly directed. And here it is necessary to observe that throughout the Essay a different meaning is given to the term Rationalism from that which is now generally attached to it. Instead of applying it to unbelief and scepticism, it is used to designate the exercise of reason on subjects of religion.

"This term (*Rationalism*) is used in this country with so much laxity that it is impossible to define the sense in which it is

generally intended. It is often taken to mean a system opposed to revealed religion, and imported into this country from Germany at the beginning of the present century. A person, however, who surveys the course of English theology during the eighteenth century will have no difficulty in recognising that throughout all discussions, underneath all controversies, and *common to all parties*, lies the assumption of the supremacy of reason in matters of religion" (p. 257).

The orthodox as well as the Deistical writers of the eighteenth century are thus classed indiscriminately as Rationalists, all equally asserting the supremacy of reason in matters of religion. The Churchman, Deist, and Socinian "alike consented to test their belief by the rational evidence for it." And if they did so they were right; if this be Rationalism it can no longer be regarded as Antichristian. But the truth of the case is not stated. The Rationalism of the Christian is very different from that of the Deist. Christian writers, indeed, maintain the *supremacy* of reason in its proper and legitimate sphere, but Deists assert the *sufficiency* of reason to the exclusion of revelation. Christians bring reason to the examination of the external evidences of the faith, and acknowledge that nothing is to be believed that is *contrary* to reason; Deists do more, they say nothing is to be believed that is *above* reason. This is the all-important difference that seems to have been forgotten when the writer calls both the advocates and opponents of revelation Rationalists, and places them on the same footing. Natural religion, we are told, was the common ground on which they met when nothing unreasonable was allowed; it then became a mere question of believing much or little, and "the line between those who believed much and those who believed little cannot be sharply drawn." Thus he says Toland was a Socinian, not a Deist, for he believed in "rational Christianity," and Leland is accused of falsely charging him with insincerity in his profession.

Leland, however, does not charge him with insincerity in his religious belief, for that, indeed, was a *minimum*, but with unfairness and disingenuity in his assault on the New Testament, quoting what he knew were spurious and forgeries in order to disparage the Gospels. Toland, it is true, called himself a Christian, but he retained of Christianity nothing but the name. In his *Pantheisticon* he plainly maintained the Pantheistic philosophy that makes nature God. In a work entitled *Amyntor* he endeavoured to overthrow the authority of the Gospels; while in his *Christianity not Mysterious*, he laboured to eliminate everything of that character from Christian doctrine, asserting that in the Gospel there is not anything to be received which is, not to say contrary to reason but above it. He admits, says the writer, "all those parts of the New Testament revelation which are, or seem to him, comprehensible by reason." Yet this is the man in whose favour the testimony of an acquaintance is produced, to the effect not only that he was "a man of no common ability," and "a well disposed person," but that his design was "to withdraw men from speculative theology to the practice of its precepts" (p. 258).

Such is a specimen of the object of the Essay, and of the spirit of the writer throughout. He puts himself forward as the undisguised apologist for the Deists, while he condemns, in no measured terms, "the evidential school," "the Rationalizing method," by which he understands the examination of the positive and external evidences of Christianity. The Rationalistic period he defines by certain limits, beginning with the Revolution of 1688, and terminating about 1830; Locke's *Reasonableness of Christianity* and the *Tracts for the Times* thus marking the commencement and close of a period to which, he says, the appellation *Seculum Rationalisticum* is peculiarly applicable. During this period he com-

plains that the Rationalizing method possessed itself absolutely of the whole field of theology, that the whole of its religious literature was devoted "to prove the truth of Christianity," that "dogmatic theology had ceased to exist," that but a few obscure writers applied religious truth to practical purposes, while everyone threw whatever he had to say into the form of argument against a supposed objector. But this is far from the truth. How can he say that dogmatic and practical theology had no existence in an age in which lived Flavel, Tillotson, Stillingfleet, Howe, Matthew Henry, Burnet, Dr. S. Clarke, Whitfield, the two Wesleys, Romaine, John Newton, Robert Hall, Thomas Scott, Adam Clarke, and others that might be named? Can he say with truth of such that "the mind never advanced as far as the stage of belief, for it was unceasingly engaged in reasoning up to it," or that its "credibility" was the only quality of Scripture on which they dwelt? Doubtless he had some of them in view when, to justify his unfounded statement, and to sneer at the atonement, he says that the Evangelical school "was obliged to succumb at last" to the dominant Rationalism.

"It too drew out its rational scheme of Christianity, in which the Atonement was made the central point of a system, and the death of Christ was accounted for as necessary to satisfy the Divine justice" (p. 260).

That doctrine, we would venture to remind him, was made the central point of a system seventeen hundred years before by the Apostle Paul. That the discussion of the evidences of Christianity had a large share in the theological writings of the eighteenth century, we not only admit but thankfully acknowledge; for was there not a cause? Were Collins, and Woolston, and Tindal, and Toland, Chubb, and Morgan, and Hume, and Lord Bolingbroke, merely "supposed objectors?" And to what under God can we ascribe the fact that their infidel opinions

died out, and never since have taken root, but to this that a Chandler, and a Sherlock, a Butler, a Paley, a Lardner, and a host of able champions were raised up, who proved the unreasonableness of infidelity, and showed it required the highest degree of an irrational scepticism to reject the evidences of Christianity.

The Rationalist age is divided by the writer into two periods—the theology of each having, as he says, its own peculiar character. The division is marked by the middle of the eighteenth century, the first period extending from 1688 to 1750; the second, which he terms "the Georgian period," from 1750 to 1830. While "both periods were engaged upon the proof of Christianity," the product of the former is regarded by him as infinitely superior to the latter, inasmuch as the one was occupied with the internal, the other with the external evidences. Were it of any importance, it might be questioned how far this distinction could be carried. We know that some of the most elaborate and learned works on the external evidences belong to the first half of the eighteenth century. Thus Bishop Chandler's *Defence of Christianity from the Prophecies of the Old Testament*, in answer to Collins, was published in 1725. So again in the same period, the prophecies of Scripture and the miracles of our Lord were fully and ably vindicated by Dr. Samuel Chandler, Dr. Sherlock, Bishop of London; Dr. Smalbrook, Bishop of St. David's; and numerous others; indeed the writer of this Essay says, that one book by Collins received no less than thirty-five answers. It is not the case, then, that the

> "Old Bailey theology, in which, to use Johnson's illustration, the Apostles were being tried once a week for the capital crime of forgery!" (p. 260),

was confined to the latter half of the century. But

what we wish to observe upon is the writer's marked horror of what he terms the "evidential school." He evidently has no great liking for the study even of the internal evidences; it has no claim to be "religious instruction at all," and in the preceding period it "had eliminated the religious experience," still it "raises some momentous problems;" but

> "A mind which occupies itself with the 'external evidences,' knows nothing of the spiritual intuition, of which it renounces at once the difficulties and the consolations" (p. 261).

But against such a statement as this we entirely protest. Here we have precisely the same views as were put forward in the Third Essay, on "The Study of the Evidences of Christianity," in which an attempt is made to get rid of the external evidences, and for this purpose to get rid of "the idea of *a positive external Divine revelation.*" But by this idea we will hold, and therefore for its external evidence we will contend. If Christianity be, as we believe, an external revelation from God, if this revelation be founded upon external facts; when Deists and Rationalists deny this revelation, is it not absurd to ask us to submit the question to *their* "*spiritual intuition*"? If the children of an absent parent received from him a letter, the authenticity of which some men questioned, they would say there are three ways by which we know it to be his. Here, first, are his handwriting, signature, and seal. Again, the subjects of the letter are those about which none but our father could write; and in addition to all, we have a natural intuition which you cannot comprehend, but which we, his children, understand. Now, what would they think were it seriously proposed to them to tear the signature and seal from off the letter, and rest its authentication in the sight of the world solely upon this inward, undefined, and incomprehensible feeling; might they not naturally suppose that there was an intention to

deprive them of the letter altogether? Well, then, we have a very shrewd suspicion that they who ask us to give up the external evidences of Christianity do so with a somewhat similar purpose. But we never will consent to do this. This would be to give up revelation altogether, for without the external the internal evidence would be useless. Indeed, the writer admits that they are supplemental.

"This school, which treated the exterior evidence, was the natural sequel and supplement of that which had preceded it, which dealt with the intrinsic credibility of the Christian revelation. This historical succession of the Schools is the logical order of the argument. For when we have first shown that the facts of Christianity are not incredible, the whole burden of proof is shifted to the evidence that the facts did really occur" (p. 261).

Just so; and this is precisely what, among other things, the writers proved, whose works he so labours to depreciate. It appears, he thinks, that in the last half of the century they were uncalled for; "the attacks through the press were nearly at an end; the Deists had ceased to be." And yet "the clergy continued to manufacture evidence." And why not, if to complete the logical argument it was necessary to show not only that the doctrines were reasonable, but that the facts were real? Besides, though the Deists had passed away, their works remained. And when Christianity had been assailed, it was needful to show how wide and sure were the foundations on which it is raised.

But it is quite clear that it is not against the alleged unseasonableness of the evidence that the writer really objects, but to the examination of the external evidences at all. In fact, he excludes from the domain of theology both the internal and external proof of Christianity. "Neither the external nor the internal evidences are properly theology at all." This is indeed true when theology is taken in its highest sense; but they form an essential part of theological

study. The writer gives a curious definition of the meaning of the word :—

"Theology is—1st, and primarily, the contemplative, *speculative habit*, by means of which the mind places itself already in another world than this; a habit begun here, to be raised to perfect vision hereafter. 2ndly, and in an inferior degree, *it is ethical* and regulative of our conduct as men, in those relations which are temporal and transitory. Argumentative proof that *such knowledge* is possible can never be substituted for the knowledge without detriment to the mental habit" (p. 264).

Observe, theology is, first, a speculative *habit!* Secondly, *it is ethical;* but this second part of the definition is not correlative with the first—this is to describe its effect, not to define what it is—and then this ethical habit is spoken of as *knowledge!* Surely nothing but the greatest confusion of ideas could lead to such a contempt of syntax. There is, however, truth in what is meant. To substitute the proof of Christianity for Christianity itself would be indeed a very fatal error, detrimental not to a man's "mental habit," but to his religion. But we may study the evidences without doing this. We may examine the title deeds of our inheritance without mistaking them for the inheritance itself. We admit that this is not the highest study in the school of Christ; when a man is convinced of the truth of Christianity he needs no longer for himself to be proving it; then it becomes at once his duty and his privilege to enjoy its truths, to feel its power, and to practise its precepts. But to the exhibition of its proofs he is sometimes drawn by necessity. When infidelity assails the foundations reason must arise for their defence. And we submit that this is the true province of reason; it is not to evolve truth, not to appropriate truth, but to judge of it. Christianity is a system of divine truth founded upon facts; whenever, therefore, its truth is questioned it is the office of reason to show that there is nothing incredible in the Christian

religion, and that the facts on which it is founded did really occur; when this is done the logical argument is complete. And yet this writer declares that when thus engaged with the external and internal evidences, in the one case reason is seen "in its dullest and least spiritual form," and in the other, prescribes to itself "an impossibility." He therefore entirely rejects "the evidential school" and "the trial of the witnesses;" he says "that either religious faith has no existence, or that it must be to be reached by some other road," and that—

"The career of the evidential school has enriched the history of doctrine with a complete refutation of that method as an instrument of theological investigation" (p. 297).

Accordingly he declares that "the principal writers in the Deistical controversy, either side of it, have expiated the attention they once engrossed by as universal an oblivion." This is indeed true of the writers on the Deistical side, but we venture to affirm that long as English literature lasts, Butler and Paley will hold their place in English theology. These writers in the twofold department of evidence have respectively supplied his portion of the great argument. Butler, by his analogical reasoning, proved there is nothing incredible in Christianity; Paley, by his historical demonstration, established the reality of its history; and these combined should command, by the fulness of their proof, the assent of every reasonable mind to the truth of revelation. But the writer especially objects to Paley's demonstration. While uniting with Coleridge in expressing his admiration "for the head and heart" of Paley, as well as for the beauty of his writings, he represents his subject as "factitious," his argument as "unreal."

"Paley had unfortunately dedicated his powers to a factitious thesis; his demonstration, however perfect, is in unreal matter. The case, as the apologists of that day stated it, is wholly con-

ventional. The breadth of their assumptions is out of all proportion to the narrow dimensions of the point they succeed in proving" (p. 262).

This is indeed a sweeping method of getting rid of the external evidences; it would be difficult to calculate the proportion between the breadth of its assumptions and the dimensions of the point proved, for that point is *zero*. It assumes everything and proves nothing; so much so, that we really are not sure whether we understand the writer's meaning. He admits that Paley's demonstration is perfect, but says it is "in unreal matter," and that his case "is wholly conventional." Why there never was such a matter-of-fact writer as was Paley. In his works you find not assumptions but proofs. What is his case? It is a demonstration of the historical reality of Christianity. His work on the Evidences is divided into three parts:—In the first, he treats of the direct historical evidence of Christianity; in the second, of the auxiliary evidences; while in the third, he considers some popular objections. In proof of the general truth of the gospel history, he appeals to the testimony of profane writers, Tacitus, Suetonius, the younger Pliny, and others, and he then establishes the authenticity of the historical Scriptures, tracing them downward to the apostolic age. Now we would ask the writer of this Essay what he means by calling this a demonstration "in unreal matter," or in what inquiry would he engage us? His reply to this latter question is in "the investigation of the *Origines* of Christianity," by which he means "a critical inquiry into the origin and composition of the canonical writings," of which he says we have but one trace in Marsh's Lectures, and he declares that this investigation is excluded from the English Church,

"not from a conviction of its barrenness, but from a fear that it might prove too fertile in results" (p. 262).

How uncandid! The very reverse is the case. So far as such investigation is abandoned, it is just because it has proved utterly vain and fruitless. However interesting it may be as a subject of biblical criticism, it has nothing to say either to theology or religion; for instance, no matter what theory may be adopted as to the origin and connection of the synoptic gospels, grant that they are authentic, and the truth of revelation necessarily follows.

And this leads us to the answer of what we suppose to be the meaning of the statement that Paley's demonstration is in unreal matter. We conclude the writer intends by it to say that, even granting all he says is true, this would not be an evidence that Christianity is from God. And here we join issue with him. We maintain, even though we claimed for the Gospels no more authority than that which belongs to authentic history, that if they truly record the history of Jesus Christ; if He said and did the things that are written; if He worked the works of love and mercy and power related; if, after having been dead and buried, He rose from the grave, and ascended into heaven,—then He has given to us the fullest proof we could have or desire, that He came forth from God, and that the religion He taught is divine.

Butler not only considers the particular and positive evidence for Christianity, but by analogical reasoning proves its credibility. He shows that the particular things principally objected to in it—such as the appointment of a Mediator, and the doctrine of vicarious suffering,—are analogous to what is experienced in God's providential government, and that therefore "the objections which are alleged against the former are no other than what may be alleged with like justness against the latter*." Now

* Butler's Analogy: Introduction.

it is to this argument from analogy that Butler confines the exercise of reason with regard to the doctrines of revealed religion. Upon this point the writer of the Essay entirely misrepresents not only him, but the whole question as it stood between the orthodox and Deistical writers. After quoting, among others, Bishop Gibson, "It is universally acknowledged that revelation itself is to stand or fall by the test of reason;" Prideaux, "Let what is written in all the books of the New Testament be tried by that which is the touchstone of all religions, I mean that religion of nature and reason which God has written in the hearts of every one of us from the first Creation;" Butler, "If in revelation there be found any passages the seeming meaning of which is contrary to natural religion, we may most certainly conclude such seeming meaning not to be the real one;" and lastly, Locke's well-known words, "Reason is natural revelation. . . . revelation is natural reason enlarged by a new set of discoveries communicated by God immediately; which reason vouches the truth of, by the testimony and proofs it gives that they come from God; so that he that takes away reason to make way for revelation, puts out the light of both;"—the author says:—

"According to this assumption, a man's religious belief is a result which issues at the end of an intellectual process. In arranging the steps of this process, they conceived natural religion to form the first stage of the journey. That stage theologians of all shades and parties travelled in company. It was only when they had reached the end of it that the Deists and the Christian apologists parted. The former found that the light of reason, which had guided them so far, indicated no road beyond. The Christian writers declared that the same natural powers enabled them to recognise the truth of revealed religion. The sufficiency of natural religion thus became the turning-point of the dispute" (pp. 269, 270).

No such thing, but the *reality of revealed* religion. Independently of revelation the Christians found that

the light of reason could not guide them on the road a step beyond the Deists. But they held that it was the province of reason to judge of the evidence of a positive external revelation, and they admitted that if anything in that revelation plainly contradicted their reason, or that moral sense which was the law written on their hearts, this would be an argument against it. But we deny that a single passage can be produced from any of the authors quoted, in which it is said that by reason or his natural powers man could know that the peculiar doctrines of Christianity are true. Believing that the revelation which makes them known is from God, we receive them by faith, reason satisfying us of this that there is nothing in them unreasonable.

Tindal, in his *Christianity as old as the Creation; or, the Gospel a Republication of the Religion of Nature*, argued that natural religion was perfect; that its principles and obligations were universally felt and acknowledged, arising, as they do, out of the natural relations between the Creator and his creatures; and that to suppose that God would make any "artificial relations," and lay upon man any positive precepts arising out of them, is to destroy the idea of morality. Against this Butler argued* that Christianity was not only a republication of natural religion, but also a revelation of a particular dispensation of Providence, carrying on by the Son and Holy Spirit; that obligations to the Son and Holy Ghost, which were unknown before, are revealed; and that the duties which thence arise, rest not merely on the positive command but on the relations in which those divine persons stand to us. The relations of Son and Spirit as Mediator and Sanctifier, are as real as the relation of God the Father as Creator and Preserver; and the relations being known, the

* Analogy, part ii. ch. 1.

obligations are "obligations of reason." When Butler describes Christianity, then, as* "a particular scheme under the general plan of Providence—and a part of it," he explains his meaning to be that both are tending to the one great end, that in both "means are made use of to accomplish ends," and that the one as well as the other "may have been all along carried on by general laws," but he does not mean that the truths of Christianity are such that when they are made known, they are self-evidential as being from God. Yet this is plainly the view attributed by the author of the Essay to the Christian writers. In describing the Christian argument, he says:—

"Christianity is a *resumé* of the knowledge of God already attained by reason, and a disclosure of further truths. These further truths could not have been thought out by reason; but, when divinely communicated, *they approve themselves* to the same reason which has already put us in possession of so much. The new truths are not of another order of ideas, for 'Christianity is a particular scheme under the general plan of Providence' (Analogy, pt. II. ch. iv.), and the whole scheme is of a piece and uniform" (pp. 270, 271).

But Butler nowhere says that "*the new truths are not of another order of ideas;*" on the contrary, he says that they are "not at all discoverable by reason;" nor does he anywhere say that, when revealed, "they approve themselves to the same reason which has already put us in possession of so much," as though reason could recognise them as it does the truths of natural religion. In one sense reason approves of them, for it sees that there is nothing in them that is incredible, since, arguing from analogy, it sees that the very same objections that are brought against them may be brought against the system of Providence and moral government of God, and that thus "the whole analogy of nature removes all imagined

* Analogy, part ii. ch. 4.

presumption against them." In a word, reason, arguing from analogy, sees that they are credible; faith, on the testimony of revelation, receives them. Yet while faith and reason had thus their distinct offices assigned them, the author of this Essay describes the Christian defenders as labouring "to construct the bridge which should unite the revealed to the natural." He says,

> They never demur to making the natural the basis on which the Christian rests" (p. 270),

and declares this assumption necessary to their scheme, which makes revelation to be an argument addressed to reason. We know not what he really intends by the expression "making the natural the basis on which the Christian rests." But that which the Christian writers did in this respect, St. Paul did the same when addressing the Epicureans and Stoics at Athens. Let us consider this case, for it is exactly in point. The Apostle first began to argue with them from the principles of natural religion. He spoke of the works of God in creation and Providence, and, appealing to their reason, argued that that Being who made the world dwells not in an earthly temple, and that He in whom we have life and breath, and all things, is not like to any graven image. Here was an argument addressed to reason. Then from the truths of natural religion he passed on to truths of revelation. He spoke to them of the necessity of repentance, of a day of judgment, of Christ being the appointed judge; but did he say that, now that these truths were communicated, they must at once "approve" themselves to their reason? No; he appealed to the external attestation of the Christian revelation, the resurrection of Christ. He called upon them to receive these truths, not because reason must approve of them, but because they are made known by a revelation,

the external evidence of which proves that it is from God. And if they had then objected that they could not receive some one of these doctrines—say, for example, that of the resurrection, because it was incredible—how would St. Paul have answered them? Not by asserting it was self-evident; that, now it was communicated, their reason must at once approve of it, but as he replied to the objectors at Corinth: "that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." Here the analogical reasoning comes in, not to prove that the resurrection is discoverable by reason, or that, when revealed, reason must at once recognise its truth, but to prove from analogy that there is nothing incredible in that which has been communicated by a positive external revelation.

We have thus dwelt upon this question, because one of the designs of this Essay is plainly to set aside the positive evidence of Christianity, and to represent it as wholly worthless. We maintain that external evidence can convince the understanding, though it cannot convert the heart; it can satisfy the mind of the truth of Christianity, though it cannot give religious faith. We maintain that the heart must be reached through the understanding, and therefore we most positively refuse to recognise the writer's effort to throw contempt on what he terms "the evidential school."

But while we are thus opposed to him on this important subject, it must be confessed that his estimate of the Anglican theology of the eighteenth century is just, at least to this extent, that the writers of that age too much lost sight of what was spiritual and supernatural in religion. And the great names mentioned by the author, as once commanding universal homage, stand undoubtedly connected with a theology, clear, cold, and moral, but wanting in spiritual power. Speaking of the answer of Collins, when asked "Why he was careful to make his servants

go to church?" "I do it that they may neither rob nor murder me;" the writer says,

"This is but an exaggerated form of the practical religion of the age. Tillotson's sermon (Works, vol. iii., p. 43), *On the Advantages of Religion to Societies*, is like Collins' reply at fuller length. The Deists and their opponents alike assume that the purpose of the supernatural interference of the Deity in revelation must have been to secure the good behaviour of man in this world" (p. 274).

This, so far as the Christian writers are concerned, is, indeed, an exaggeration. It should be remembered that the very subject of Tillotson's sermon referred to, *The Advantages of Religion to Societies*, would naturally lead him to speak of the influence of religion on man's present welfare. Indeed, to make this out was his design, seeing, as he expresses it, that "religion hath extremely suffered in the opinion of many, as if it were opposite to our present welfare, and did rob men of the greatest advantages and conveniences of life." But we could point to some of Tillotson's sermons, in which not only the highest distinctive truths of Christianity are taught, but in which the purest motives are urged, and the most spiritual aspirations breathed. For example, in his sermon on Philip. iii. 20, *For our conversation is in heaven*, he exclaims,

"O blessed time! . . . when we shall know God and other things without study, and love Him and one another without measure, and serve and praise Him without weariness, and obey His will without the least reluctancy; and shall still be more and more delighted in the knowing, and loving, and praising, and obeying of God to all eternity. How should these thoughts affect our hearts, and what a mighty influence ought they to have upon our lives?"

Still it must be acknowledged that, with few exceptions, Christianity was treated too much as natural religion, the truths, and principles, and motives of the Gospel were overlooked. Cowper's satire on the

pulpit of his age was not without foundation, in which, among other things, he notices its dry, moral, philosophical, Christless tone :—

> "Now tell me, dignified and sapient sir,
> My man of morals, nurtured in the shades
> Of Academus—is this false or true?
> Is Christ the abler teacher, or the schools?
> If Christ, why then resort at every turn
> To Athens or to Rome, for wisdom short
> Of man's occasions, when in him reside
> Grace, knowledge, comfort—an unfathomed store!
> How oft, when Paul has served us with a text,
> Has Epictetus, Plato, Tully, preached!
> Men that if now alive, would sit content
> And humble learners of a Saviour's worth,
> Preach it who might."
>
> ——*The Task.*

Nor can we accept the apology offered by the writer for the preachers of that time :—

> "The preachers of any period are not to be censured for adapting their style of address and mode of arguing to their hearers. They are as necessarily bound to the preconceived notions, as to the language of those whom they have to exhort. The pulpit does not mould the forms into which religious thought in any age runs, it simply accommodates itself to those that exist" (p. 276).

Alas for the pulpit if ever such a principle as this be adopted; let a pen be taken, and Ichabod be written upon it; better far that its voice should be ever hushed in silence than that it should be a mere echo of the opinions, or an accommodation to the notions of the passing hour. But it was not merely in the pulpit that "the practice of our duty is recommended to us on the undeniable grounds of prudence" (p. 279). The same spirit characterised the whole theology and literature of the age. Paley's was essentially a utilitarian philosophy. His theory was that the only difference between an act of prudence and an act of duty is this, that* "in the

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* Paley's Moral and Political Philosophy, book ii. ch. 3.

one case we consider what we shall gain or lose in the present world, in the other case we consider also what we shall gain or lose in the world to come;" while again, according to him*, "virtue is the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness." Now, there is no doubt but that God appeals to various principles of our nature, and that there are many motives of Christian conduct recognised in Scripture. Love, gratitude, hope, ambition, a desire for our own happiness, these are all appealed to and brought into exercise. And, while love is the great constraining principle of Christianity, this does not prevent the Saviour from promising the reward of victory "to him that overcometh," nor the Christian from being animated in the conflict by the prospect of "a crown of righteousness" laid up. The Deistical and Christian moralists ran into the contrary extremes of this question. The Deists, from the notion that any consideration of man's own interest destroyed the moral worth of human conduct, denied the reality of future rewards and punishments; the Christian moralists, on the other hand, treated the question of duty as a question of prudence. They proved most conclusively that it is for a man's own interest to be virtuous, but they forgot those higher principles and motives which alone are powerful to influence human conduct, and that the practical rule by which men too often are guided is—

"Meliora probo, deteriora sequor."

And so, as is universally admitted, the most utilitarian was the most licentious age. This fact is noted by the writer of the "Essay":—

"A general relaxation of manners in all classes of society is universally affirmed to be characteristic of that time" (p. 320).

* Book i. ch. 7.

Again:—

"After making every allowance for the exaggeration of religious rhetoric, and the querulousness of defeated parties, there seems to remain *some* real evidence for ascribing to that age a more than usual moral licence, and contempt of external restraints" (pp. 321, 322).

But while the fact of wide-spread corruption is admitted, great diversity of opinion existed as to the cause. Each party, as might be supposed, endeavoured to throw the blame upon some other, and even now all would not agree in the same view. The author of this Essay quotes a writer of our day in order to differ from him. Dr. Whewell ascribes the prevailing corruption to "that low view of morality which rests its rules upon consequences merely;" but in the opinion of our author the sequence of cause and effect is by this as nearly as possible inverted.

"The licentiousness of talk and manners was not produced by the moral doctrines promulgated; but the doctrine of moral consequences was had recourse to by the divines and moralists as the most likely remedy of the prevailing licentiousness" (p. 324).

According to this, "the theory of consequences" was not introduced by speculative men to overthrow a more spiritual religion, but it was employed by religious men in the hope of stemming the tide of wickedness. We believe that in both these opinions there is truth, and that the state of society is to be accounted for by the twofold influence. When the deistical speculator laid, as Dr. Whewell says, "a sacrilegious hand" on all that was hallowed and venerated, barriers were broken down which hitherto had restrained licentiousness within bounds, and then the means employed for rectifying the evil only made the calamity worse,—"the morality of consequences,"—the remedy applied only aggravated the disease. "The obligation to practice in point of prudence was as perfect as though the proof had been

demonstrative. And what was the surprising result? That the more they demonstrated the less people believed." Commenting upon this, the writer observes :—

> " This is certainly not what we should antecedently expect. If, as Dr. Whewell assumes, and the whole *doctrinaire* school with him, the speculative belief of an age determines its moral character, that should be the purest epoch when the morality of consequences is placed in the strongest light " (p. 325).

To this we would say the result referred to is not so surprising; on the contrary, we think it is just what might have been expected. Any one acquainted with human nature is aware that the consideration of consequences is frequently wholly powerless to influence men with reference to this life. Starvation and death staring the drunkard in the face are found insufficient to restrain him; yet things seen and temporal have a greater power over man than those that are unseen and eternal. He, therefore, can know but little of the human heart who would expect that prudential motives with regard to the life to come would regulate man's conduct in the life that now is. Again, we entirely object to the statement as to the assumption of what is called the *doctrinaire* school. Indeed, we know not exactly what school he means: if it be the school that teaches that there are positive distinctive doctrines in the Christian religion, we profess ourselves disciples of it. But, in the first place, if they of whom he speaks teach, that " speculative belief " determines the moral character of the age, that belief is not merely about the prudence of virtue, but belief concerning the faith. Again, no one assumes that *speculative* belief would determine the moral character of an age. If, indeed, *speculative* belief be false, the character of the age will not be religious; but *speculative* belief might be sound while the character of the age was ungodly. No mere speculative belief can of itself influence the life for good. The heart must

be changed by the Spirit of God, and man must be brought by a living faith into union with the Lord Jesus Christ, that he may bring forth good fruit. The writer seems conscious that it is unfair to charge the "doctrinaire school" with holding that speculative belief can influence the heart, for speaking immediately afterwards of the revival of "the doctrine of the Reformation" by "the Evangelical school," he adds—

"Their doctrine of conversion by supernatural influence must on no account be forgotten. Yet it appears that they thought that the channel of this supernatural influence was, in some way or other, preaching. Preaching, too, not as rhetoric, but as the annunciation of a specific doctrine—the Gospel. They certainly insisted on 'the heart' being touched, and that the Spirit only had the power savingly to affect the heart; but they acted as though this were done by an appeal to the reason, *and scornfully rejected the idea of religious education*" (p. 326).

We can only say, if they were guilty of this last piece of folly, it was not a necessary consequence of the opinions and principles previously described. St. Paul did not reject religious education; he reminds Timothy that he had known the Holy Scriptures from his infancy, yet he commands him to "preach the word." The New Testament insists upon this that the Spirit only has power savingly to affect the heart, while at the same time it declares that "it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Corinth. i. 21); and that He "hath chosen us to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and *belief of the truth*" (2 Thess. ii. 13). Here, then, is the secret of the want of power in the pulpit of the eighteenth century; the morality of consequences was insisted upon, and the prudence of virtue demonstrated, but the Gospel of Christ was not preached. This moral lever was not used by the builders, and therefore they failed in carrying forward the Church's spiritual work. But we have no doubt that while the pulpit acted injuriously on the age the

age acted injuriously on the pulpit. The divines of that period were called to contend for the faith, to contend for the very existence of Christianity. It was not with them a choice but a necessity, a duty from which they dare not shrink. The controversy was one that was unfavourable to spiritual religion; they felt they had to do with men who had no spiritual perception, whose only guide was unaided reason; that to speak to them of Christian experience, of the Spirit's witness of that kingdom of God which is "righteousness and joy and peace in the Holy Ghost," would be as vain as to talk to a blind man of colours, it would be to cast pearls before swine, and then have them turn again and rend you. This conviction doubtless influenced the theology of the age. We believe it was mistaken. To meet reason with reason was well, but to resign the more spiritual weapons of our warfare was not wise. The smooth stone from the brook as well as the Philistine's own sword gave David the victory.

In speaking of this controversy it is unhappily too apparent that the writer's convictions and sympathies are on the side of the Deists. If he does not give to their arguments the victory, he acknowledges the unanswerable weight of their objections, and leaves no ground for boasting to their opponents.

"The objections urged against revelation in the course of the Deistical controversy were no chimeras of a sickly brain, but *solid charges*; the points brought into public discussion were the points at which the revealed system itself impinges on human reason. No time can lessen whatever force there may be in the objection against a miracle; it is felt as strongly in one century as in another" (pp. 283, 284).

Again:—

"It is not the speculative reason of the few, but the natural conscience of the many, that questions the extirpation of the Canaanites, or the eternity of hell torments" (p. 285).

Here the Deistical objections are represented as

solid charges, the question of miracles, as impinging on human reason, is said to be one which in every age is open to the same objections, while conscience is made the judge of matters of revelation. It would be difficult to distinguish between the views put forward in some of these Essays and those of the Deists of the eighteenth century. They are, in fact, almost identical. Indeed it will be found that there is not an objection contained in these Essays that is not also in the Deistical writers. Blount assailed the Mosaic writings, urging that they were irreconcilable with Chaldean and Egyptian antiquities (*Oracles of Reason*). Collins argued that the prophecies of the Old Testament, applied to Christianity in the New, have no reference to the times of the Gospel, and that such application is contrary to the original meaning of these prophecies (*A Discourse on the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*). Woolston denied all miracles, he represented the facts of the Gospel as allegorical and mythical, and declared that if taken literally they were absurd and untrue (*Six Discourses on the Miracles of our Saviour*). Morgan held that the only criterion by which we are to judge of anything as coming from God is by its reasonableness and fitness; that miracles can be no proof, for that it would be impossible to know whether they were miracles or not (*Moral Philosopher*). Chubb sneered at the doctrine of the atonement, representing it as immoral, and contrary to reason and truth (*Posthumous Works*). Hume held that miracles were contrary to experience, and incapable of proof (*Philosophical Essays*); while Lord Bolingbroke denied a particular providence, future rewards and punishments, and spoke of the proofs of Christianity as "*traditional*" (*Bolingbroke's Works*, vol. v., p. 91). Thus, not only the objections, but the very language of the Deists, are the objections and language which clergymen of the Church of England have in our day adopted, and

attempted to palm upon the world as something new and striking.

We need not now be surprised to find that the Christian writers receive but little favour at the author's hands. Their works are underrated, and their honesty is impeached.

"They are impatient at the smallest demur, and deny loudly that there is any weight in anything advanced by their opponents. In the way they override the most serious difficulties, they show anything but the temper which is supposed to qualify for the weighing of evidence. The astonishing want of candour in their reasoning, their blindness to real difficulty, the ill-concealed predetermination to find a particular verdict, the rise of their style in passion in the same proportion as their argument fails in strength, constitute a class of writers more calculated than any other to damage their own cause with young ingenuous minds, ... To whatever causes is to be attributed the decline of Deism, from 1750 onwards, the books polemically written against it cannot reckon among them" (p. 304).

This is indeed an unsparing judgment, a sweeping condemnation, but it is only assertion. We, on the other hand, assert that the person who penned this sentence either is grossly ignorant of the authors of whom he speaks, or else has shamefully misrepresented them. If ever there were writers distinguished for honesty, soundness of judgment, learning, close reasoning, they are the Christian apologists of the eighteenth century. Can he point to an overruling of serious difficulties, passion substituted for argument, want of candour, in the pages of Chandler, Clarke, Butler, Paley, Bishop Newton, Lardner? No, they are monuments of deep thought, sound reasoning, and extensive learning. Why the author seems to have forgotten that a little before he described the distinguishing characteristic of the eighteenth century to be "the best good sense," and that while he declares that "the evidential school" failed with respect to the supernatural part of Christianity, not from any fault to be attributed to it,

but because "a higher organon was needed," he acknowledges—

"It has enforced the truths of natural morality with a *solidity of argument* and variety of proof, which they have not received since the Stoical epoch, if then" (p. 296).

Yet now that it is his purpose to decry the Christian writers, they are accused of want of candour and of argument. One of them at least, however, he is compelled to exempt from this charge; he is unable to say of him that there is a disproportion between the positiveness of his assertion and the feebleness of his argument; on the contrary, he admits that instead of dogmatizing, he often speaks doubtfully, but confesses that

"Butler's doubtfulness is not the unsteadiness of the sceptical, but the wariness of the judicial mind" (p. 306).

Still he sees in Butler as in the rest, a "predetermination to find a particular verdict."

"Butler, it is true, comes forward not as an investigator, but as a pleader" (p. 305).

What a grievous charge! And does the writer imagine that every infidel objection brought against revelation, is to be regarded as an open question, and that we are to contend for the faith as if our minds were not decided? If he fancies that it is thus the Christian Church will approach the old Deistical objections revived in this volume of Essays, he is very grievously mistaken. They have been long since tried and condemned, and it is for those who side with the Deists to show if they can, that the condemnation is unjust.

To but one other writer on the Christian side besides Butler is the author disposed to allow any credit. This is Bentley, whose answer to Collins is admitted "to have been completely successful as an answer" (p. 307). This measure of praise, however,

he materially qualifies, and endeavours to deprive it of any value. In the first place Bentley's remarks were only decisive, as they were a "masterly critique" on the *Discourse of Freethinking;* while, compared with Collins, he was a low, abusive controversialist. "His remarks were not, of course, decisive of the Deistical controversy, on which the critic *avoids* entering," but were "coarse, arrogant, and abusive." But

> "Collins was a gentleman of independent fortune, whose high personal character and general respectability seemed to give a weight to his words" (p. 307).

Again:—

> "It has been mentioned that Bentley does not attempt to reply to the argument of the *Discourse on Free-thinking*. His tactic is to ignore it .... But Collins was not a sharper, and would have disdained practices to which Bentley stooped for the sake of a professorship" (p. 310).

Bentley certainly did not spare the egregious blunders, the false translations, the mistakes and misrepresentations of *Philcleutherus Lipsiensis*, the name under which Collins published the *Discourse of Free-thinking*. With a master's hand he unveiled the ignorance and sophistry of the "Christian Deist!" Nor do we see any reason why, because "Collins was a gentleman," he should have been exempt from the well-merited castigation he received at the hands of the clever and learned divine. Never was there an answer more successful; it is pronounced by the writer of this Essay decisive. But in the two passages just quoted, we notice how different are the statements. In the first it is said that Bentley "avoided entering on the Deistical controversy." In the second that "he *did not attempt to reply* to the argument of the *Discourse of Free-thinking*." These are two very differing things. Bentley certainly did not enter on the whole Deistical controversy; this was not his design. His design was to reply to Collins, and his

book was entitled *Remarks on a late Discourse of Free-thinking*. As a reply to that discourse his remarks are admitted to have been "decisive"—"Completely successful as an answer;" yet now we are told not only that he avoided entering on the Deistical controversy, but even did not attempt to reply to the argument of Collins! So far as Collins entered on the Deistical controversy, he did. His remarks were a professed answer to his discourse. He took it up sentence by sentence, and did not leave a shred of it together. Nevertheless, the judgment to which the writer comes in the end is, that "the dirt endeavoured to be thrown on Collins will cleave to the hand that throws it." It is lamentable that the Deist who laboured to discredit the Bible, and overthrow Christianity, should at length have found a sympathizing apologist in a clergyman of the Church of England.

The object of English theology in that age is said to have been—

> "To find a new basis for doctrine which should replace those foundations which had failed it" (p. 240).

These were Church authority, and the "inner light." The authority of the Church was destroyed by the Reformation; then it was attempted "to rest faith and doctrine upon the inward light within each man's breast;" but this, in turn, fell into discredit "through the extravagancies to which it had given birth," and the reaction against it "led to this first attempt to base revealed truth on reason." Thus Church authority, the Spirit, and Reason are represented as being in succession the basis on which an effort was made to build Christian doctrine, and each is declared equally to have proved a failure. "Church authority was soon found untenable." It was still sooner found that on the basis of the Spirit

"only discord and disunion could be reared." There remained common reason to be tried.

"To apply this instrument to the contents of Revelation was the occupation of the early half of the eighteenth century; with what success has been seen. In the latter part of the century the same Common Reason was applied to the external evidences. But here the method fails in a first requisite—universality; for even the shallowest array of historical proof requires some book-learning to apprehend. Further than this, the Lardner and Paley school could not complete their proof satisfactorily, inasmuch as the materials for the investigation of the first and second centuries of the Christian era were not at hand" (pp. 328, 329).

Thus, then, it is made out that there is no certain basis of religious truth, and the Essay concludes with a passage we have already quoted at the beginning, in which the writer tells us, that he would undertake a perplexing inquiry, who would endeavour clearly to make out on what basis, in the present day, revelation is supposed to rest. Mindful of the divine command, "be ready always to give an answer to any man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear," we shall endeavour to meet this implied challenge, by giving an idea, imperfect though it must be, of the grounds upon which the Christian can rest his faith; a sketch of the evidence, brief though it must be, by which Christianity commends itself both to our intellects and our hearts.

We need not stop to argue that there is a God. All but the Atheist admit this, and he puts himself beyond the pale of all reasoning. But the God, of whose existence the works of his hands bear witness, is not the God of the Pantheist, for whom nature is but another name, but a personal, spiritual Being, an eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Spirit. Creation, throughout all its works, proclaims the presence of an intelligent mind; a Mind after the image of which the human mind was created. Man, by the highest efforts of his intellect, becomes but an humble follower of God. In all the contrivances of

his wisdom, in all the productions of his art, he finds himself anticipated in the works of Creation; there are the same combinations, the same mechanical appliances, the same adaptation of means for the accomplishment of the same ends, so that, arguing from the effect to the cause, we necessarily conclude the existence of a Divine Intelligent Mind. Wherever we turn, in whatever quarter we look, whether to the heavens above, or to the earth beneath; whether we scan the firmament, or explore the bowels of the earth; whether we trace a planet in its orbit, or watch a bird upon the wing,—we behold the most wonderful beauty, wisdom, order, and design, the most perfect contrivance and adaptation of means to wise and beneficent ends.

In a day when science has thrown so widely open the laboratory of nature, every advancing step in the investigation of its operations brings with it fresh proofs of the wisdom by which it is pervaded. This might form the study of a life-time. Its details might furnish materials for volumes. Paley* gathered from one field a rich harvest of evidence. By an examination of the animal and human organizations he has made manifest the doctrine of Final Causes. And that which anatomy has yielded to his investigations is but the first-fruits of what has been and still may be further reaped from every field of science and department of nature. On the face of Creation, on all things animate and inanimate, above, below, beneath, around, there is one word written—DESIGN. Thus, "The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and godhead" (Rom. i. 20).

From the world without, we turn to look to the world that is within, to study the mysteries of our

* Natural Theology.

own moral and spiritual being. And what are its teachings? Man feels that he has an undying spirit within him. He feels he was not born to live here for a few short years and then perish for ever. Were this his destiny he would be indeed a strange exception to that beautiful law which adapts the nature and capabilities of every creature to the circumstances and end of its being. Man has deep and noble aspirations, unfading hopes, and vast desires: desires so vast that they have never yet been satisfied by anything of earth. Wealth, rank, honour, pleasure, power, fame, have never fully satisfied the longings of the human soul. The story of one of nature's most highly-gifted sons—England's noble bard—may, with more or less truth, be told of all who seek satisfaction in the things of earth:—

"He touch'd his harp, and nations heard entranc'd."

He stood upon the pinnacle of fame, the great admired; princes did him honour. Praise from every side rolled its incense on his ear:—

"Thus full of titles, flattery, honour, fame,
Beyond desire, beyond ambition, full,
He died—he died of what?—of wretchedness;
Drank every cup of joy, heard every trump
Of fame, drank early, deeply drank, drank draughts
That common millions might have quench'd; then died
Of thirst, because there was no more to drink."

——POLLOK'S *Course of Time*, Book iv.

Nor are man's desires greater than his hopes. Hope ever stands like a ministering spirit by him to cheer him amid his sorrows. No darkness so deep that its glimmerings are not seen, no misery so great as to crush and weigh down the soarings of its wing. It points man ever forward to the future, bidding him to see in the distant vista brighter prospects in store. And is all this but a delusion? Are man's desires never to be satisfied? Is hope given but to mock

him? Is its voice but a siren's alluring him to disappointment? Is it a mere phantom beckoning him onward, onward, still onward, lighting him to the very verge of the tomb, and then vanishing as he sinks into the darkness and annihilation of the grave? No! Surely hope is the sigh of immortality; and desires which earth cannot satisfy tell of a river of life where the spirit may quench its thirst.

Again, man is a moral being: he is possessed of a moral faculty by which he distinguishes between good and evil, between right and wrong. It matters not whether this be a simple and original principle of his nature, or whether it be resolvable into other elementary ones; wherever human nature is, it is to be found. Just as man can distinguish colours by his natural sense, he can distinguish actions by his moral sense. Either vision may be indeed impaired, but the constitution of his nature is to see. He has the law written in "his heart;" and however defaced the characters may be, it cannot be wholly obliterated. More than this, not only can man discern between right and wrong, but he sits in judgment on his actions. Conscience has its throne erected in its bosom,—

> "The voice within, the voice of God, that nought
> Can bribe to sleep,"—

Conscience, that supreme arbiter of human actions, exercises a felt supremacy over man's thoughts, and words, and works. Its voice may be indeed unheeded, —amid the wild tumult of human passions it may be for a time unheard,—but there are moments when it speaks in tones so thrilling as to make even stout hearts quail. Felix on the judgment-seat, and the flagitious Nero in the midst of his cruel enormities, were cited as criminals to its bar. And this empire of conscience is as wide as humanity itself; it is no partial feeling, confined to one class or race,—it is a universal principle to which human nature does homage.

Wherever the footstep of the missionary has trod, whatever shore he has reached, among whatever people he may have come, whether speaking to the untutored savage, or to the intellectual, the civilized, and refined, he has found a chord in every bosom that vibrates at his touch, a witness whose unerring testimony is on the side of truth. And what is this but evidence of a judgment and a judge? What are the warnings of conscience but intimations of future retribution?—what is its tribunal but the shadow of the great white throne reflected on the world? What are its decisions but pledges of a final sentence? What are its fears and torments but foretastes of future retribution? And so it is felt to be; throughout the world, there is a recognition of God. Man looks upward to a Being above him, of whose moral government he feels himself a subject. This idea may have been corrupted by the licentiousness and idolatry of Paganism; a faction may have been formed amid the bloody convulsions of a nation blasphemously to have abjured religion; here and there along the track of time an atheist may be permitted to arise, a monument of human folly and blindness; nevertheless, the great idea of a Deity prevails,—the universal practice of religious worship exists.

Lastly, there is one other universal feeling connected with this; namely, that man needs some method of reconciliation with the Divine Being. He feels that he is guilty, sinful, fallen, or at least he feels that some dire calamity has happened to his nature and to the world, the truth of which is confirmed by the sin, the sorrow, the suffering, the misery, the poverty, the disease, the death, that are in the earth. Yet, though conscious of his condition, he is in darkness, he knows not from whence he is come, or whither he is going. Sensible of his misery, he can himself find no relief; sensible of his corruption, he cannot deliver himself from its power; sensible that

there is a Power above him, he cannot by searching find out the Almighty. Egypt, and Greece, and Rome, bear witness that civilization, and art, and literature cannot deliver man from moral and spiritual degradation. What then? If there be a God omnipotent, omniscient, infinitely wise and good,—if man be immortal, yet ignorant, miserable, and fallen,—if there be a life for him beyond the grave which is to know no end,—is it unreasonable to suppose, nay, is it not highly probable, that God would reveal himself to man?

Well, there is a volume in the world which claims to be a revelation from Heaven,—that volume is the Bible. This book has now been for centuries in men's hands; portions of it are more than three thousand years old. It is circulated throughout the earth; it courts investigation. All that human learning and sophistry could do has been done to undermine its authority, but in vain—still it stands, laughing to scorn the feeble efforts of silly men. This volume makes known many things which human reason could not discover. The creation of the world and of man, the entrance of sin, and the circumstances of the fall. It teaches the great doctrines of a resurrection, eternal life, and future judgment. It makes known the great mysteries of the incarnation and atonement, that God was manifest in the flesh, and that to save man He became obedient unto death, the death of the Cross; and then, to establish its high claim to a Divine revelation, it appeals to external evidences, which speak to man's reason—Miracles and Prophecy.

When we turn our attention to this book we find a remarkable circumstance connected with it, which is one of singular advantage for the confirmation of our faith. It is that a large and important portion of it is received with the deepest veneration as a revelation from God by the bitterest enemies of Christianity—the Jewish people; so that whoever

questions the reality of an external revelation must account not only for the Christian religion and its miraculous story, but also for the religion and history of the Jewish nation, as contained in the writings of the Old Testament. Of these writings the Pentateuch is the most ancient. It contains the miraculous history of the Jewish people—their call in Abraham, their bondage and growth in Egypt, their mighty deliverance, their passage through the Red Sea, their sojourn in the wilderness, in which they were for forty years miraculously fed. Now, if all this be not a fiction, the truth of revelation is established. Of the genuineness of the Pentateuch there cannot be entertained the shadow of a doubt. There can be no question that, whether it be true or false, whether the story it contains be fiction or fact, it is the same book which the Jews possessed from the very earliest period of their history as a nation, and which is acknowledged both by Jews and Samaritans as a Divine and authentic record.

This, then, is the important question—Is it true? Is the story it records an invention or a reality? Now if we strip the Pentateuch of everything miraculous, the general history of the nation it contains will hardly be disputed. That the Jews were bondmen in Egypt is witnessed by contemporary pictures of recent discovery, which represent them engaged in making bricks, with Egyptian taskmasters over them. Also that they came up out of Egypt is a matter of history. Strabo makes mention of Moses leaving Egypt, accompanied by a large number of people, and of their eventually settling in the land of which Jerusalem was afterwards the capital. Speaking of Judea he says:—

* "An Egyptian priest named Moses, who possessed a portion of the country called Lower (Egypt) . . . being dissatisfied with the established insti-

* Strabo, lib. xvi. ch. 2, edit. Falconer.

tutions there, left it and came to Judæa, with a large body of people, who worshipped the Deity."

Having then referred to some of the doctrines taught by Moses, that we ought not to carve any image, but to set apart some sacred ground and a shrine worthy of the Deity, and to worship Him without any similitude, he adds:—

"By such doctrine Moses persuaded a large body of right-minded persons to accompany him to the place where Jerusalem now stands."

But while the historical basis of the story is admitted, the miraculous events connected with it are denied. The judgments upon Egypt, the passage through the Red Sea, the destruction of Pharaoh, the encampment in the wilderness of Sinai, the manna from heaven, everything, in fact, of a miraculous nature in the history. Well, time rolled on, the wilderness is traversed, Sinai is reached, when lo! there are discovered innumerable inscriptions on its rocks. Inscriptions! impossible; yes, sceptic, look again, examine them well, they are inscriptions, the work of men's hands. But how came they there? Solitary wanderers, pilgrims who have reached the sacred spot, have there inscribed their journeys and their names. No, they are too numerous for that, they are deeply and beautifully carved, they cover the rocks for miles. Thousands of living men must have been here engaged. But what could have brought such multitudes to the place, or when there, how could they have been sustained? Let the sceptic answer. He is silent, he cannot explain. Well, the believer ventured to suggest, that these inscriptions may have been engraven on the rocks by the hosts of Israel when in the wilderness; but the sceptic, though unable to offer a more reasonable solution, only smiled and looked incredulous. But time, the revealer of all things, advanced, and now, in our day, God has given to faith and patient labour the

key by which these inscriptions have been deciphered. And what do we read? The miraculous story of Israel, their deliverance from Egypt, the destruction of Pharaoh in the waters of the Red Sea, the sending of the manna from heaven. And thus, for the confirmation of faith and the confusion of infidelity, after three thousand years, there is read on the stony pages of the rocks of Sinai what Moses wrote on the page of inspiration *.

But, not to dwell on this and many other striking confirmations of the truth of his word which in these days God is graciously giving to his Church, we would observe that the very existence and present condition of the Jewish people are of themselves sufficient evidence that the Old Testament is a revelation from God. They are themselves a perpetual miracle in the earth, a living witness to the truth and inspiration of Scripture. Before they were erected into a kingdom or established as a nation in Canaan, Moses, speaking to them in the name of the Lord, foretold the judgments that should befall them if they did not observe to do all the words of the law. "The Lord shall scatter thee among all people from the one end of the earth even unto the other" (Deut. xxviii. 64). So, after they had rebelled against God, Hosea wrote, "they shall be wanderers among the nations" (ch. ix. 17). And have they not been wanderers for eighteen centuries? In what corner of the earth may they not be found? They dwell in every land, every country is their home, Europe, America, India, China, Persia, Russia, Africa; they wander on the snows of Siberia, the steppes of Tartary, the shores of the Mediterranean. They dwell in every city of the

* We are aware that some writers still reject the Israelitish origin of the "Sinaitic Inscriptions." We would only, however, refer our readers to Mr. Forster's learned and interesting works, *One Primeval Language*, with their illustrative plates, to enable them to form their own judgment on the matter.

world, New York and Moscow, London and Cairo, Paris and Pekin, Rome and Calcutta, while they linger around the walls of their own much loved Jerusalem. Nor is it merely their dispersion, their state of spiritual desolation was also foretold. "The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim" (Hosea iii. 4). And now behold them, where is their king? where is their temple? where is their priesthood? where are their sacrifices? Their glory is departed. The fire on their altars is quenched. The voice of their prophets has ceased, but they remain because the Lord hath spoken, "I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth" (Amos ix. 9). Thus an anomaly in the history of nations, Israel has come down the stream of time, wrecked indeed, but its fragments still borne on that tide which has proved the grave of many peoples; so that, in the striking language of the late Professor Butler, we may say*:—

"Though in the spirit of a miserable criticism ministering to a still more miserable philosophy, you were to evacuate that Old Testament of every express miracle it records, though you were to convert the Prophets into jugglers, and the people into fools, and make of our Elijahs and Isaiahs pretenders to power and conjecturers in knowledge, could you even so clear the Old Testament of wonders? You may deny the story of miracles, but can you destroy the miracle of the story? You may discredit this volume of miracles, but can you *unmiracle* the obstinate fact of the volume itself? Can you resolve the enormous

* Sermons by the Rev. W. Archer Butler, M.A. late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Dublin. First Series. Sermon xiv.

difficulty of this history, these recorded habits, and above all this recorded religion?"

Every argument, every line of evidence, then, that the Jew can advance to prove the miraculous history of his nation arrays itself on the side of Christianity. Christianity is no new religion, it is the substance of which Judaism was the shadow. The New Testament is the development and completion of the Old. Christ is the substance of its types, the subject of its prophecies, the object of its promises. The Jews looked for Him of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote; in the beautiful language of the writer just quoted, "from Moses to Malachi these Hebrew Scriptures are, as it were, one long-drawn sigh of sorrowful hope." And now a nation's hope, changed into sad and bitter disappointment, tells too plainly that "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

That Jesus Christ appeared in the world at the time predicted, and when the Jews expected their Messiah, that he was crucified when Pontius Pilate was Governor of Judea, that He was the founder of the Christian religion, and that it spread rapidly in the world, are matters of history. Tacitus, the Roman historian, who flourished in the first century, and while some of the Apostles were yet alive, writing of the persecution which the Christians suffered under Nero, says:

* "Christ, the author of this name, was put to death as a criminal by the Procurator Pontius Pilate, in the reign of Tiberius. The pernicious superstition, repressed for a time, broke out again, not only throughout Judea, the origin of the evil, but through the city also."

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* "Auctor nominis ejus Christus, Tiberio imperitante, per Procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicis affectus erat. Repressaque in præsens, exitiabilis superstitio rursus erumpebat, non modo per Judæum, originem ejus mali, sed per urbem etiam," &c.—Tacitus, *Ann.* lib. xv. 44. vol. iv. Lond. 1821.

Thus this eminent historian, a stranger if not a positive enemy to Christianity, tells us that the religion commenced in Judea, and soon spread throughout it, that it reached even Rome, that it obtained multitudes of converts, that the founder of the religion was Christ, that he was put to death as a malefactor under Pontius Pilate, and that his followers were exposed to the most violent persecutions. And this testimony of Tacitus is supported by Suetonius and other contemporary writers who were acquainted with the facts of the case.

That the followers of Jesus Christ wrote books in which they professed to give an account of His life, of the first promulgation and spread of His religion, and of its doctrines, and that these books are the books of the New Testament, is equally certain. From the present day backward through eighteen centuries we have an uninterrupted succession of writers, referring to and quoting from the books of the New Testament. Several catalogues were drawn up at an early period which contain these books; while the enemies of Christianity, such as Celsus in the second century, treated them as the acknowledged writings of apostles and evangelists, and referred to the Gospels as the books which contained the history of Jesus Christ. That we have these books as they were originally written is also certain. That they have not been corrupted appears not only from the numerous quotations from them already referred to, but also from the variety of MSS. collected in different parts of the world, Persia, Egypt, India, Syria, Europe, all of which perfectly agree, except in some slight variation of readings, which could hardly be avoided in the great work and labour of transcribing. Dr. Buchanan found in a remote church in the mountains of Syria a splendid manuscript, of great antiquity, of the Old and New Testaments, having the words of every book numbered. It is now in the Cambridge Library.

The New Testament, then, contains the life of Jesus Christ, written by four different persons, two of whom were His immediate followers, and attended upon Him, and they all agree as to the leading circumstances of His history. They all declare that He was miraculously conceived; that He went about doing good; that He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind, and raised the dead; that He walked upon the sea; that He said He was the Son of God, and came down from heaven, that all power was given Him, that His voice should open the graves, and break the sleep of death, that to Him all judgment was committed, and that hereafter He should be seen coming in the clouds of heaven; and lastly, that He appealed to His works and to His resurrection from the dead as His witnesses. Now the very nature of these claims shows that He must have wrought miracles in their proof; for how is it possible otherwise they could have been received? How is it possible that His religion should have taken root in the very place, and at the very time of His crucifixion, and then have spread rapidly through the world, unless it were supported by convincing evidence and power? Is it credible that a man born in a lowly condition, without rank, without wealth, without influence, without the use of any force, without appealing to human passions, without offering indulgence to any lust, without holding out any worldly advantage, but, on the contrary, teaching a religion which demands the mortification of every sin, could overthrow the idolatry and change the religion of the Roman world, unless he exercised supernatural power and his religion were from God? As Archbishop Whately forcibly observes:—

"Wonderful as the whole Gospel history is, the most wonderful thing of all is, that a Jewish peasant should have succeeded in changing the religion of the world. That he should have succeeded in doing this

without displaying any miracles would have been more wonderful than all the miracles that have been recorded; and that he should have accomplished all this by means of *pretended* miracles, where none were really performed, would be the most incredible of all; so that those who are unwilling to believe anything that is strange, cannot escape doing so by disbelieving the Gospel; but will have to believe something still more strange if they reject the Gospel *."

The very existence, then, of Christianity requires to be explained; whatever difficulties may lie in the way of its reception, they sink into insignificance compared with those which accompany its rejection. Of it may be said—

> "A truth so strange, 'twere bold to think it true,
> If not far bolder still to disbelieve."

For what was the case of those who became the apostles and immediate disciples of Christ, who preached his Gospel and laid down their lives in witness of its truths? If Christianity be not true, either these men were deceivers, or they were themselves deceived. That they were deceived is impossible. Instead of being credulous, they were always slow to believe; often doubting, and sometimes sceptical. Besides, the nature of the miracles said to have been performed precludes the possibility. No force of imagination, no mental delusion, no deception of the senses, could account for their believing the things which they record, if they did not really take place. They tell us they saw Jesus walk upon the sea; that they saw him raise the dead; that they saw him transfigured on the mount; that they saw him after his resurrection, and that they saw him go away into heaven. Nor was it one, but many, who were witnesses of these things. The man, then, who could

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* Whately's "Lessons on Christian Evidences," Lesson vi.

believe that they were deceived is infinitely more credulous than he supposes even them to have been. Either Christ rose from the dead, or they who laid down their lives in witness of it were deceivers, and so one of them admits. "If Christ be not risen, we are found false witnesses of God" (1 Cor. xv. 14, 15).

But that they were deceivers is equally incredible. Deceivers; for what purpose? what were they to gain? what did they gain? the spoiling of their goods, bonds and imprisonment, and stripes, and death. Deceivers! for what? to teach the purest morality the world ever heard, to lead men from the bondage of sin to the service of righteousness, and to cheer man with the brightest hope that ever dawned upon the human spirit; so that upon this supposition, "they were villains for no end but to teach honesty, and martyrs without the least prospect of advantage*." Again, suppose for a moment that the immediate followers of Christ agreed to impose upon the world, is it reasonable to think that the cheat would not have been discovered by some of the many thousands they had deceived? Some who embraced Christianity were tempted to deny Christ, but did any of them expose any fraud before the heathen tribunals? So far from this, many of them, with tears of repentance, sought again admission into the Church. From one of these supposed deceivers we learn that his authority had been questioned by some, and what step did he adopt to assert it? He writes to the Church in which those parties were, and appeals to the fact that he had not only wrought miracles among them, but had bestowed upon them supernatural gifts. Now if no such miracles had been wrought, if no such gifts had been imparted, would not such an appeal have brought confusion upon the apostle, and given his enemies an opportunity of

* Paley's Evidences of Christianity, part i. chap. viii.

exposing the barefaced imposition? We are, therefore, shut up to the conclusion, that what the writers of the New Testament had seen and heard, that did they declare.

Lastly, and we speak with reverence, either Jesus was God or he was an impostor. If not the Christ, the Son of the living God, the accusation which the Jews brought against him of blasphemy was a just one. We dare not accept the apology that infidelity is willing to make for him, that he was a good man, but a fanatic. His claims were too great, his pretensions too high to ascribe them to fanaticism. Of all who have ever appeared in the world, he is the one least open to this charge. There is a calmness, a dignity, a simple majesty around everything he said or did wholly at variance with such a spirit. He uttered the most momentous truths, and wrought the most stupendous works without seeming as it were conscious of saying or doing what was marvellous. Either Jesus, then, was, what he claimed to be, God, or he was an impostor. An impostor! Our heart, our mind, our conscience revolt at the thought. *This no man can believe.* He who says so must be worse than credulous, he must be a wicked fool. Look at that mysterious Being; what wisdom, what holiness, what meekness, what tenderness, what sympathy, what pity are in that character? See how love and mercy mark his footsteps through the world. Go to the grave of Lazarus, and see him weep; go to the gates of Nain, and see him dry the widow's tears; go to Simon's house and see him look on penitent sorrow, and heal the broken heart; go to that upper room where alone with his disciples in the language of tenderest love, he commends them to the Father; go to the garden of Gethsemane, and see the mysterious agonizing of his soul; go to the cross of Calvary, and see him die; then call him an impostor if you can.

This leads us, in the last place, to say a word

on that which, while insisting strongly as we do on the importance of the external evidence of Christianity, has a power for the spiritual mind which nothing else can give, the internal evidence springing from the excellency and glory of the Gospel, and its suitability to the wants and desires of man. To understand and feel this we need a spiritual perception; but when we have received "an unction from the Holy One," then we can say, "we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life" (1 John v. 20). Without the faith of an incarnate Saviour what is man's position? Ignorant of God, but with an impression of Him on his mind, he gropes after but cannot find Him; with a sense of guilt upon his soul, he knows not how to have it removed. But in the Gospel of Christ there is provision made to meet all the wants and satisfy all the desires of the human heart. By it God is revealed, by it conscience is satisfied, by it comfort is poured into the weary spirit, by it victory over sin is obtained, by it hope is kindled, by it life and immortality are brought to light. All that man wants he finds in Christ. We want to know God—He is the express image of his person. We want a mediator—He in our nature ever liveth to intercede. We want pardon for sin—we have it in His blood. We want deliverance from its power—we have it by His grace. We want righteousness in which to stand before the throne—we have it in His perfect obedience. We want strength—we have it in that hand which though nailed to the accursed tree, upholds the universe. We want sympathy—we have it in that heart which, though upon the throne of God, can be touched with every feeling of our infirmity. Thus, then, reason and faith go hand in hand, and bending at the feet of Christ, reverently

adore; and if asked on what basis our religious belief rests, we answer, our reason, our heart, our conscience, our faith, our hope, our love bind us to the cross of Christ, and to it in life and in death will we cling, for there, and there only, we find rest unto our souls.

ANSWER TO THE SEVENTH ESSAY, "ON THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE."

THE Seventh and last Essay of this volume is, for many reasons, the most important of the series. It is so not only on account of the subject of which it treats, but also because of the style in which that subject is treated. We cannot, indeed, say that it is altogether free from rash statements and hasty conclusions; but the general style contrasts favourably with the flippancy, the disingenuousness, and the tampering with moral principles by which some of the Essays are so unhappily distinguished. However widely we may differ from the author in his views, or however we may deplore the result to which, if adopted, they must lead, we cannot but feel that we have to do with an earnest and thoughtful spirit, who, if he pains, does not do so wantonly, but because the assertion of what he conceives to be the truth is to him the first consideration. We have evidently, in this Essay, the serious thoughts of an educated mind upon a subject the most momentous; and these thoughts are, for the most part, presented in a way that bespeaks our belief in the sincerity of the writer. But while we thus speak of the author, it must not be supposed for a moment that we think favourably of the Essay. No; neither sincerity, nor earnestness, nor amiability, nor even piety, can accredit error. On the contrary, the

character of the author, by giving weight to his opinions, only renders them more dangerous, if they be erroneous. It is so in the case of this Essay. Were we asked to point out the one which is likely to be the most injurious, which is most likely to unsettle the faith, and bring doubts to the minds of many, we would unhesitatingly name this one, "On the Interpretation of Scripture." And we believe this unenviable power belongs to it, not only because it does not offensively wound our moral feelings, but because it treats of a subject that lies at the root of every other question, and in doing so undermines that without which there can be no certainty in religion.

The consideration of the subject of Scripture interpretation leads the author to touch upon a variety of questions, critical and exegetical; type, prophecy, the relation between the Old and New Testaments, Scriptural difficulties, and, above all, inspiration. And we regret to say, that the tendency of the whole Essay is to shake our confidence in the Scriptures as a revelation from God, to destroy Christianity as a system of Divine truth, rendering it a religion founded more in imagination and feeling than on fact.

The author commences by saying, "it is strange that great differences of opinion exist respecting the interpretation of Scripture," and proceeds to inquire into the causes of it. This inquiry forms the subject of the Essay. Some of the points brought forward are judicious, and might be well worthy of consideration, but that they are buried beneath a superincumbent load of error. Like a few grains of corn in a heap of chaff, they are useless and lost. The different interpretations that exist among us are, he says, partly "traditional," that is, they spring "from the controversies of former ages," and no doubt this is so; it is difficult, nay impossible, to separate ourselves entirely from the past, nor if we could, would

it be desirable. The thoughts of every age must more or less exercise a beneficial influence on those that follow. Still there is no doubt but that the strife of controversy and prejudice of sects are injurious, and lead men often to find in Scripture what otherwise they never could discover there. Another cause of the multitude of interpretations is traced to "the growth or progress of the human mind itself. Modes of interpreting vary as time goes on; they partake of the general state of literature or knowledge." Again, there are certain methods of dealing with Scripture mentioned by which its meaning is obscured; the use of "allegory," "a rigid application of logic," "a pedantic and misplaced use of classical learning," a "rhetorical" exaggeration of the meaning of simple words—these are some of the injurious methods too often adopted in the interpretation of Scripture. We feel that some of the writer's remarks on these points are very just. To profess to discover hidden and mysterious meanings where none are intended, to treat the language of Scripture as if every word were cabalistic, this is not to interpret Scripture, but to obscure it. Again, we believe, there may be danger from an over-refined criticism. To make an important doctrine depend upon a Greek article or preposition, would hardly be justified by him who spake "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power." Nor is the rhetorical method less faulty, by which the preacher, instead of endeavouring to bring out the meaning of Scripture, overlays it with his own feelings and fancies. So far we are at one with the writer; but when he tells us that these methods are employed "to adapt the ideas of the past to the wants of the present,"—when he says that "any one who has ever written sermons is aware how hard it is to apply Scripture to the wants of his hearers, and at the same time to preserve its meaning" (p. 334),—from the principle

involved in such a statement we entirely dissent. The ideas of Scripture need no adaptation to the wants of the present. The spiritual wants of man are in every age the same, and the more the meaning of Scripture is preserved, the more suited to these wants will it be found. The Bible is a book not for one nation or one time, it is a book whose truths are ever fresh, speaking with living power to human hearts. Its beauty consists in this, that in it there is a supply for every want, comfort for every sorrow, and truth for every experience. It is, in short, not the word of man, but the word of God.

This, unhappily, is the truth which the writer seems to have forgotten; for, while speaking of the causes of the differences of interpretation, he makes no mention at all of that which is a chief cause: "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinth. ii. 14). But he does more than forget this; he practically at least denies it, for he dwells upon the view of high supernatural inspiration as the great cause of those differences, and treats of the interpretation of Scripture as of Sophocles or Plato, or any other book. He supposes the case of our dealing with Sophocles as he alleges we do with the Bible, to show the unreasonableness of our method of interpretation. After a time scholars are agreed upon the text, the meaning of the words is sufficiently certain, the grammar of the language minutely analysed, yet, with all these things fixed, the meaning of Sophocles is wholly uncertain; "to some the great tragedian has appeared to embody in his choruses certain theological or moral ideas of his own age or country; there are others who find there an allegory of the Christian religion or of the history of modern Europe." But surely the writer does not seriously mean to press this parallel. It would be

indeed the highest absurdity to seek either for doctrine, or type, or prophecy, in the pages of the Greek author, not so in the pages of Scripture, for these are professedly its subject-matter; and it is just because, for the understanding of these something more is required than critical knowledge, that there are such differences of interpretation. This seems in a measure to be admitted, for it is said there are particulars in which the comparison fails; "as, for example, the style and subject;" and that though in what may be termed the externals of interpretation, such as the meaning of words, the connection of sentences, &c. "the same rules apply to the Old and New Testaments as to other books," yet

"the interpretation of Scripture requires 'a vision and faculty divine,' or at least a moral and religious interest which is not needed in the study of a Greek poet or philosopher" (p. 337).

This is an approach to the truth, but it is not the truth. "A moral and religious interest" is not enough; "the vision and faculty divine" is something more, the eyes of our understanding must be enlightened, "then opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures" (Luke xxiv. 45). A man may be a learned scholar, an able divine, so far as the externals of theology are concerned, and yet the Bible be to him a sealed book; while the simple peasant, without education, without learning, without critical knowledge, if taught by the Spirit of God, will have a deep perception of divine truth. Thus the Christian poet contrasts the humble cottager with "the Frenchman, first in literary fame:"—

> "Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—
> A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew!
> And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes
> Her title to a treasure in the skies."
>
> ——COWPER'S *Truth*.

Thus, then, while there are certain rules of interpretation applicable to the Scriptures as to other books; if we sit down to the study of them as we would to the study of Plato or Sophocles, if we think that no spiritual discernment, no divine teaching is needed, and that we have only fairly to apply to them our rules of grammar, we shall most certainly fail to understand them; so that the rule, "interpret the Scriptures as you would any other book," if carried too far, will prove a false canon of interpretation. The Bible is a book *sui generis;* it differs from all other books in its author, style, nature, subject, and therefore it requires a higher and more spiritual method of investigation.

The writer of this Essay thinks, and we agree with him, that a history of the interpretation of Scripture would be most useful. A history that would trace it through its various stages, allegorical, rhetorical, logical, critical, from Origen down to our own day, could not fail to be both interesting and instructive; it would teach us many important lessons, and enable us to avoid many errors. But the benefit he anticipates as the result of it is one which we venture to think many would consider very questionable, for it comes to this, that he would be led by it to give up altogether the work of Scriptural interpretation.

"Like the history of science, it would save many a useless toil; it would indicate the uncertainties on which it is not worth while to speculate further; the byepaths or labyrinths in which men lose themselves; the mines that are already worked out. He who reflects on the multitude of explanations which already exist of the 'number of the beast,' 'the two witnesses,' 'the little horn,' 'the man of sin,' who observes the manner in which these explanations have varied with the political movements of our own time, will be unwilling to devote himself to a method of inquiry in which there is so little appearance of certainty or progress" (p. 341).

So that, because experience proves that the word of prophecy has received a variety of interpretations,

and because some have drawn from it rash and hasty conclusions, we are therefore to abandon its study, instead of giving heed to it more earnestly as we are commanded. In like manner because, when geology was not so well understood as it is now, men did not see the perfect harmony that exists between it and the Mosaic record, and because explanations of the first chapter of Genesis have changed with the advance of geology, we should be "unwilling to add another to the spurious reconcilements of science and revelation." But why should we abandon the effort, unless it be admitted that science and revelation cannot be reconciled? But this we will never admit, so long as we believe that they are both from God. Again, because Roman Catholics have employed the types and figures of the Old Testament in support of the doctrines of their Church, "the Protestant divine will be careful not to use weapons which it is impossible to guide, and which may with equal force be turned against himself." This is certainly a strange mode of arguing. No doubt if the Old Testament may be used "with equal force" against the faith of Protestants as against the errors of Roman Catholics, the wisest plan is to leave it quietly alone, but that this is so we have yet to learn; certainly we require some better proof of it than that Roman Catholics employ its types and figures in support of their tenets.

But now, while the author notices various causes which contribute to the uncertainty which prevails in the interpretation of Scripture, he intimates that there are "deeper reasons" which have hindered the natural meaning of the text from being immediately and universally received. One of these, he says, is connected with the unsettlement of many questions bearing on the subject. He proceeds to the consideration of some of those questions, and they certainly are most important. The first question is

in fact connected with the very nature of the Scriptures themselves; one reason why the natural meaning of the text is not received being the supposition that the Bible is the infallible word of God. He says we imagine a certain standard of perfection and accuracy to which it is supposed the Scriptures must attain; and, therefore, that when we meet with difficulties and contradictions, instead of candidly accepting them as errors, we are driven to search for "double senses, allegorical interpretations, forced reconcilements," against which if any object, they are met with the assurance that "God speaks not as man speaks."

"No one would interpret Scripture as many do, but for certain previous suppositions with which we come to the perusal of it. 'There can be no error in the Word of God;' therefore the discrepancies in the books of Kings and Chronicles are only apparent, or may be attributed to differences in the copies. 'It is a thousand times more likely that the interpreter should err than the inspired writer.' For a like reason the failure of a prophecy is never admitted, in spite of Scripture and of history (Jer. xxxvi. 30; Isa. xxiii.; Amos vii. 10—17); the mention of a name later than the supposed age of the prophet is not allowed, as in other writings, to be taken in evidence of the date (Isaiah xlv. 1)" (p. 343).

What the discrepancies are in the books of Kings and Chronicles to which he refers we are not told; if we were, perhaps it might be possible, after all, to show they are only apparent; but if not, we do maintain "it is a thousand times more likely that the interpreter should err than the inspired writer." Indeed, we have a striking proof of this, given by himself in this very passage. Had he searched the Old Testament he could hardly have found two prophecies that were more remarkably fulfilled than the first two named by him as instances of failure. Jeremiah foretold that the king of Babylon should come and destroy the land, and that Jehoiakim, King of Judah, should have none to sit upon the throne of David. And what does sacred history inform us?

Why, that when Jehoiakim's son, who succeeded him, was but a youth, the King of Babylon came against the land, and carried him, and his princes, and officers, and craftsmen, and all his treasures into Babylon, and set up his own uncle as king in Jerusalem (2 Kings xxiv.). The prophecy in Isaiah xxiii., concerning Tyre, is one the fulfilment of which is most remarkable. At the time when Tyre was the pride and joy of the earth, the centre of the world's commerce, and the mart of nations, Isaiah foretold, at least 125 years before, that God would stain the pride of its glory, that it should be taken and destroyed by the Chaldeans, that the inhabitants should pass over to the islands of the Mediterranean and adjoining countries, but should find no rest, and that the city should, after seventy years, be again restored, and return to her merchandise. This latter portion of the prediction is the more remarkable, for in other passages Tyre's desolation is spoken of as complete, reduced to be a rock on which fishermen should spread their nets. Nevertheless, the prophecy is shown by Bishop Newton to have been most wonderfully fulfilled. The old Tyre was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, in the thirty-second year of his reign, B.C. 573. Seventy years from that bring us to the year B.C. 503, when we find the Tyrians so recovered as to be able to assist Darius with their fleets; *"and by the time of Alexander the Tyrians were grown to such power and greatness, that they stopped the progress of that rapid conqueror longer than any part of the Persian empire besides." Thus her glory in new or insular Tyre was restored, but though she did build herself a stronghold, though she was defended by the sea, and fortified with a wall one hundred and fifty feet in height, yet she was besieged, and taken, and burned with fire, according to the word of

* Newton's Dissertations on the Prophecies, Dissertation XI.

the Lord (Ezek. xxviii. 18), and became a heap of ruins in the midst of the waters. With such facts of history before us we cannot understand how Isaiah xxiii. can be referred to as an instance of the failure of prophecy. With regard to Amos vii. 10—17, the writer overlooks the important fact that what in the passage was not fulfilled are words falsely attributed to Amos by Amaziah, the priest of Bethel! As to his complaint that a name found in Isaiah of a later age than the supposed age of the prophet is not taken, as it would in other writings, to determine its date, it is simply ridiculous, so long as we maintain that Isaiah differs from other writings, that it is an inspired prophecy, and that this very mention of the name of Cyrus is a proof of its inspiration.

But now we learn from this the serious nature of the question opened, a question second to none in importance, for upon it all certainty of truth depends, the question of inspiration. To this the first and most important portion of the Essay is devoted:—

"Among these previous questions, that which first presents itself is the one already alluded to—the question of inspiration" (p. 344).

Almost all are said to agree in the word as expressing the reverence which they feel for the Old and New Testament, "but here the agreement of opinion ends." Men make use of the word inspiration, but they do not mean by it the same thing; so that Bacon's *idola fori*, which of all others he regards as the most fruitful source of confusion*, must be guarded against here as in other theological questions. The writer says, "The word inspiration has received more numerous gradations and dis-

* At idola fori molestissima sunt, quæ ex fœdere tacito inter homines, de verbis et nominibus impositis, se in intellectum insinuarunt.—De Augmentis Scientiarum, Lib. v. cap. iv.

tinctions of meaning than, perhaps, any other in the whole of theology." And he then proceeds to mention the variety of meanings that have been attached to it, or rather, different shades of views that have been taken of the subject itself. The passage is important, and therefore, though a long one, we must quote it in full :—

"There is an inspiration of superintendence and an inspiration of suggestion; an inspiration which would have been consistent with the apostle or evangelist falling into error, and an inspiration which would have prevented him from erring; verbal organic inspiration, by which the inspired person is the passive utterer of a Divine word, and an inspiration which acts through the character of the sacred writer; there is an inspiration which absolutely communicates the fact to be revealed or statement to be made, and an inspiration which does not supersede the ordinary knowledge of human events; there is an inspiration which demands infallibility in matters of doctrine, but allows for mistakes in fact. Lastly, there is a view of inspiration which recognises only its supernatural and prophetic character, and a view of inspiration which regards the Apostles and Evangelists as equally inspired in their writings and in their lives, and in both receiving the guidance of the Spirit of truth in a manner not differing in kind, but only in degree, from ordinary Christians" (p. 345).

It is not our purpose to discuss these various views or theories of inspiration, especially as the writer of this Essay does not do so. We agree with him that some of them lose sight of the meaning of the word, that others of them seem framed with the view of removing difficulties; while of all it may be said, if they mean to define the mode of inspiration, they err in attempting to define what is incapable of exact definition. The philosophy of mind is so mysterious that we do not fully understand even its natural laws. We do not understand how one mind acts upon another, and communicates to it new ideas, or how, under the influence of strong emotions, the mind is often carried, as it were, beyond itself, into a higher region of thought. How, then, can we suppose we could understand the mode in which

the Spirit of God acts upon the human mind in imparting to it ideas and truths far beyond its natural comprehension and reach? No; we need not attempt to speculate as to the mode, while we hold fast the reality of the thing. And this is all-important; for inspiration in any sense worthy of the name is now denied. Apostles and Evangelists are declared not to have been under any "*supernatural*" influence; and such a view is given of the Bible as in truth deprives it of the character of the word of God. Now, at the very outset, we wish most strongly to declare our belief that the Bible is truly and literally THE WORD OF GOD, not that it may be accepted as the word of God, or that it is partially the word of God, or that part of it is the word of God, but that, in the strictest sense, it is in its totality, from Genesis to Revelation, *the* word of God. There is no resting place between this elevation, and the level of human compositions.

We regret to find that the view of inspiration maintained in this Essay is the very opposite of that we have stated. The author, referring to the various ideas of it mentioned by him, says;—

"Nor for any of the higher or supernatural views of inspiration is there any foundation in the Gospels or Epistles. There is no appearance in their writings that the Evangelists or Apostles had any inward gift, or were subject to any power external to them different from that of preaching or teaching which they daily exercised; nor do they anywhere lead us to suppose that they were free from error or infirmity. St. Paul writes like a Christian teacher, exhibiting all the emotions and vicissitudes of human feeling, speaking, indeed, with authority, but hesitating in difficult cases, and more than once correcting himself, corrected, too, by the course of events in his expectation of the coming of Christ. The Evangelist 'who saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true.' (John xix. 35). Another evangelist does not profess to be an original narrator, but only to set forth in order a declaration of what eye-witnesses had delivered, like many others whose writings have not been preserved to us. (Luke i. 1, 2). And the result is

in accordance with the simple profession and style in which they describe themselves; there is no appearance, that is to say, of insincerity or want of faith, but neither is there perfect accuracy or agreement"—(pp. 345, 346).

We have given this passage at length because it contains all that can possibly be said against the view of supernatural inspiration, and because in replying to its statements we hope to remove some confusion of thought on the subject, and put the whole question in its true light. We will consider the passage in detail, commencing with what the writer has last said. As a proof that the Evangelists were not supernaturally inspired, he says that while there is no appearance of "*want of faith*" in them, there is want of "accuracy or agreement." A want of verbal agreement we are quite ready to admit, but we do not see how that at all makes against inspiration. Indeed, if there were not the slightest variation in the narratives this would be held as a convincing argument that they were mere copyists; as, in fact, it is sometimes argued from the measure of agreement that does exist. We can well understand that the Spirit of God had a wise purpose in causing the Evangelists to vary the sacred narrative, as each of them wrote with a special design. The charge of inaccuracy is, however different; if it can be really proved that they have made mistakes, or put forward statements that are not correct, then the higher view of inspiration must certainly be given up. But can this be done? We believe not; nay, we are perfectly sure that it cannot. But here we are prepared to make two admissions, or rather to state decidedly two important points connected with the subject. First, some errors have crept into the sacred text by the frequent process of transcription. This appears from the variety of readings that are found by the collation of various manuscripts. To suppose that it could have been otherwise would be, indeed, to suppose the

constant existence of a miracle. That a volume, such as the Bible, written in different languages, could have been multiplied by human penmanship in different countries and in different ages, without any variations or mistakes being made would be utterly incredible, even giving the transcribers credit for the exercise of the greatest skill, diligence, and faithfulness. This, then, will account for some errors in names or numbers that may perhaps be pointed out. At the same time, we believe we are fully justified in positively asserting that these errors are so trifling that they are unworthy of mention; and that if all the various readings of all the MSS. were collected not a single doctrine of the faith, not a single truth of the Gospel would be found to be affected by them. But, again: there are doubtless some difficulties in Scripture which cannot thus be accounted for, and which we are unable to explain. But, we ask, is it not far more reasonable to ascribe this to want of sufficient knowledge on our part rather than to error on the part of the sacred writers, especially as it is found that some of these difficulties are gradually being removed by careful examination and increasing knowledge. Thus Dean Alford says of Stephen's address, recorded Acts vii.:—

"In the last apology of Stephen, which he spoke being full of the Holy Ghost, and with divine influence beaming from his countenance, we have at least *two demonstrable historical mistakes**."

Now, even if no solution could be offered of these supposed historical mistakes, we must say, that however high the authority of the critic who ventures to make such a statement as this, it is rash and unadvised. Were we to read in some classic author, an address to his countrymen by one acquainted with the history of his nation, to

* Greek Testament, Proleg., vol. i., ch. i. § 6.

say that he made mistakes would not be for a moment tolerated in order to get over some difficulties. And why should it, then, be permitted in the case of Stephen, where it is certainly far more improbable? Here was a man so intimately acquainted with the history and literature of his nation, and speaking with so much wisdom and power, as to confound the most learned of the Jewish Sanhedrim, for "they were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake" (Acts vi. 10); a man too, who, it is confessed, "spoke being full of the Holy Ghost, and with Divine influence beaming from his countenance;" and yet, to evade some difficulties that present themselves, the conclusion is at once adopted, that he made historical mistakes. Now we submit that even if these difficulties could not be explained, it would much more become the spirit of a scholar and the piety of a Christian to admit the difficulties and ascribe them to some deficiency in our knowledge than to attempt to cut the knot by charging the Scriptures with error. But, in this case, we are not left to reason on the general justness of the principle, for the "*demonstrable historical mistakes*" may by a little learned and careful criticism be demonstrated not to be mistakes at all. For this demonstration we refer to Appendix H., in Dr. Lee's work on the Inspiration of Holy Scripture.

The examples of want of accuracy in the Evangelists mentioned in this Essay are very stale and weak—that they trace the genealogy of Christ in different ways; that one mentions that the two thieves blasphemed, while another describes one thief as penitent; and that they appear to differ as to the time of the crucifixion. We certainly shall not stop to offer explanations upon these points. Such may be found in most of the Commentaries on the Gospels; nor would any well-instructed Sunday-school child find much difficulty in them.

But it is said that Luke "does not profess to be an original narrator," and that he merely, as other writers did, set forth the things that he had seen; and the conclusion derived from this is, that he was not supernaturally inspired. Now this remark leads us to point out and dwell upon a distinction that is of the very utmost importance. It had been noticed before by other writers, both ancient and modern, but is brought out fully and clearly in all its bearings on this important question in that learned and valuable work already referred to, "The Inspiration of Holy Scripture," by Rev. W. Lee. The distinction we refer to, is that between revelation and inspiration. That a man should be the medium of communicating the will or truth of God to the world, two things are required—first, that the knowledge of that will or truth should be imparted to his own mind; and, secondly, that he should be directed and enabled to convey it to others. To distinguish this twofold work or influence of the Spirit, the term revelation has been applied to the former, inspiration to the latter. If the subject be beyond the natural knowledge of the human intellect, then, when communicated by the Spirit to any mind, it becomes a revelation to that individual; when, again, that same Spirit influences and moves the mind of that person to make known that revelation to others, and enables him to do so in all its truth and purity, it becomes to them an inspired communication. It is possible that a man might receive a revelation from God, and yet not be inspired to write it. This was, indeed, the case with St. Paul, who "was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter." (2 Corinth. xii. 4.) So, again, concerning the revelations that were given to St. John, in Patmos, it was said to him, "Write the things which thou hast seen." In one case, however, he received a contrary command. When the seven thunders had uttered their voices, he was about

to write, but he heard a voice saying, "Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not." (Rev. x. 4.) Here was a revelation made to the mind of the Apostle which was not given as an inspired communication to the world. On the other hand a man might be inspired to communicate to the world and the Church that which was within his knowledge, or the ordinary sources of information. Thus when Paul writes that when Peter had come to Antioch, he withstood him, this fact was not a revelation to the Apostle; he knew and remembered he had done so, as he knew and remembered any other circumstance, but he was inspired to write it.

We may say, then, that all Scripture is inspired, and equally inspired; but all that is in inspired Scripture is not revealed. Moses had a personal knowledge of many of the events recorded in the Pentateuch; the Evangelists had a personal knowledge of many of the incidents of our Lord's life which they record; yet they were as fully inspired in writing these as were prophets when they wrote what was revealed to them, and which even they did not understand. Were this borne in mind it would at once remove every objection similar to the one here made, that St. Luke records the things which he had known from ordinary sources of information. Inspiration does not destroy these sources of information, it does not set aside the knowledge acquired by means of them; but it enables the inspired penman to write with infallible certainty and truth all that he records. In a word, the subject-matter contained in Scripture is very various—history, chronology, genealogies, biography, as well as doctrine and prophecy; even many of the acts and words of wicked men are recorded; all these were not revealed to the sacred writers by the Spirit of God. Of some of them they could say, "that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you," while

the things they did not know were supernaturally revealed to them. But whether thus supernaturally revealed, or whether learned from ordinary sources of information, all were written under the influence of inspiration suggesting what they should write, and enabling them to write it with the infallible certainty of truth. Thus

* "Inspiration is to be understood as denoting that Divine influence, under which *all* the parts of the Bible have been committed to writing—whether they contain an account of ordinary historical facts, or the narrative of supernatural revelations."

This distinction explains how, consistently with inspiration, parts of the Old Testament were gathered from other historical records of Jewish history; and, again, how the New Testament writers frequently quote the Septuagint version of the Old; one time strictly following the original Hebrew, and another adopting the Greek translation, according as they are most suited to the particular object that the inspired writer has in view.

But again, it is said in the passage quoted from the Essay, that there is nothing in the writings of the Evangelists or Apostles to lead us to suppose that they were free from error and infirmity, and that St. Paul "exhibits all the emotions and vicissitudes of human feeling." This no one will deny. Both Prophets and Apostles were "men of like passions" with us. In themselves they were neither perfect nor infallible, but it does not follow that they were not used as instruments for giving expression to the infallible utterances of the Holy Ghost. But when the writer adds that Paul "hesitates in difficult cases," and more than once corrects himself, and that he was "corrected too by the course of events in his ex-

* The Inspiration of Holy Scripture, by William Lee. M.A. Fellow and Tutor of Trinity College.

pectation of the coming of Christ;" he exhibits great confusion of thought upon the subject on which he writes, and really refers to what is a convincing proof of the reality of the inspiration for which we contend. If, when he says Paul hesitates in difficult cases, he refers, as we suppose, to the reply he gives to the question of the Corinthians on the subject of marriage, nothing is a stronger evidence that the Apostle was conscious of Divine inspiration on subjects revealed to him, that he had an inward gift, and was subject to a power external to him, different from that which he exercised in his judgment, and speaking as an ordinary man. He in this case clearly distinguishes between his own private opinion and advice and what he had received to deliver as the mind of God. His language is, "But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment." "And unto the married I command; *yet not I, but the Lord.*" "But to the rest *speak I, not the Lord.*" "Now concerning virgins, I have *no commandment of the Lord*; yet *I give my judgment* as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful" (1 Corinth. vii. 6, 10, 12, 25). What could show more plainly than this that the Apostle regarded his own natural judgment as entirely distinct from the communications he received by revelation from God, and which, under the influence of inspiration, he was directed to make known to the Church? Then again, even if it were certain that "*his expectation*" of the coming of Christ was corrected by the course of events, it would not in the slightest degree affect the question; because, as we shall see hereafter, the inspired writers did not themselves always understand the meaning of what they were made the instruments of uttering. It does not follow that the understanding of the sacred writers was always so enlightened by the revelations they received as to give them a perfect knowledge of the subjects upon which, under the influence of inspiration, they

wrote. St. Paul was inspired to speak of the hope of the Lord's coming in language such as this: "We which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord." The Thessalonians concluded from this that Christ was about immediately to appear; grant that the Apostle shared in this expectation, an expectation which was corrected by the course of events, it only proves that he wrote under the power of an influence external to his own mind, and that he was inspired by God to speak of the coming of Christ in language which would keep alive the expectation of that event in every age of the Church. Thus there is not the slightest force in any one objection here brought by the writer against what he terms "the higher or supernatural views of inspiration."

But now, he says, and in this we quite agree with him, that

"the nature of inspiration can only be known from the examination of Scripture; there is no other source to which we can turn for information" (p. 347).

This is perfectly true; the nature of inspiration is not to be determined by any *à priori* reasoning, we must form our idea of it from the evidence of Scripture itself, and the testimony of the sacred writers. Unfortunately, however, instead of proceeding to consider this evidence, the writer passes it by completely, and from a foregone conclusion forms his idea of inspiration:—

"To the question 'what is inspiration?' the first answer therefore is, '*That idea* of Scripture which we gather from the knowledge of it'" (p. 347).

Now we must object to such writing as this; whatever be the nature of inspiration it is not an idea. Suppose in the passage, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God," we were to substitute for the word inspiration this definition of it, how would the

passage read? "All Scripture is given by that idea of Scripture which we gather from the knowledge of it!" This, however, being his definition of inspiration, and his knowledge of Scripture being such as leads him to think that "imperfect aspects of the truth" and "variations of fact," as well as inaccuracies of language, are to be found in it, his notion of inspiration is such as is not inconsistent with the existence of these. Now once for all, we again deny that there are any real contradictions in Scripture; many that are alleged are but apparent, and are every day being removed by the critical knowledge and diligent research of the learned. And even if any still remain which as yet cannot be explained, it is indeed no small assumption to say, that there cannot be any circumstances unknown to us which, if known, would harmonize what now appear to be discrepancies. Instead, therefore, of assuming that there are real errors and contradictions in Scripture, and upon this assumption forming our idea of inspiration, let us examine what Scripture itself testifies on the subject, and consider what is the idea of inspiration that is to be gathered from it. And here we have abundant and satisfactory evidence, leading us to this conclusion, that when the sacred penmen were employed by God to write upon subjects either with which they were not acquainted, or which were beyond the reach of human knowledge, the thoughts and truths were *inbreathed* into their minds by the Spirit of God; and in all cases, whether they knew by ordinary means what they were about to write, or whether it was thus inbreathed as a revelation, they so wrote under the influence of the Spirit, that the written word was not theirs but God's.

Let us, in the first place, then reflect upon the way in which the books of the Old Testament are spoken of and referred to in the New. They are called "the Scriptures," "the oracles of God," while

God is distinctly said to have spoken by the mouths of His holy prophets (Luke i. 70, Heb. i.1). So God said to Moses, "Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say" (Exod. iv. 12); to Isaiah, "My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth" (ch. lix. 21). Again, Jeremiah says, "But the Lord said unto me, Say not I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold I have put my words in thy mouth (ch. i. 7—9). Such is the language that runs throughout the whole of the Old Testament, proving to us how literally true is the statement of St. Peter, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Epis. i. 21). The word came not forth from man but from God, for holy men *spake,* borne onward by the Holy Ghost, *ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου *φερομενοι ἐλάλησαν.*

A similar view is given of the power and influence under which the Apostles of Christ should speak. He himself gave them beforehand this assurance, "When they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour that speak ye, *for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost"* (*οὐ γὰρ ἐστε ὑμεῖς οἱ λαλοῦντες, ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον* Mark xiii. 11). What more explicit declaration could there be that the Holy Ghost should speak by the mouth of the Apostles? And, accordingly, we read that "they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake *the word of God* with boldness" (Acts

* Driven onward, as a ship by the wind. "And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we *let her drive* (*ἐφερόμεθα*)."—Acts xxvii. 15.

iv. 31). Is there, we would ask, no foundation here for any "supernatural view of inspiration?" is there here no evidence that the apostles were subject to an external power? Is the view of inspiration given in these passages consistent with "imperfect narratives?" If it be true that not Peter, John, or Stephen spake, but the Holy Ghost with which they were filled, that without thought or premeditation they were borne forward under a divine influence to give utterance to the word of God, shall it be said that the Holy Ghost made mistakes? Yet the view of inspiration taken by some is that while it preserved the doctrine from error, it did not protect the narrative. This seems to be the opinion of the writer, for while he says nothing as to the doctrine, he does say—

"There is no more reason why imperfect narratives should be excluded from Scripture than imperfect grammar" (p 348).

But such a theory as this is very difficult to be maintained, for if the sacred writers may err in the narration of facts, what security have we that they may not err in the exhibition of doctrine, or what authority is there for making this distinction? If they are fallible in recording history, what ground have we for supposing they are infallible in unfolding the mysteries of the truth? Besides, the doctrines of the Christian faith are inseparably connected with the facts of the Christian history. But this erroneous view evidently arises from not distinguishing between revelation and inspiration; because some things were not *revealed*, it is hastily concluded that the Scripture record of them is not *inspired*. But ALL Scripture —Scripture in all its parts—narrative as well as doctrine, history as well as prophecy, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim. iii. 16), *θεόπνευστος*, inbreathed of God. Now even if it be granted that this passage refers exclusively to the Old Testament Scriptures, notwithstanding this, that

the apostle had been exhorting Timothy to continue in the things that he had learned, and to hold fast the form of sound words he had heard, still it is clear that the passage is conclusive as to the nature and extent of Old Testament inspiration, and that for our argument is enough. Again, St. Peter places Paul's Epistles on a level with "the other Scriptures" (2 Peter iii. 16), a claim which the apostle himself indeed asserts. Writing to the Thessalonians, he says, "When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth *the word of God*" (1 Ep. ii. 13). "The word of God," this is an important expression; the Bible is not man's *word* but God's *word*, and because it is the *word* of God it is Holy *Scripture*. In this we have the true theory of inspiration.

We are thus led to speak of what is termed verbal inspiration; and we declare that we are unable to distinguish between inspiration and verbal inspiration properly understood. Scripture is the *written* word of God, and therefore the language of Scripture is the divine expression of the doctrines it conveys. This Scripture itself declares; passages already referred to teach it; "holy men of old *spake* as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" but there are two passages to which special reference must be made. St. Paul says, "which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (1 Corinth. ii. 13), λόγοις ἀλλ' ἐν διδακτοῖς Πνεύματος ἁγίου, "in *words taught* by the Holy Ghost." The apostle here plainly speaks of verbal inspiration; he declares that his words are words taught by the Holy Ghost. The same truth is implied by St. Peter when he represents the prophets as searching into the meaning of their own utterances:—"Searching what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ" (1 Ep. i. 11). When, then, they did not

understand the things which they themselves spake, it is evident that the language as well as the thoughts must have been inbreathed, for of themselves they could not express what they did not understand.

A great variety of considerations proves the reality of this, for not to argue the question whether it be possible for a train of thought to pass through the mind entirely dissociated from words, we would observe that in order that what was revealed to the prophets should become a true revelation to the world it should be secured from error and imperfection in its transmission. The divine thought might be inbreathed into the human mind, but if then left to be imperfectly or inadequately expressed, it might come forth coloured and distorted in the language of the writers. In order that the words of the sacred writers might be to us the word of God, they must have written as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Another important consideration is, that the doctrine and reasoning of Scripture are often made to depend upon a word. Thus our Lord proved the doctrine of the resurrection from *the tense* of the substantive verb, "As touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, I AM the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?" from whence he argues, "God IS not the God of the dead but of the living" (Matt. xxii. 31, 32). In like manner St. Paul reasons that the Gospel was preached before the law in the promise given to Abraham. "He saith not, and to *seeds*, as of many; but as of one, and to thy *seed*, which is Christ" (Galatians iii. 16). Such being the case it would seem to follow that Scripture was *written* under the Spirit's influence, and is, therefore, to be regarded, not only in its matter but in its language, as divine.

The objection urged against this view is, that we trace in the Bible as many different styles as

there are authors; that the idiosyncrasy of the individual writer is distinctly preserved throughout, as much so as in any human composition—a fact supposed to be incompatible with anything like verbal inspiration. But this objection rests upon an erroneous supposition. It supposes that the inspired penmen were perfectly passive machines. Even were this the case, we can understand that their variety might be marked by a corresponding variety in the utterances of the Spirit. The same breath will produce different tones from different instruments; the same handwriting will be modified by the nature of the pen employed; so that if the inspired penmen were nothing more than mechanical instruments in the hand of the Holy Ghost, we need not suppose that there would be a perfect uniformity of style in Scripture. But though the inspired writers were penmen, they were not senseless machines; they were conscious intelligent agents, whom to use according to the laws of their natural constitution was the great prerogative of God. Man has power to employ matter, and to direct its laws according to his will; it belongs to God to employ mind, to make the human spirit vibrate to his touch, and the human tongue give utterance to its tones, not in contradiction, but according to the natural laws of individual constitution and temperament. And in doing this, not only the power but the wisdom of God is made manifest. He chose and prepared the instruments suited for his purposes. He chose Isaiah with noble imagination, whose lips, touched by the fire of heaven, might pour forth in loftiest strain the glorious prophecies concerning Messiah. And he chose Amos, rough and unpolished, from among the herdmen of Tekoa, who, under the influence of the same Spirit, might, in sternest language, denounce the transgression of Israel, declare the judgments impending, and summon them to meet their God.

So, too, he called and prepared the ardent Peter, the loving John, the zealous Paul, and used them, not by destroying their individual characters and styles, but by employing everything that was peculiar and distinctive in them for the accomplishment of different purposes, and the exhibition of the different aspects of divine truth.

On the whole, then, we believe that the view which Scripture itself gives us of the subject of inspiration is that the sacred penmen under the influence of the Holy Ghost *wrote* the Scriptures, so that their words are the Word of God, and their language is divine; that when they wrote about things which they did not know, the thoughts and truths were inbreathed into them; and when they wrote about things within the reach of their knowledge, they still wrote under the influence of the same Spirit, not only preserving them from error, but directing them what and how they should write, so that though all Scripture is not equally revealed, all is equally inspired.

We proceed now to some further statements on the subject of inspiration by the author of this Essay. To the previous consideration, that "the nature of inspiration can only be known from the examination of Scripture," he adds another, "that any true doctrine of inspiration must conform to all well ascertained facts of history and science" (p. 348). The conclusion he would seem to come to from this is, that as revelation and science are at variance, we must form such an idea of the nature of inspiration as will admit of this discrepancy. He says, "there are a class of scientific facts with which popular opinions on theology often conflict"—facts, for instance, which relate to the formation of the earth and the beginning of the human race, and he tells us, "it is not worth while to fight on this debateable ground a losing battle,

in the hope that a generation will pass away before we sound a last retreat"! Now, however "popular opinions on theology" may conflict with scientific facts, we believe that revealed theology does not. The sooner, therefore, that these popular errors are given up the better; but we refuse to give up revelation and inspiration, lest, perchance, in time to come, something might be discovered in science that would appear to be opposed to them; yet this is, in fact, what this writer recommends. After observing that nearly all intelligent persons are now agreed that this earth has existed for ages, and that persons best informed are of opinion that our received chronology must have a longer limit assigned to it in the past, he adds:—

"Recent discoveries in geology *may* perhaps open a further vista of existence for the human species, while *it is possible*, and *may* one day be known, that mankind spread, not from one but from many centres over the globe; or, as others say, that the supply of links which are at present wanting in the chain of animal life *may* lead to new conclusions respecting the origin of man. Now let it be granted that *these facts*, being with the past cannot be shown in the same palpable and evident manner as the facts of chemistry or physiology; and that the proof of some of them, especially of those last mentioned, is wanting; still it is a false policy to set up inspiration or revelation in opposition to them, a principle which can have no influence on them, and should be rather kept out of their way. The sciences of geology and comparative philology are steadily gaining ground (many of the guesses of twenty years ago have become certainties, and the *guesses of to-day may* hereafter become so). Shall we peril religion on the possibility of their untruth?" (p 349)

This is certainly an extraordinary passage; the things which in one sentence are spoken of as guesses are in another called facts, while revelation is made to stand a poor trembling and frightened thing amid the progress of science, afraid to utter her voice, lest "*guesses*" that would contradict her "*may*" prove true. Well might revelation exclaim, "Save me from my friends." Shame on such advocacy as this. We are not to say that the human race sprung from one pair,

though the best physiologists strongly confirm the teaching of Scripture on this point.

"We contemplate (says Dr. Prichard*), among all the diversified tribes who are endowed with reason and speech, the same internal feelings, appetencies, aversions, the same inward convictions, the same sentiments of subjection to invisible powers, and more or less fully developed of accountableness, or responsibility to unseen avengers of wrong, and agents of retributive justice, from whose tribunals men cannot, even by death, escape . . . in a word, the same inward and mental nature is to be recognised in all the races of men. When we compare this fact with the observations which have been heretofore fully established as to the specific instincts, and separate physical endowments, of all the distinct tribes of sentient beings in the universe, we are entitled to draw confidently the conclusion that all human races are of one species and one family."

But though science thus confidently proclaims the same truth, revelation is reminded that it is "a false policy" to let her voice be heard in opposition to certain guesses, lest they might possibly prove true. Nor, again, should she teach that God made man in his image, lest perchance some African traveller should hereafter discover a link between man and the gorilla! We declare that, in our judgment, no possible discrepancy between science and Scripture could so "peril religion," or throw such contempt on revelation, as does the suspicion of its truth contained in the course here recommended as politic and wise.

A similar line of thought is applied to the results of historical inquiries:—

"These results cannot be barred by the dates or narratives of

* The Natural History of Man. By James Cowles Prichard, M.D.

Scripture, neither should they be made to wind round into agreement with them"—(p. 350).

The conclusion drawn from this is, that "the idea of inspiration must expand and take them in;" in other words, we must form such an idea of inspiration as will allow the dates and narratives of Scripture to be contradicted by the results of historical inquiries. If we take such a view of inspiration as this, we are assured such results can neither impugn nor confirm revelation. Now, we quite agree with the writer, that "the recent chronological discoveries from Egyptian monuments do not tend to overthrow revelation." We are perfectly sure that the hieroglyphic records of Egyptian monuments will never disclose anything that is contrary to Scripture. But this admission on the writer's part will not induce us to give up the strong confirmation which the Jewish history has derived from archæological discoveries, nor to agree with him in thinking that revelation derives no support from the Ninevite inscriptions, and that it ought not to be thought

"that Christianity gains anything from the deciphering of the names of some Assyrian and Babylonian kings, contemporaries chiefly with the later Jewish history" (p. 350).

Were it necessary, we might show how witnesses for the truth of revelation have in our day been summoned from amid the ruins of Nineveh; and how, under the hand of Layard, that buried city has arisen from the sleep of ages to give to the world its testimony for God, as it cries from the dust, "Thy Word is truth." But we must dwell for a moment on the last subject referred to, "the deciphering of the names of some Assyrian and Babylonian kings;" because it not only proves a confirmation of Scripture, but also furnishes a striking example of the removal, by the progress of discovery, of a difficulty which for

a length of time appeared incapable of any solution. Daniel, in his account of the taking of Babylon by Cyrus, says that, on the very night it was taken, the Chaldean king, whom he calls Belshazzar, was slain (ch. v. 30). But this appears to be irreconcilably opposed to Chaldean history; for we learn, from a fragment of Berosus preserved by Josephus (Cont. Apion, lib. i. c. 20), that at the time when Babylon was taken Nabonidus was king. Moreover, the same historian informs us that, as Cyrus was approaching the city, Nabonidus went out to meet him, but was defeated, and fled to Borsippus, and that Cyrus, having eventually taken that city also, treated him with consideration, and permitted him to retire to Carmania, where he died. Now here was an apparent palpable contradiction between sacred and profane history. But the long-desired solution of the difficulty is given by the very deciphering of the names of the Assyrian and Babylonian kings from which the writer says Christianity can gain nothing. There are now in the British Museum four clay cylinders, discovered by Colonel Rawlinson in the ruins of Mugheir, the ancient Ur of the Chaldees. They were found in the four corners of the Temple of the Moon, and prove to be cylinders of Nabonidus, the last king of Babylon (B.C. 555). The inscription on them relates to the repairs of the temple, but furnishes the important information that the eldest son of Nabonidus was Belsharezar, evidently the Belshazzar of Daniel, and that he was admitted by his father to share with him the government. By this discovery Daniel and Berosus may be easily reconciled. We may admit, with Berosus, that Nabonidus, going forth to meet the invading army, was vanquished, and fled to the neighbouring town of Borsippa, while Belshazzar, remaining in the city, which was stormed by night during a festival, was slain. Thus, as Colonel Rawlinson

writes, "we are for the first time enabled to reconcile authentic history with the inspired record of Daniel*." A remarkable coincidence has been pointed out in connection with this. We read that, upon Daniel interpreting the writing on the wall, he was made *third* ruler in the kingdom. "Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold upon his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be *the third ruler* in the kingdom" (Dan. v. 29). Why was he not made the *second* ruler, as Joseph was under very similar circumstances? The Babylonian cylinders enable us to explain. Nabonidus was king. Belshazzar, his son, sharing with him the kingdom, was *second* in authority. Daniel was appointed *third*. We have thus a remarkable proof of the perfect truth and accuracy of the sacred record, and at the same time an example of a very considerable difficulty being removed by the progress of knowledge; from which we should learn that revelation need not tremble at the discoveries of science, or the results of historical investigation, and that we should not shrink from maintaining such a view of inspiration as stamps Scripture with the character of the infallible word of God, and leads us to attach greater weight to divine truth than to human guesses.

The author declares that however interesting the question of inspiration may be, it is of no importance to the interpreter, "that the interpretation of Scripture has nothing to do with any opinion respecting its origin," and therefore he recommends the interpreter to go on his way, and not seek "to determine a matter with which he has nothing to do, and which was not determined by the Fathers of the Church" (p. 351). Upon both these statements we must say a word. We entirely deny that the question of

* *Athenæum*, No. 1,377, p. 341, March 18, 1854.

inspiration has nothing to do with its interpretation; of course, both the holders and deniers of inspiration "may meet on the common ground of the meaning of words." But if the Scriptures be the inspired word of God, if they contain type and prophecy, the mere determination of the meaning of words will not furnish a sufficient clue to their interpretation. But we must defer the discussion of this subject, as it is afterwards more fully spoken of. That the Fathers did not determine the *nature* of inspiration, or endeavour to define the *modus operandi* of the Spirit, may be admitted. This we believe no one ought to attempt, and if attempted we are sure it must be a failure; but that they taught the reality of inspiration, and asserted in the strongest manner its supernatural character, is too notorious to require proof.

Thus St. Clement writes to the Corinthians: *"Consider diligently the Scriptures, which are the true sayings of the Holy Ghost." So Gregory the Great, † "But what is the sacred Scripture but a certain epistle of the Almighty God to his creatures? . . . Study, therefore, I beseech you, and daily meditate on the words of thy Creator. Learn the heart of God in the words of God." Such is a specimen of the language of the Christian Fathers with reference to the Scriptures. On no subject, perhaps, do they give a fuller or clearer testimony. If any one desires to form an idea of their teaching upon inspiration we would refer him to Appendix G of Mr. Lee's work on Inspiration, or to Mr. Westcott's "Catena on Inspiration," appended to his "Gospel Harmony."

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* Ἐν [κύπτετε] εἰς τὰς γραφὰς τὰς ἀληθεῖς [ῥήσεις] Πνεύματος τοῦ Ἁγίου.—S. Clementis ad Corinth, ch. xlv.; Patres Apostolic. tom. i., p. 160, ed. Jacobson.

† Quid est autem Scriptura Sacra nisi, quædam epistola omnipotentis Dei ad creaturam? . . Stude ergo quæso, et quotidie Creatoris tui verba meditare. Disce cor Dei in verbis Dei. S. Gregor. M. Ep. xxxi. *Ad Theodorum Medicum.*

Not only did the Fathers speak of the Scriptures as the Word of God, but they describe the sacred writers as under the supernatural influence of the Holy Ghost; indeed, a favourite simile of theirs is that by which they represented the inspired writers as lyres whose chords were tuned and struck by the Spirit of God. Thus Origen says, * "Scripture, as a whole, is God's one, perfect, and complete instrument, giving forth to those who wish to learn, it's one saving music from many notes combined;" while Chrysostom continually applies to Paul and the other apostles the title † "The Lyre of the Spirit." Thus, both by the testimony of Scripture itself and the teaching of the Fathers of the Church, we learn that the true doctrine of inspiration is that which represents the sacred writers as being so under the influence of the Holy Ghost that their thoughts and their words are to be regarded as the thoughts and words not of men but of God.

The author, in passing from the subject of inspiration, and the errors of interpretation, into which he thinks any supernatural view of it must lead, notices what he conceives to be another source of erroneous interpretation, namely, "the attempt to adapt the truths of Scripture to the doctrines of the creeds," and "the precepts and maxims of Scripture to the language or practice of our age" (p. 353). Upon the first of these attempts at adaptation he objects to the Nicene or Athanasian creed being made an "instrument for the interpretation of Scripture;" but who says that Scripture is to be interpreted by the creeds? Certainly not the Church of which he is a minister, for its Eighth Article teaches that

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* *Ἐν γὰρ τὸ τέλειον οἶδε καὶ ἡρμοσμένον ὄργανὸν τοῦ θεοῦ εἶναι πᾶσαν τὴν γραφὴν, μίαν ἀποτελοῦν ἐκ διαφόρων φθόγγων σώτήριον τοῖς μανθάνειν ἐθέλουσι φωνὴν.—Comm. in Matt.* v. 9.

† *Ἠκούσατε τῆς ἀποστολικῆς φωνῆς, τῆς σάλπιγγος τῆς ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, τῆς λύρας τῆς πνευματικῆς;—Ad Pop. Antioch, Hom. I.*

the creeds are to be received, "for they may be proved by most certain warrants of holy Scripture." Thus the creeds are brought to the Scripture, and not Scripture to the creeds. The truth is, the writer objects to giving to the language of Scripture any precise meaning at all, or drawing from the New Testament any definite system of truth. He says that to attribute to St. Paul "the abstract notion of Christian truth which afterwards sprang up" is as great an anachronism as to attribute to him "a system of philosophy."

"Nor indeed is it easy to say what is the meaning of 'proving a doctrine from Scripture.' For when we demand logical equivalents and similarity of circumstances, when we balance adverse statements, St. James and St. Paul, the New Testament with the Old, it will be hard to demonstrate from Scripture any complex system either of doctrine or practice" (pp. 366, 367).

Besides, we are reminded that the Bible was written in the East, that its language and feelings are Eastern, that much must be attributed to "Oriental modes of speech," and that, therefore, any attempt to draw out these Oriental modes, "with the severity of a philosophical or legal argument," must be attended with the greatest confusion. Thus the letter of Scripture is useless, and creeds, no matter how orthodox, are worse. The creeds and articles of the Church must therefore be put aside if we would hope to be able at all to interpret Scripture aright. We are, however, comforted by the assurance,—

"Neither would the substitution of any other precise or definite rule of faith—as, for example, the Unitarian—be more favourable to the interpretation of Scripture" (p. 355).

Before proceeding to other questions mentioned by the author as affecting Scripture interpretation, we should strongly recommend him to be more careful how he himself attempts to adapt texts of Scripture to what they are totally inapplicable. Thus he says,

"the Christian scheme of Redemption has been staked on two figurative expressions," And what are the two *figurative* expressions?

"'As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;' and the corresponding passage in Romans v. 12, notwithstanding the declaration of the Old Testament, as also of the New, 'Every soul shall bear its own iniquity,' and 'Neither this man sinned, nor his parents'" (p. 361).

Now, in the first place, the expressions of which he speaks, instead of being figurative, are perfectly literal; and, in the next place, the passages from the Old and New Testaments by which he would prove that they do not teach "the Christian scheme of Redemption,"—or in other words, death in Adam, life in Christ,—are wholly inapplicable to the subject. So again we are told the Protestant who would prove the doctrines and discipline of his own Church from Scripture—

"is often obliged to have recourse to harsh methods, and sometimes to deny appearances which seem to favour some particular tenet of Roman Catholicism" (p. 366).

—And Matthew xvi. 18, 19; xviii. 18; 1 Cor. iii. 15, are noted as instances of this. In reply, we would only say that the writer must be but little acquainted with the Romish controversy, if he feel "obliged to have recourse to harsh methods" to show that these passages do not lend any support to the tenets of the Church of Rome. For instance, had he consulted Cardinal Bellarmine* on the last one (1 Cor. iii. 15), he would have found that that author shows that the Fathers interpreted it very variously, most of their interpretations being decidedly opposed to the Romish doctrine of Purgatory; while the slightest attention to the context and argument of the Apostle would show that it cannot by any possibility be applied to that dogma.

But now we are told that other questions must be determined before any progress can be made in the interpretation of Scripture. One of these is—

* De Purgatorio, lib. i. c. 5.

" the origin of the three first Gospels,—an inquiry which has not been much considered by English theologians since the days of Bishop Marsh" (p. 370.)

—The statement that the settlement of this question is necessary before we can make any progress in the interpretation of Scripture, seems very inconsistent with what was before said,—

" that the interpretation of Scripture has nothing to do with any opinion respecting its origin" (p 350).

If by an inquiry into "the origin" of the three Gospels we mean an inquiry whether they were written under the influence of inspiration, then, as we have said, the determination of this must affect the question of interpretation; but if we mean—and this is what is meant—an inquiry as to whether the authors of the three Gospels made use of any common tradition or document in writing their narratives, this cannot affect either their interpretation or their inspiration. No possible reason can be assigned why it should affect their interpretation; while the distinction between revelation and inspiration shows that even the compiler of history might be inspired. This is the question which we were informed in Essay VI. is excluded from the English Church, "not from a conviction of its barrenness, but from a fear that it might prove too fertile in results." But whatever results would arise from the inquiry could only be interesting to the biblical critic, they could not affect any doctrine of the faith, or any question of theology. The truth is, that the inquiry has been given up solely because of its "barrenness," it being impossible to be determined, and even if determined it could lead to no result. The opinion of the writer on the subject is as follows:—

" The most probable solution of this difficulty is, that the tradition on which the three first Gospels are based was at first preserved orally, and slowly put together and written in the three

forms which it assumed at a very early period, those forms being in some places, perhaps, modified by translation" (p. 370).

Well, then, we ask in what way does this "most probable solution" help us to interpret the Gospels? We do not see how it can. It is certainly no help to be told, as we immediately are, that "we can no longer speak of three independent witnesses of the Gospel narrative" (p. 371)—a statement which rests upon the same constant confusion of revelation and inspiration. Dean Alford is of opinion that "no documentary source could have led to the present texts of our Gospels*." And to show the perfect barrenness of this inquiry, and the hopeless confusion into which they are plunged who engage in it, we would set down the method of inquiry by Bishop Marsh, so much admired, and his hypothesis on the subject, as given by Alford:—

"He supposes, 1) א, the original Hebrew Gospel; 2) $\bar{\aleph}$, a Greek version of the same; 3) א + *a* + A, a volume containing a copy of the Hebrew original Gospel, accompanied by lesser (*a*) and greater (A) additions; 4) א + β + B, another copy of ditto, accompanied by *other* lesser (β) and greater (B) additions; 5) א + γ + Γ, a third copy of ditto, accompanied by *a third* set of lesser (γ) and greater (Γ) additions; 6) ב, a Hebrew gnomology (collection of sayings of the Lord), varying according to different copies.

"Hence he holds our Gospels to have arisen: viz., the *Hebrew Matthew*, from א + ב + *a* + A + γ + Γ; Luke, from א + ב + β + B + γ + Γ + א; Mark, from א + *a* + A + β + B + $\bar{\aleph}$; the Greek Matthew to be a translation from the Hebrew Matt., with the collation of $\bar{\aleph}$ and Luke and Mark. This is only *one* of the various arrangements made by the supporters of this hypothesis †."

Such is the genealogy of the synoptic Gospels as traced by Bishop Marsh. If our readers think they would derive any profit from the further study of it,

* Greek Testament, vol. i., Prolegomena, ch. i., sec. iii.

† Ibid., note.

they will find it, as drawn out into a genealogical tree by Ebrard, in Appendix L. to Lee's work on Inspiration, together with other theories on this subject, equally groundless and improbable.

We come now to another question mentioned by the writer as affecting the interpretation of Scripture, and it is an important one. It refers to the application of type and prophecy—in fact, to the connection between the Old and New Testaments. And upon this subject we find views put forward which are quite opposed to the truth and reality of revelation, some of the worst errors of the previous Essays being repeated. The writer continually lays down the principle that Scripture has but one meaning, and that to say that there is any double meaning in prophecy, or even that in the law there is any foreshadowing of the Gospel, is to concede the principle of allegorical interpretation adopted by the Fathers. He asks,—

"Is it admitted that the Scripture has one and only one true meaning? or are we to follow the Fathers into mystical and allegorical explanations? or, with the majority of modern interpreters, to confine ourselves to the double senses of prophecy, and the symbolism of the Gospel in the law? In either case we assume what never can be proved, and an instrument is introduced of such subtlety and pliability as to make the Scriptures mean anything" (p. 368).

"Again, if we attribute to the details of the Mosaical ritual a reference to the New Testament; or, once more, supposing the passage of the Red Sea to be regarded not merely as a figure of baptism, but as a fore-ordained type, the principle is conceded; there is no good reason why the scarlet thread of Rahab should not receive the explanation given to it by Clement. A little more or a little less of the method does not make the difference between certainty and uncertainty in the interpretation of Scripture" (p. 369).

We must say we have here the most extraordinary, and erroneous statements we have ever read—statements which eliminate from the Bible everything prophetical, typical, and divine, and which charge both Christ and his Apostles with a false application of the

Old Testament Scriptures. Are we to be told that there is no difference between the mystical and fanciful system of allegorising adopted by some ancient writers, and the sober, intelligent, and beautiful explanation of the law and the prophets, not only sanctioned but opened out by the New Testament itself? We really find it difficult to understand what the writer's views upon this subject are, for while he here says that if the principle be admitted at all, a little more or less of the method makes no difference, in another passage he writes:—

"It is true, also, that there are types in Scripture which were regarded as such by the Jews themselves, as, for example, the scapegoat or the paschal lamb. But that is no proof of all outward ceremonies being types when Scripture is silent" (p. 381).

Certainly not. We are no more justified in creating a type than we should be in making a prophecy. We are not arguing for the mischievous allegorising of Origen, we do not claim for imagination the liberty of indulging in fanciful and mystical interpretations, but while condemning an unwarrantable system of allegorising, we must contend against the greater error which teaches that—

"The apprehension of the original meaning is inconsistent with the reception of a typical or conventional one" (p. 418). "And what we give up as a general principle we shall find it impossible to maintain partially; *e. g.*, in the types of the Mosaic law and the double meanings of prophecy, at least, in any sense in which it is equally applicable to all deep and suggestive writings" (p. 419).

But what saith the Scripture? To it we appeal. Here we have a question opened, upon which Scripture pronounces. The writer truly observes that the question involved is "the relation between the Old and New Testaments." And upon this we are not left in any uncertainty, or to the decision of our own judgment. We learn that the Old Testament is to be explained by the New, that by that explanation there is not new truth introduced into it, but old truth is

found there and brought to light, so that what the writer speaks of as an assumption is a reality.

"The types and ceremonies of the law, perhaps the very facts and persons of the history will be assumed to be predestined or made after a *pattern* corresponding to the things that were to be in the latter days" (p. 370).

But we ask, is not this just what we learn from the New Testament is the case? Does not St. Paul declare that an incident in the domestic history of Abraham was an allegory, that Agar and her son, and Sarah and her son were types? (Gal. iv.). Does he not teach that Adam is the figure of him that was to come? (Rom. v. 14). What is the Epistle to the Hebrews but an unfolding of the typical meaning of the whole ceremonial law? "The Holy Ghost this signifying." "Which was a figure for the time then present." "It was necessary that the *patterns* of things in the heavens should be purified with these." "For the law having a shadow of good things to come." Such is the language by which the typical character of the whole ceremonial law, its priesthood, its tabernacle, its sacrifices, is revealed. Christ was the end; he is the substance of which they were the shadow, and in him, as their great antitype, they find a fulfilment in the minutest particular. Take this typical character from the Jewish economy, and you at once involve it in deepest darkness: take it from the ceremonial law, and you render it an unmeaning enigma. * "Judaism with a typified atonement may be a miracle or a chain of miracles, but Judaism without it is a greater miracle still." Can this be denied without denying the New Testament? Can it be denied without denying Christianity? Impossible, for both affirm the teaching of the Church in her Seventh Article, that "both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to mankind by

* Professor Butler's Sermons—Sermon XIV.

Christ." Salvation is the subject of it all. Christ is the golden thread that runs through every page, binding its parts together, and giving a unity to the whole. Christ in Genesis and Christ in Revelation, Christ in its history, Christ in its genealogies, Christ in its types, Christ in its ceremonies, Christ in its sacrifices, Christ in its prophecies, Christ in all, its Alpha and Omega. "Him first—Him last—Him midst and without end." This is the true oneness of the Bible, not that of which the writer speaks which "begins with the true unity of God in the earliest books, and ends with the perfection of Christ," and which

"saves the interpreter from the necessity of maintaining that the Old Testament is one and the same everywhere; that the books of Moses contain truths or precepts, such as the duty of prayer or the faith in immortality, or the spiritual interpretation of sacrifice which no one has ever seen there" (p. 387).

But, again, there is in the Scriptures not only a unity of subject, but a unity of design, though this is called by the writer "a mischievous notion." We are not to regard them merely as a collection of books bound together in one volume, which when we come to study "at length the idea rises in our minds of a common literature, a pervading life, an overruling law," but we are to regard them as the book whose several portions have each a definite end, and all contributing to the unity and perfection of the whole as the revelation of Christ. Thus the types of the Pentateuch are not to be regarded as repetitions of one and the same truth, but as exhibitions of a variety of truths connected with the same subject. The types of each book have their own peculiar and distinctive character. While redemption through the blood of Christ is the great subject of all, that subject is presented under various aspects and in its different relations. So, again, we are not to look upon the four Gospels as merely giving a fourfold history of our Lord's life, but each Gospel gives a different

aspect of that life, so that by their combination we get a perfect and finished view of Christ. We believe it would thus be possible to take every book of the Old, as well as of the New Testament, and point out its special design, each fulfilling some particular purpose, contributing to the one grand result, occupying an assigned place, and, like every stone in a building, having a definite relation to each other and to the whole.

But the author proceeds a step further to deprive the Scriptures of all meaning, and to render their interpretation impossible, though his statements appear strangely contradictory. He tells us there is no quotation from the Psalms or Prophets in the Epistles "which is based on the original sense or context;" that the time will come when educated men will be no more able to believe that the words, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son" (Matt. ii. 15; Hosea xi. 1), were *intended* by the Prophet to refer to the return of Joseph and Mary from Egypt, than they are now able to believe the Roman Catholic explanation of Gen. iii. 15, "Ipsa conteret caput tuum" (p. 418). Now, no one holds it essential to believe that the *prophet intended* this application. He may or may not have so understood the words; but this is a very different thing from saying that the Holy Ghost, "who spake by the Prophets," did not intend it. Holding, as we do, that the Scriptures are inspired, we believe that the Spirit of God often included a deeper meaning in the words* than was understood by those who gave them utterance, and that the inspired writers did not always fully understand the significance of their own predictions; indeed, not only, as we have seen, does St. Peter affirm this, but the writer strangely admits it:—

"All that the prophet meant may not have been consciously

* See 4th vol. Bac. Op. (Spedding's ed.), pp. 312, 313.

present to his mind; there were depths which to himself also were but half revealed" (p. 380).

But again we are informed that the language of Scripture is not very definite, that at the time when our Saviour appeared, "Greek was in a state of degeneracy and decay;" that "it had lost its logical precision;" that "the language of Scripture does not admit of any sharp distinction." And yet this writer at the same time adds:—

"The power and meaning of the characteristic words of the New Testament is in remarkable contrast with the vapid and general use of the same words in Philo about the same time" (p. 396).

But, notwithstanding this, what is the conclusion to which he would lead us? That distinctions in theology must be given up, that definite creeds must be abandoned, that we must not "impose any narrow rule of religious opinion on the ever-varying conditions of the human mind and Christian society," that it is "no longer sufficient to rest doctrines on texts of Scripture," that we should be unwilling "to peril religion on the literal truth of such an expression as 'We shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air.'" Such are some of the aids afforded by the author for the interpretation of Scripture. We greatly fear that instead of aids they will prove stumbling blocks to many. Of this he seems himself to be afraid, for he addresses a word to

"any one who is about to become a clergyman, and feels, or thinks that he feels that some of the preceding statements cast a shade of trouble on his future walk of life" (p. 430).

That such may be the least evil, great as it is, caused by this Essay, we earnestly hope. Happy will it be for the author if his words cast a shade of trouble only on the life that now is of some doubting souls who through his means may have made shipwreck of the faith. We may give him credit for sincere motives and intentions; we do not believe that he desires to

lay a rude and sacrilegious hand upon the ark of God; that he is influenced by the hope "that the Gospel might win again the minds of intellectual men" we are not disposed to doubt; but even were his efforts to accomplish this, the sacrifice of truth is too costly a price for such a result. To win men to a Gospel which is "another gospel" is useless. And we regret to say it is "another gospel" that the author teaches. Not only does he advance views with reference to Scripture which, if adopted, must overthrow "the foundations," but, as might be expected, he has fallen into some of the worst errors of the other Essayists. He speaks of Christianity becoming "at one with the *conscience* of man," of its ceasing to be "at variance with his intellectual convictions," of "*the education of the world*," of "all mankind whom He restores to His Father and their Father, to His God and their God." He tells us that the "revelation which we trace in the Old and New Testament is a part of a larger whole extending over the earth," and that the divisions of the Christian world are more "differences of nations than of creeds." The life of Christ is spoken of, but there is no mention of his death, while the study of the Bible in a liberal spirit is recommended, as a book containing poetry, history, biography, and the highest form of moral teaching, not as the book "which is able to make wise unto salvation."

And yet there is one passage with which we would gladly conclude, which seems to tell of thoughts and feelings, as well as of views of Scripture, better and higher than all this:—

"There are difficulties of another kind in many parts of Scripture, the depth and inwardness of which require a measure of the same qualities in the interpreter himself. There are notes struck in places, which, like discoveries of science, have sounded before their time, and only after many days have been caught up and found a response on earth. There are germs of truth which after thousands of years have never yet taken root in the world. . . . It is perhaps the greatest difficulty of all to enter into the

meaning of the words of Christ—so gentle, so human, so divine, neither adding to them nor marring their simplicity. The attempt to illustrate or draw them out in detail, even to guard against their abuse, is apt to disturb the balance of truth The interpreter needs nothing short of 'fashioning' in himself the image of the mind of Christ. He has to be born again into a new spiritual or intellectual world, from which the thoughts of this world are shut out. It is one of the highest tasks on which the labour of a life can be spent, to bring the words of Christ a little nearer the heart of man" (pp. 379, 380)

And is this book which requires a depth and inwardness in order to understand, this book which has struck notes which have found a response on earth only after many days, this book in which are germs of truth which have never yet taken root in the world, is this book but the word of man? No; it bears upon it the divine impress of Him whose word it is. There is a depth, a beauty, a majesty, a fulness, a glory in it, not of earth. It shines amid the night time of the world like a bright star upon the pilgrim's path, streaming down its light upon him and cheering him on his way. In it we find a balm for every wound, a cure for every care. By its words the weary are strengthened, the tempted upheld, the afflicted comforted, the mourner cheered. It speaks of life and light and love, of hope and joy and peace. It tells of sin pardoned, of death vanquished, of man redeemed. It lights up the valley of the shadow of death, and tells of a reunion in a world beyond the grave. It tells of a better land, a happier home, where, beyond the reach of sorrow and strife and death and sin, all who are redeemed by a Saviour's blood and sanctified by the Holy Spirit shall dwell for ever with Him, who, when walking on this world as incarnate God, lifted up His eyes to His Father and their Father, and said, "Sanctify them through thy truth, THY WORD IS TRUTH."

THE END.