

THE DEITY:

An Argument

ON THE EXISTENCE, ATTRIBUTES, AND PERSONAL
DISTINCTIONS OF THE GODHEAD.

BY

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THIRD EDITION OF "THEIOTES,"

REVISED AND ENLARGED.



LONDON:

HAMILTON, ADAMS, & CO., PATERNOSTER ROW.

1877.

Hungay

CLAY AND TAYLOR, PRINTERS



PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

Two large editions of this work having been sold, and the demand for a third having become urgent, the author has revised the work throughout, and brought it abreast with the most recent discoveries of science. The revival of the ancient error of evolutionism has also received more special and extended notice.

The Author's aim, in the First and Second Books of this volume, is to adduce evidence from Nature on the existence and perfections of God, and to show its harmony with the more luminous teachings of Revelation. If there be a God, the universe is his work; and if his work, it will both attest his being, and unfold some of his attributes. If the Bible be Divinely inspired, its declarations and revelations respecting God will harmonize with his works; and, therefore, both should be consulted by those who are anxious to know the truth.

In the Third Book of this volume, the Author's aim is to adduce evidence on the Holy Trinity, showing that this doctrine, derived from Revelation, is in harmony with the decisions of Reason, and not, as Dr. Channing has irreverently termed it, "an outrage on

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our rational nature," "contradicting and degrading our reason." For if God has revealed the mode of his existence as including a trinal personal distinction, it is true; and if true, it is in harmony with right reason. The Author has attempted to show this harmony.

Though the superficial and the profane may dismiss the importunities of Reason with a light and scoffing air, the sober-minded and the solid thinker cannot do so. The sincere inquirer loves truth wherever he may find it, and will not, either timidly or negligently, avert his eye from its light. While he deems the phenomena and the laws of Nature worthy of his diligent study, he will feel that the existence and perfections of the great Author of Nature, and the moral relations and destinies of humanity involved therein, require from him a calm, impartial, and patient investigation, so that his mind may enjoy the repose of enlightened conviction and conscious integrity. Our humble office is to aid his inquiries.

We greatly honour the productions of others who have preceded us in this work; but the labours of the past may not wholly supersede the endeavours of the present, as ours, assuredly, will not dispense with the labours of others in the future. The current of evidence must flow onward with the stream of time, keeping pace with the progress of science and the development of mind, else would faith languish for want of being replenished with the rational element, truth lose much of its freshness and power, and infidelity boast that our

silence acknowledged a defeat. Moreover, each age brings some new modification of infidelity, and truth is being continually re-enforced and fortified by new accessions from science. As the volume of Nature becomes unrolled and deciphered, its testimony for a Divine Author becomes more distinct and emphatic. That testimony should be adduced, expounded, and applied, so that men, in each successive age, may perceive that true Philosophy is the handmaid of Religion; that the voice of Nature echoes an harmonious response to the oracles of Revelation; and that the heavens and the earth, as their marvels become unfolded, assert the existence and show forth the glory of God.

We hope this edition will be found somewhat superior to its predecessor. In the Second Edition the entire argument on the existence of God was re-constructed, four new chapters were added, and others have now been revised and extended. The argument, also, on the Divine attributes was strengthened by a new chapter on the wisdom of God; and the chapter containing answers to objections was made to embrace a more extended range of facts. Although some portions of the work in the first edition were abridged, yet the additional matter has extended the present volume to more than one hundred pages beyond the size of its original. In endeavouring to establish the first principles of Christian Theism, the Author has availed himself of such scientific discoveries as the nature of the argument required, and the limited size of the work

could admit. While profoundly impressed with the importance of his theme, he is as deeply conscious of the inadequacy of his efforts to do it justice; but should the process of argument, he has been induced to pursue, be found adapted to the existing state of society, and be productive of usefulness among the more thoughtful of our population, he will rejoice in the attainment of an object which has engaged his anxious solicitude.

Dartmouth Park,
Forest Hill, London.
1877.

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INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

WHETHER or not we live in a fatherless universe; whether the great series of causes and effects which appear in Nature spring from an intelligent and self-existent cause, or from blind chance, or an equally blind necessity, operating by certain inherent properties of matter; whether we, as rational beings, sustain relations and responsibilities to a Supreme Being, as our Creator, Benefactor, and Governor, in whose providence we may confide, for whose favour we may hope, and to whose tribunal we are accountable; or whether we sustain no relations or responsibilities to any being superior to our own species—are questions confessedly of the highest interest and importance.

If, indeed, the existence of God were propounded merely as an abstract proposition; if it had no connection with ethics, and involved no responsibilities; if it had no more relation to the weal or woe of our being than the most abstract problem, yet would it legitimately come within the scope of scientific inquiry, and have a paramount claim to our attention. The province of science is the interpretation of Nature by the discovery of truth. To this end science accumulates facts and deduces principles. From the operations of Nature she ascends to Nature's laws—from effects to their causes. Nor is true science satisfied with proximate and subordinate causes, but pursues the path of discovery to the utmost limits attainable by experiment and reason, ever seeking for those

ultimate facts and primary causes which afford the most complete and comprehensive generalizations of truth. Indeed, the farther science can trace the converging lines of subordinate causes, the more valuable are her discoveries, and the more brilliant her achievements ; for it is thus the simplicity and unity, the harmony and grandeur, of Nature are seen. As, therefore, the proposition that There is a God, assumes to furnish the Cause of causes, the great ultimate principle in philosophy, the last and sublimest generalization of scientific truth, it not only comes legitimately within the province of scientific inquiry, but claims the highest place in its investigations.

If true philosophy is, as its name imports, "the love of wisdom," no philosopher can designedly or negligently ignore the existence of a Supreme Being. If science be the interpretation of Nature, he cannot decline an investigation as to the great Author of Nature, without discarding the highest claims of science. Let the philosopher pursue his studies in the walks of science ; let him daily ply his laboratory to extort the secrets of Nature, or nightly turn his watchful eye to the heavens, exploring the depths of space, and extending further and yet further his researches into stellar arrangements and dynamic forces ; but let him not refuse to inquire into the Great First Cause, the ultimate principle in philosophy, the *primal source* of all the phenomena of Nature ; for that were to do injustice to truth, and break off his investigations at the moment they culminate to the point of their highest interest and grandeur.

If the beauty and sublimity of Nature be attractive to a refined and cultivated mind, the same inducement should operate with augmented force in reference to the existence and perfections of a Supreme Being ; for whatever elements of beauty or grandeur there may be in the material universe, they are all comprehended and surpassed in the conception of a God. If the extent of the visible universe inspires the mind with a conception of the vastness of Nature, that idea becomes sublimer still when associated with the personal

existence of a Being whose presence fills immensity. If the dynamics of the universe give us a sublime conception of the energy of Nature, that sublimity is surpassed in the idea of a personal Existence who is omnipotent. If the comprehensive arrangements, the harmonious laws, the complicated yet systematic and orderly operations of the universe, excite admiration, that feeling becomes deeper and richer when we conceive of a Being in whom dwells the profound wisdom that originated those harmonious laws, and devised those marvellous arrangements. If the stability of Nature, and the regularity of its multifarious operations, impress the mind with awe at the indefinite ages of its duration, that conception is heightened the moment we contemplate a Being who literally inhabiteth eternity, and who, amid the cycles of Nature's revolutions, changeth not. There is, indeed, no element of sublimity either actually existent or even conceivable in Nature, but what is indefinitely surpassed in the idea of a God. (The proposition, therefore, that there is a God, has no equal, no competitor; it stands alone in unrivalled and unapproachable grandeur; and if its sublimity does not prove its truth, it renders it at least worthy of inquiry, and imposes a weighty task on the unbeliever; for if it be false, it is not only the sublimest of all errors, but is an error more sublime than truth itself—yea, more ennobling and elevating to the mind than any truths which Nature herself can present to our contemplations. If this be a paradox, its solution is a task devolving on those who deny the being of a God.)

The proposition that there is a God derives additional interest when viewed in its *moral* aspects, for it comprehends ideas of infinite moral excellence. Whatever *moral* excellence may be supposed to exist in the creature, is assumed to dwell in the Creator without alloy, and in infinite plenitude and perfection. Absolute truth and rectitude, spotless purity and holiness, united with boundless benevolence, are comprehended in our conception of God. Thus, while his natural attributes invest him with infinite grandeur, his *moral* perfections array him with infinite loveliness and dignity. As such, his exist-

ence presents higher claims to our sober consideration. For if the contemplation of the sublime be adapted to invigorate and expand the *mental* faculties, the contemplation of a Being resplendent with all moral perfections must tend to refine and ennoble our *moral* powers. If models of excellence stimulate to the love and imitation of virtue, the due contemplation of the most pure and perfect, the most holy and benevolent Being, must restrain the vicious and excite the good affections of our nature. Thus the conception of a God is the ally of virtue, and the most powerful incentive to goodness; and if this be not a demonstration of its truth, it evinces, at least, its importance; it asserts its high claim to calm and honest inquiry, and demands that those who reject it as false should be well satisfied that their own theory is true.

If the conception of a God serves to refine, expand, and exalt our intellectual and moral nature, it is no less powerful in its influence on the happiness of our being. For in what consists the happiness of our existence but in the appropriate exercise of our faculties, and the full satisfaction of our desires? The material and the sensible world may meet the limited wants of our animal nature; but does not our consciousness attest the want of something higher to meet the aspirations and capacities of our intellectual and moral nature? Exclude the idea of a God, and how are these requirements to be met? Let it be believed that the universe has no Architect, no Author—that man has no relation to any being higher than himself—and our thoughts at once collapse, the faculties of the mind are imprisoned, and our loftiest aspirations mocked and restrained. The conception of a fatherless universe is a cold and barren thought, which makes Nature a vast solitude—a dreary wilderness, in which the mind is left without adequate fellowship or sympathy, without comfort, and without hope.

In the view of these facts, every lover of truth and virtue, every one who feels an interest in the intellectual and moral elevation of himself and his species, will admit that the existence of a God is desirable, and will regard the subject as paramount in its claims to his most careful and thorough examination.

Even the sceptic and the infidel, if influenced by a love of truth, and conscientious in their sentiments, should be anxious to go thoroughly into this question, and to ascertain whether their opinions will bear the ordeal of logical analysis and philosophic investigation.

Judging from the writings of avowed atheists, it would appear that few indeed, if any of them, hold their denial of a God with such a firm conviction as excludes every doubt from their minds. Their prevailing opinions claim rather the appellation of scepticism than of confirmed, speculative atheism. Unbelief there may be, but it is the companion of a tremulous apprehension that possibly, after all, there may be a God; and in the most elaborate arguments put forth in defence of atheism, we often find admissions and confessions which clearly indicate the absence of settled convictions and of fixed principles. These corroding doubts must be an unenviable inheritance to their possessor, uncongenial to the philosopher, and a source of disquietude and danger to the man; for they involve contingencies which cannot be viewed by the sceptic without apprehension and alarm. The bare possibility of a God is prolific in suggestions of other possibilities of infinite moment. The possibility of relations, of obligations, and responsibilities to an infinite Creator stands inseparably connected with the possibility of his being, suggesting a train of grave and anxious reflections to every thoughtful mind. For if there be a God, he is my Creator and Lord; I am his creature and subject; and, as a rational being, deriving my existence and all I enjoy from his goodness, I owe him my grateful allegiance, my cheerful obedience to his known will, and I am accountable to his tribunal for my conduct.

The bare contingency of such momentous truths will rouse a conscientious mind to inquiry and research. Such a one will not rest in darkness, if light can possibly be had; will not remain in doubtful suspense, if satisfaction can be attained; will not, like Pilate, hurriedly ask, "What is truth?" and impatiently turn away before an answer can be given; but will apply himself with ceaseless energy to determine that which is

so essential to impart rectitude to his thoughts, tranquillity to his feelings, and a right scope to his being. He will honestly endeavour to divest his mind of every selfish prejudice, of every sinister influence, and subject his opinions to the most rigid scrutiny; he will examine with calmness and candour the arguments of an opponent; he will open his mind to evidence from every source, and gladly follow the light of truth, wherever it may lead him; nor will he relinquish the pursuit until either he repose in the satisfaction of a settled conviction, or has done his best to obtain it.

Indeed, although an atheist should feel confident in the truth of his opinion, yet, unless he is as certain of his own infallibility as he is positive in his atheism, he will not be indisposed to re-examine the grounds of his sentiments. The broad and obvious fact, that the general verdict of the human mind in all ages is against him, is enough to suggest to a modest man the possibility of himself being mistaken—that it is, at least, as probable his individual mind may err on this one point, as that the great universe of mind has been deceived in all ages. If the common sense of the unlearned, and the elaborate deductions of the erudite, have combined in every age, with all but perfect unanimity, to sustain the conviction that there is a God, it is enough to moderate the confidence of the most stern atheist, so far as to induce him to listen with candour to an opponent, and deem the subject still open to his investigation.

As to the Christian, this subject will be as welcome to his feelings as it is important in his judgment. Though fully satisfied as to the stability of his principles, he is not unwilling to resume an examination of their foundation. While he challenges the scrutiny of an opponent, he is neither afraid nor reluctant to listen to his objections. The diamond acquires brightness by friction, and truth emits a more brilliant radiance from examination.

We propose to extend our argument from the existence, to the attributes and personal distinctions of the Deity, comprising the whole in three Books.

BOOK I.
ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

PART I.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES, AND MODE OF CONDUCTING
THE ARGUMENT.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES STATED.

THE proposition to be established is, that there is a God—and this, like all other rational propositions, must be examined by the common laws of evidence. The sacredness of its character is never assumed to exempt it from a rational ordeal. It asks no favour, but invites the closest and the fullest scrutiny; making no claim but that which absolute justice demands for all subjects—an investigation conducted in candour and uprightness.

In every argument there are certain principles which lie at its foundation. These should be distinctly stated, and rigidly adhered to; otherwise there can be no satisfaction in our reasoning—no certainty in our conclusions. Our fundamental principles are few and simple. They constitute the *common* ground of argument. In setting them forth we affect no metaphysical refinements, nor scholastic phraseology; we employ language in its popular acceptation, and are desirous only to convey a clear and definite idea of our meaning to men of common sense and honest hearts.

1. *All intuitive and self-evident propositions are to be admitted as true.*

By self-evident and intuitive propositions, we mean those which are so obvious that the mind sees their truth at once, and without the process of reasoning. All sober-minded men assent to them as soon as they are proposed; and they are equally evident to the illiterate and the philosopher, so soon as their terms are understood. Thus the propositions that a whole is greater than a part—that two material bodies cannot occupy the same absolute portions of space at the same moment of time—that it is impossible for the same thing to exist and not to exist at the same instant—that there is a real difference between good and evil actions—and that a proposition cannot be, in the same sense, both true and false—are all self-evident. Our object, however, is not to furnish a list, but to give a specimen of self-evident and intuitive truths. It may be laid down as a principle, that every proposition is self-evident or intuitive, when the denial of it would contradict our consciousness and common sense, or involve a palpable contradiction and absurdity.

2. *Every effect must have a cause, and the cause must be adequate to the effect.*

This fundamental principle is verified by consciousness, by observation, and by instinct. We know from consciousness, that we have power to produce numberless effects which could not take place without our agency; and the power which consciousness attests as existing in ourselves, observation and experience witness as existing in others. In fact, the languages and the reasonings of men in all nations and in all ages, evince that this consciousness of personal agency is natural to man, and is the foundation of morals and responsibility. The man who denies his own agency contradicts his own consciousness, and might as well deny his own existence. Every voluntary action he performs convicts him either of insincerity of heart or insanity of mind.

When we turn our eye to the material universe, we behold innumerable phenomena exhibiting the relation of cause and

effect. Indeed, all the operations of Nature consist of a series of facts which stand in the relation of physical cause and effect. Whence comes the energy which gives to a cause its efficacy—whether that energy be essentially inherent in Nature, or whether it be derived from and directed by a power distinct from Nature, and superior to it, we do not now stop to inquire: we look merely to the fact that there is such an energy actually existing, so that the same cause produces, uniformly and constantly, the same effect; and the connection between a physical cause and its effect in inanimate Nature is as real as the connection between an intelligent agent and any effect which he may voluntarily produce. For example, the connection between the falling of a stone, as the effect of gravitation, is not less real than the connection between a volition of the mind and a corresponding action of the body. All philosophy acknowledges the reality of this connection, and is built upon it. What, indeed, is philosophy but an inquiry into the laws of Nature? and what are those laws but rules or principles, according to which the diversified phenomena are produced by their respective causes? The dependence, therefore, of effects upon their causes lies at the very foundation of all science. Without this axiom there could be no inquiry prosecuted, no laws demonstrated, no principles evolved.

It may be further affirmed that our confidence in the connection between cause and effect is an instinct of our nature. While we reject the doctrine of innate ideas, we are compelled to admit the existence of innate tendencies and impressions; and our confidence in the constancy and uniformity of Nature, or of the same cause producing the same effect, is instinctive. This confidence appears in the earliest developments of our mental constitution, before reasoning or experience has had time to originate it. If an infant has once felt the pain arising from touching the flame of a candle, he will carefully avoid putting his hand near the flame a second time. It is certain that in this case the mind of the infant connects the sensation of pain with the flame of the candle. There is here an obvious recognition between the cause and the effect, with a correspond-

ing dependence on the constancy and uniformity of Nature ; and as these impressions of the infant mind cannot be the result of reason or experience (for they are anterior to both), they must be referred to an instinct of our nature. This original impression continues with us through life ; it never leaves us ; no sophistry can expel it, nor even diminish its force. It is as natural for us to believe that every effect must have a cause, and that the same causes produce the same effects, as it is to confide in the certainty of our own existence ; and as all the operations of Nature are in harmony with this principle, we have a demonstration that it has not been implanted in our nature in vain. It is not possible even to *imagine* an effect without a cause ; the mind instantly resists every attempt to entertain such a conception, because it is contradictory to an instinctive and intuitive principle.

David Hume endeavours to resolve the connection between cause and effect into the mere relation of antecedence and succession ; but this is a sophism unworthy of a philosopher, for this connection between antecedence and succession is either founded in Nature as a physical law, or it is not. If we say it is, then the dependence of effects upon their causes is admitted. If it be denied, then we demand, How is it that this connection is invariable and universal ? How is it that those events which are called effects do not transpire without causes ? If this connection were merely accidental, it would be proper to say that light is the cause of darkness, and darkness the cause of light, for they *succeed* each other daily ; it would be just as proper to maintain that silence is the cause of sound (for these succeed each other), as it is to say that fire is the cause of heat. Again, if this succession were accidental, the order of it might, and indeed often would, be inverted. We demand, then, How is it that the class of facts called effects do not promiscuously change places with the class of agencies called causes ? Why do not effects precede their causes, as often as causes precede their effects ? How is it that the succession universally flows one way—from cause to effect ? The only answer is, Because the inversion of this order is physically impossible, and impossible

because, in the constitution of Nature, causes are endued with an energy to produce their effects. And therefore the sophism of Mr Hume is apparent.

But we confront this philosopher with himself. It is hard for those who contend against the truth to preserve their consistency, and of this our infidel philosopher is an example. When arguing against the being of God, he denies the necessary dependence of effects upon their causes; but, in another place, when arguing against Christianity, he denies the credibility of miracles, because, as he alleges, they are contrary to our experience of "*the constancy of Nature.*" But if there be no physical dependence of effects upon their causes, there can be no necessary constancy in the operations of Nature. If the succession of effects be purely accidental, it is quite in character for effects, such as miracles, to take place without physical causes. His arguments thus destroy each other, and his inconsistency utters no compliment upon his sincerity. His argument against miracles, however, has this value: it proves that he had no confidence in his own argument against the being of God—it proves that his argument was merely a subtle sophism, fabricated with a design to obscure and perplex a plain but unwelcome truth; and it proves that Hume, like all other men, believed in the necessary physical dependence of every effect upon its cause? or, in other words, that there can be no effect without a cause. Every infidel, in objecting to the miracles of Christianity, bases his objections upon a principle which necessarily admits the connection between cause and effect. For what is a miracle but an effect apparently *without* a natural cause? And why does the infidel deny the truth of a miracle, but because it is an event without a natural cause? And why does he object on this ground, but because he confides in the constancy of Nature? But what is the constancy of Nature, except the necessary relation between cause and effect? And why does he so tenaciously believe in that constancy, but because he believes that relation to be real and essential, not fortuitous and accidental? or, in other words, because he believes there can be no effect without a cause.

Since every effect must have a cause, it necessarily follows that the cause must be *adequate* to the effect. This, indeed, is implied in the proposition, and will not be disputed. Hence it follows that, if Nature exhibit effects indicative of intelligence, those effects must have an intelligent cause.

3. *Every truth must be examined by its appropriate evidence.*

Some truths we know by consciousness, others by sense, and others by intuition; and these, as previously stated, require no reasoning to prove them. They are at once perceived by the mind, and no argument can make them plainer. All men believe them, and all men act upon them; and so long as any one continues in a sound state of mind, his belief in them cannot be shaken. But there are many other truths which *do* require proof; they must be rendered evident by *reasoning*. To this class belong innumerable propositions in general science. These propositions may, indeed, be as true as any facts known by consciousness, by sensation, or intuition, but their evidence is not immediate; they require proof by reason. To this category belongs the proposition which asserts the existence of God. It is not self-evident; it is not recognized by our bodily senses; it does not claim to be an intuitive truth; but it appeals to our reason. It is a rational proposition; it must be examined by a rational process, and tested by that logical evidence which belongs to its own class. We do not claim for it the evidence of a mathematical demonstration, but that kind and amount of evidence which impart to it a moral certainty and require a rational assent.

4. *In every rational argument there are certain criteria by which truth may be tested, and among those criteria are the following:—*

(a) It is a logical axiom that every particular truth must quadrature or harmonize with universal truth. No one truth can be in opposition or contradiction to any other truth. This principle is absolute, and applies as much to logical propositions as it does to mathematical principles and scientific facts. Some truths, indeed, which are but partially and imperfectly

understood, may *appear* for a time to be scarcely consistent with each other, but that discrepancy is in appearance only, not in reality. If our knowledge were so perfect as fully to comprehend all truths, we should see their harmony absolutely perfect and universal. In every instance where a proposition is true, it is not possible that it can be in actual opposition or contradiction to any other truth. All truths must essentially and eternally harmonize among themselves. Hence the corollary, When two propositions contradict each other, one of them is certainly false.

(b) It is necessary, in order that the truth of a proposition should be perceived and believed by us, that the proposition should be supported by some *direct* logical evidence; that while it quadrates and harmonizes with existing facts, it should also receive from them some *direct* evidence. Thus the ancient doctrine of Pythagoras, which taught that the sun occupied the centre of our system, and the earth and the other planets revolved around him, was true, but it wanted proof. It was as true in the time of Pythagoras as in the time of Newton, but its truth was not then generally believed, because not demonstrated by other truths. But when Newton's gigantic mind elaborated that demonstration by evidence from physical fact and mathematical calculation, the doctrine commanded the admiring belief of mankind. Pythagoras could proceed no further than the first step in this great discovery; he could perceive its harmony with some existing facts; he could see that it quadrated with the diurnal succession of light and darkness, the periodical return of the constellations, and the phenomena of solar and lunar eclipses, but he could not establish his theory by *direct* evidence from mathematical and physical science, and without this it could not command the general assent of mankind. So with regard to logical truth in general, it must not only be seen to harmonize with other truths, but must receive some *direct* evidence from them, in order to its commanding our belief.

(c) In rational evidence there is a graduated scale from the lowest probability to the highest moral certainty; and the

claim which any proposition has to our assent must be determined by *two* considerations—namely, the clearness and extent of its harmony with existing facts, and the degree of direct logical evidence which it receives from these facts.

(*d*) If a proposition be true, its evidence will brighten as knowledge advances; but if a proposition be erroneous, its absurdity will become more apparent as ignorance becomes dispersed.

(*e*) If a proposition is found to harmonize with *all* the truths to which it stands related, and at the same time is sustained by all the direct evidence which the nature of the proposition admits of, it has then the highest logical evidence of its truth, amounting to a moral demonstration, and is entitled to our strongest confidence.

(*f*) If, on the other hand, a proposition derives no evidence from existing facts, it has no rational claim to our belief; and if, instead of harmonizing with ascertained truths, it is repugnant and contradictory to them, it is false.

(*g*) If two contradictory propositions are placed before us, the proof of the truth of one demonstrates the other to be false.

These are the plain practical principles on which we propose to pursue our inquiries on the momentous subject of the existence of God. These are the principles by which we shall test the arguments of our opponents, and by which we cordially invite them to test ours. We care not how rigid and severe the investigation on their part. All we ask is candour and integrity.

CHAPTER II.

MODE OF CONDUCTING THE ARGUMENT.

In proving the existence of God, two modes of argument have been employed: one technically called the *argumentum à priori*, and the other, the *argumentum à posteriori*. The *à*

priori literally means an argument taken from that which is before, and designates those arguments which are constructed by reasoning from cause to effect, from an antecedent to a consequent, from a principle to a corollary; as when astronomers, from the laws and motions of the solar system, determine the return of a comet, or the exact time of an eclipse; or when geologists determine, by the principles of comparative anatomy, the form, size, proportions, and character of the animal to which a fossil fragment once belonged. In such cases the reasoning is termed *à priori*.

By the application of this mode of argument, Dr S. Clarke, Mr S. Drew, Mr W. Gillespie, and other able metaphysicians, have contended, that the existence of unlimited space and duration necessarily imply an infinite and eternal substance, of which they are the attributes.

The argument *à posteriori* is, on the other hand, a process of reasoning from an effect to a cause, from a consequent to an antecedent; as when, from the mechanism of a watch, or some exquisite work of art, we infer the skill and genius of its author. But no example can more clearly and forcibly illustrate this mode of argument than the brief and compendious statement of Paul, when he says, "Every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God." That is to say, "As the existence of a house proves the existence of a builder, so the existence of the universe proves the existence of a Creator."

It is not necessary here to attempt any nice adjustment of the respective claims of these two modes of argument, as they are not antagonistic to each other. Although the metaphysical abstractions of the *à priori* argument may be too refined to impress the masses of mankind, and though such intellectual giants as Reid, Brown, Chalmers, and Watson have pronounced them unsatisfactory, yet they have confessedly won the approval of others of no ordinary acumen and power. It may be remarked, however, *en passant*, that the term *à priori* is not strictly applicable to the entire argument as presented by its advocates, for it evidently leans upon an *à posteriori* basis—the

existence of a material universe as an effect of a pre-existing Cause. As the design of this work is to reach the mind by a course of argument the most easily comprehended, the most cogent and suitable to produce general conviction, we shall adopt the *à posteriori* method. It is, confessedly, a mode of argument adapted to the comprehension of every mind. Its materials are facts furnished by consciousness, observation, and science, patent to all men; and the reasonings those facts supply conform to the logical deductions of ordinary life, and appeal to the common sense of mankind.

If it be a truth that there is a self-existent and intelligent Creator, it is reasonable to suppose that he has not left himself without witness in his works—without clear and satisfactory evidence of his being; but if, on the other hand, there be no God, it is equally reasonable to suppose there will be either *no* evidence of his existence, or clear and conclusive evidence *contradictory* to his being. If there be a God, his own works will not deny him; and if there be no God, the voice of Nature will not bear witness to a lie. Here, then, we stand before the oracle of the universe, and ask what is her testimony on the great question—Is there a God? and if there is a God, what is his nature, and what are the attributes of his character?

PLAN OF THE ARGUMENT.

The general plan of our argument is briefly presented in the following propositions:—

PROPOSITION I.

The present existence of the universe necessarily proves that something must have existed eternally.

PROPOSITION II.

There is no evidence that matter is eternal. †

PROPOSITION III.

There is evidence that the universe, or the present constitution of Nature, is not eternal.

PROPOSITION IV. ✕

If the universe, or the present constitution of Nature, is not eternal, it must have had an Originator; or in other words, it must be an effect, and must, therefore, have had an adequate cause.

PROPOSITION V.

There are no powers existent in Nature itself adequate to the production of the universe.

PROPOSITION VI.

Chance is not adequate to the production of the universe. ✕

PROPOSITION VII.

Necessity is not adequate to the production of the universe.

PROPOSITION VIII.

If, then, the universe be an effect, and no adequate cause of its existence can be found in Nature itself, nor in chance, nor in necessity, it follows, that the cause of its being must be something distinct from Nature, from necessity, and from chance; or in other words, the universe must be the work of a self-existent Creator.

PROPOSITION IX.

The great cause of all things must be an intelligent existence, because the universe bears the impress of intelligence.

PROPOSITION X.

The great cause of all things must be a conscious, personal existence, because this intelligence is the property of none but a conscious, personal existence.

PROPOSITION XI.

*While the existence of a conscious and intelligent Creator is supported by direct evidence, it is in harmony with all known truth. **

PROPOSITION XII.

✦ *The existence of God, thus sustained by direct evidence, and in harmony with all known truth, is attested by the assent of all nations.*

PROPOSITION XIII.

The great truth thus sustained by every form of direct evidence from reason, and in harmony with all known truth, and attested by all nations, is confirmed by the records of Revelation.

PART II.

THE ARGUMENT ON THE EXISTENCE OF GOD.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRESENT EXISTENCE OF THE UNIVERSE PROVES THAT SOMETHING MUST HAVE BEEN ETERNAL.

It has been laid down as a fundamental truth, that every effect must have a cause. From the necessary connection between cause and effect, it follows that in a chain or series of events all proximate causes are themselves effects of remoter causes; and these again are effects of other causes still more remote, and so on throughout the whole series: and we are compelled either to suppose that series to be eternal, or the whole to be derived from a first cause, which, from its nature, must necessarily be underived and eternal. At present we stop not to inquire into the nature of that first cause; whether it be material or immaterial; whether it be Nature itself, or something distinct from Nature, and independent of it. These important inquiries must be reserved for subsequent and separate consideration. The proposition before us must be examined by itself, unencumbered with any extraneous ideas. We have, in this chapter, merely to show that there must be something which is eternal in its existence, and this proposition may be established by a very simple process of reasoning.

We know from consciousness that we exist, and from the evidence of our senses we know that other beings, and the universe around us, exist. Either, then, the universe itself must have been eternal, or it must have been derived in some way from a cause antecedently existing; and whatever the

ultimate cause of all things may be, that cause must necessarily be self-existent and eternal. The actual existence of things at present precludes the possibility of conceiving that there ever was a period when there was nothing in existence. We are certain that no being can create itself, or be the cause of its own existence, for that would imply that it acted before it existed, which is a contradiction. It is evident, therefore, if ever there had been a period when there was absolutely no being, it would have been impossible that any being could have begun to exist. *Ex nihilo, nihil fit*—out of nothing, nothing can arise*—is an axiom admitted by men of all creeds and in all ages. It is impossible that absolute non-existence can be the author of actual existence. We repeat, had there been any period in eternity when there was neither matter nor spirit, no being whatever, intelligent or unintelligent, not the bare existence of anything created or uncreated, but all space being an infinite void, there could not ever have arisen any existence at all; a boundless vacuity must have remained a boundless vacuity for ever. Seeing, then, it is certain that something does now exist, it is equally certain that something must have always existed, and that which has always existed must itself be underived, self-existent, and eternal, and be the cause of all subsequent existence.

The truth thus established is so clear and obvious, that it is universally admitted. However diversified and contradictory the opinions entertained by men on other subjects, they are unanimous in this; and in all the theories which men have adopted to account for the existence of the universe, this obvious axiomatic truth, that something must have been eternal, lies at the foundation of all their reasoning.

Some philosophers supposed that the present constitution

* This axiom, which was echoed from one philosopher to another, in heathen antiquity, was irrelevant as it applied to the *creation* of matter; for creation is not the arising of something out of nothing, but is the act of a self-existent Being bringing something into being. At the same time, the axiom, as involving the necessity of an eternal something, is incontrovertible.

of Nature is eternal, or that the diversified forms of being which constitute the universe have existed in an eternal series. Others contended that the present constitution of Nature is an effect necessarily resulting from the operations of matter which had eternally existed. Such was the doctrine of Epicurus and his disciples in ancient times, and such is the opinion of modern atheists. Others contended that, though matter was an eternal substance, yet its laws, its orderly arrangement, and harmonious operations, as displayed in Nature, were the work of a wise, powerful, and beneficent Creator, self-existent and eternal. This was the doctrine of Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics, and ancient philosophers in general. The Christian, diverse from all these theorists, believes that matter itself is a *creature*, brought into existence by the power of God—that the universe is his work, and that God alone is self-existent and eternal. These four systems of belief comprehend the general views of mankind in all ages, on the existence of the universe; and it is seen that each assumes, as a fundamental axiom, as an intellectual and physical necessity, the existence of an eternal something. Some contended for the eternity of matter alone, some for the eternity of mind alone, and some for the eternity of both matter and mind; but no sect of philosophers, however erroneous and extravagant in their opinions, ever contended that nothing was eternal, or even admitted its possibility. Every man who admits the existence of the universe, or even his own existence, is compelled to admit, if he for one moment reflect on the fact, that it involves the existence of an eternal something. What that something is, we shall endeavour to determine by the arguments which follow.

CHAPTER II.

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT MATTER IS ETERNAL.

IN support of the atheistic system, it is alleged that matter is eternal, and this hypothesis is, indeed, essential to that theory.

It is important, however, to observe, that if matter were proved to be eternal, it would not overturn the doctrine of God's existence. For without controverting the eternity of matter, volumes of evidence of the existence of God might be adduced, from the constitution of the universe; and whatever evidence of a God there may be in the arrangements, adaptations, and operations of Nature, that evidence cannot be annulled by the eternity of matter. That evidence, indeed, stands upon its own ground, and must be held at its proper logical value.

But, on the other hand, the non-eternity of matter is fatal to atheism; for it gives a positive disproof to every argument which can be adduced in its support. The eternity of matter is a doctrine, then, essential to atheism. Without this the theory has neither a basis on which to rest, nor any power of cohesion in its parts. If the eternity of matter be a conjecture, the whole atheistic theory is an hypothesis. If this conjecture cannot be supported, the first stone in the foundation of the atheistic fabric cannot be laid. If this conjecture be disproved, the whole system of atheism is destroyed; for, if matter be not eternal, it is not self-existent, but created and dependent; and if created, it must have had a creator, and that Creator must necessarily himself be uncreated, independent, self-existent, and eternal; or, in other words, he must be God. Thus the eternity of matter is absolutely essential to the veriest shadow of an argument in support of atheism. Such being the importance of this principle in the atheistic system, let us carefully examine its claims to our belief.

As a fundamental principle, on which the whole atheistic argument depends, the eternity of matter ought to rest on indisputable evidence. As the atheist professes to be a man of reason, a philosopher, ever on his guard against imposition and error, at the greatest possible distance from all credulity, holding it to be even a virtue to doubt until the most complete evidence be afforded, have we not a right to demand from him the clearest demonstration, or the most palpable certainty, of his fundamental principle—the eternity of matter? Have we not a right to insist upon his showing that this principle is

either a self-evident truth, or capable of the most clear and obvious demonstration? and that, unless he is prepared to prove this, all his assertions about the sufficiency of Nature alone—about the prolific powers of Nature being adequate to the production of all existing phenomena, are utterly without foundation? Undoubtedly we have.

What, then, is the true character of the assertion that matter is eternal? Is it a self-evident axiom, a necessary truth? or is it a proposition sustained by high probable evidence? An answer to these inquiries must now be sought.

1. The eternity of matter is not a self-evident axiom or a necessary truth.

The necessity for an eternal something is felt by every mind. We cannot but admit it; but that matter is that eternal something is not felt to be either a physical or a logical necessity. Some sceptics, indeed, have argued against even the actual existence of matter. We can, certainly, conceive it possible for matter not to have existed at all, and this possibility excludes the eternity of matter from the category of necessary truths. An atheistic writer, so far confirmed in infidelity that he gloried in the name of Antitheos,* and wrote a work expressly to disprove the being of God, says—“We can conceive matter not to exist.” Important admission from a materialist! for, if we can conceive matter not to have existed, its non-existence is thus admitted to have been possible, and, therefore, its actual existence was contingent; and, if contingent, its eternity is excluded from the category of necessary truths, even by the testimony of infidelity itself. Indeed, as the non-existence of matter is admitted to have been possible, it follows that its actual existence has no ground at all except the will and energy of a creator.

2. The objection that the creation of matter is impossible, has no foundation in reason.

What is creation? It is simply an act by which a self-existent being brings something into existence. What, then,

* Antitheos—a denier of God's existence. See Gillespie on “The Necessary Existence of the Deity,” p. 253.

we demand, is there impossible in this? Limited as are the capabilities of a human being, we can originate *events*. By a mere exercise of volition and muscular energy we can cause a variety of events to be, which at present have no existence. Why, then, cannot a self-existent being cause the existence of another being? What is there to limit and control the power of a self-existent and independent being? What is there to hinder such a being from effecting anything which does not in itself involve a contradiction? Nothing which we are able to conceive. In his causing a substance to exist which did not exist before, there is no more contradiction involved than in our causing an event to exist which did not exist before. The eternity of matter, therefore, cannot be sustained on this ground.

3. *The alleged indestructibility of matter is no evidence of its eternity.*

Mirabaud,* indeed, affirms, "That which cannot annihilate itself exists necessarily; it is impossible to conceive that that which cannot cease to exist, or that which cannot annihilate itself, could ever have had a beginning. If matter cannot be annihilated, it could not commence to be."†

This is feeble and fallacious reasoning. We admit, indeed, that matter cannot annihilate itself; but that matter cannot be annihilated is neither self-evident nor capable of proof. The entire argument is built on a fallacy, for it assumes that the *absence* of a power to effect a certain result implies the possession of the highest attributes! Because matter has not the power to annihilate itself, it must, therefore, necessarily possess the exalted attributes of self-existence and eternity! Wonderful logic is this! The *absence* of one power may, indeed, involve the *absence* of other powers; but how the *absence* of a power necessarily involves the *actual possession* of others, and those of the highest dignity and importance, we are at a loss to

* I am aware that the "System of Nature" ascribed to Mirabaud is regarded as the production of Baron d'Holbach, or, as some state, of the Baron and Diderot conjointly.

† "Système de la Nature," tom. i., part ii., chap. 4.

conceive. The absence of the power in matter to annihilate itself is a limitation, and only one limitation among many. Matter in its essential properties has not power to make any voluntary effort. It is absolutely helpless and passive, and can act in no way but as it is controlled and governed by fixed laws. It would, therefore, be just as logical to assert, that because matter is helpless it must be omnipotent, and because it is absolutely passive it must have an independent energy to do all things, as it is to assert that, because matter cannot destroy itself, it must therefore be self-existent and eternal! Such an absurdity is but seldom equalled.

But there is another aspect in this question, which the atheist has overlooked. If matter be unable to destroy itself, is it not equally unable to preserve itself? If we are to be guided by evidence, we have no reason to suppose that matter has any more power to secure its own preservation than it has to effect its own annihilation. We believe, indeed, that all matter is preserved or continued in being, but there is not the least shadow of evidence that it preserves itself; and if there be no evidence that it preserves itself, there can be no evidence that it exists by itself, or is eternal and independent. On the contrary, the fact that matter is preserved in being, although it has no power of preserving itself, suggests to our reason that it is preserved by another; and if its existence is preserved by another, it argues that it must have been derived from another; and if derived, it cannot be eternal.

As to the other part of the argument of Mirabaud, in which he asserts that "matter cannot be annihilated," a few brief remarks may suffice. It is true that matter cannot be annihilated by us, but that it cannot be annihilated by any other being is an assertion without proof, and we think contrary to reason. That matter cannot be annihilated by us is certainly an evidence that we cannot create it, but no evidence that another being cannot create it. The fact, indeed, that matter is not capable of either annihilating or preserving itself, or of being annihilated by man, suggests to our reason that its being is in the power of another, superior to both; a Being who gave it existence, and

who preserves it beyond the power of any one to destroy what he has made.

4. *The abettors of the atheistic system allege that the eternity of matter is a doctrine supported by the general voice of ancient philosophers.*

We reply, the opinions of ancient heathen philosophers are no evidence of truth; if they were, the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, the Epicurean theory of atomic motion, and a hundred other theories, which modern science has exploded, might be advocated on the same ground. Besides, the eternity of matter is a fundamental principle with atheism, and to base this principle on antiquity is to confess that it rests not on fact, not on evidence, but on *opinion*; that it is merely an hypothesis. The question at issue is not to be determined by *argumentum ad verecundiam*, but by evidence; and if that be wanting, the whole theory of atheism is confessedly without foundation.

Moreover, it is not just to the philosophers of antiquity to identify their sentiments with those of modern atheists on the eternity of matter. If by the voice of antiquity we are to understand the *general* opinions of ancient philosophers, and of those the most eminent for wisdom and public influence, they were widely different from those of modern atheists.

Modern atheists contend that matter is the *only* eternal being; but almost all the ancient philosophers maintained the eternity of a spiritual being as the supreme God. Modern atheists assert the absolute self-existence of matter; but the Oriental, the Persian, the Egyptian, and the earliest of the Grecian philosophers held that matter either existed in God, or was an eternal effect from an eternal cause. Indeed, each of these opinions had its advocates, and each implied in some sense the dependence and derivation of matter.

Modern atheists maintain the absolute self-sufficiency of matter to produce the phenomena of the universe; but a great majority of the ancient philosophers taught that matter was dependent for its various modifications, its systematic and orderly arrangement, and harmonious operations, on the intel-

ligence, power, and beneficence of a Supreme Being, of whom they speak as the original, incorporeal, and efficient cause; himself immovable and the first mover of all things, the origin of all spiritual beings, and the former of the world.*

As for those philosophers who maintained the absolute self-existence and independence of matter, they were few compared with the rest, and their reasonings are often inconsistent and suicidal. Ocellus Lucanus, one of the most ancient philosophers who contended for the eternity of the world, is forced to confess that it proceeded from an eternal and intelligent mind; † and Epicurus, who ascribed the production of the universe to atomic motion, acknowledged (whether sincerely or not) the existence of the gods, though he excluded them from all concern with the material universe and the affairs of mankind. ‡ If, then, the authority of antiquity have any weight in this argument, it is decidedly against atheism, and in favour of the existence of a Supreme Being.

We have now examined the arguments adduced in support of the eternity of matter, and we think it will be admitted by all reasonable minds, that they utterly fail to give the least air of probability to the notion. It is a mere conjecture, and one as groundless as it is gratuitous.

Further examination will show that this conjecture is not only without evidence, but totally repugnant to reason.

1. *The eternity of matter involves the absurdity of supposing an infinite number of eternal and self-existent beings.*

Matter, in the aggregate, is not *one* being only, but an incalculable number of beings. It consists of innumerable

* The authorities in confirmation of these statements are too numerous for quotation, nor will the facts be disputed by any who are acquainted with the philosophical and theological opinions of the ancients. See the Latin version of "The Oupnek'hat, or Abridgment of the Vedis," by M. Anquetil du Perron, tom. i., Paris, 1802; Sir W. Jones's Works, vol. vi., quarto edit.; "Plato in Timeo," iii.; "De Republ.," lib. x.; "Diog. in Vita Aristot., Aristot. Metaph.," lib. i., c. 7, 8; "De Cælo," lib. ii. c. 3; "Cicero de Nat. Deorum," *passim*.

† Ocell. Luc. de Leg. Fragm.

‡ Lucret., lib. v., &c.

particles, inconceivably small. It is further evident that every atom, however small, has a distinct existence—an existence as peculiar to itself, and as distinct from all the rest, as the largest masses of matter are distinct from each other. The smallest molecule of matter has its peculiar identity of being, as distinct from every other as the existence of Sirius from the sun, or the sun from the planets which revolve around him. If this applies to one atom, it applies to all, however numerous they may be; and therefore, if matter be eternal, self-existent, and independent, every atom is eternal, self-existent, and independent; and there are necessarily as many eternal, self-existent, and independent beings in the universe as there are individual atoms. Can we conceive a supposition more extravagant than this? Yet such is the atheistic hypothesis; and this we are required to believe without a particle of evidence, and as a substitute for our belief in the existence of one eternal Being as the intelligent Creator of all things!

If true philosophy demands no more causes than what are adequate to the result, atheism is the reverse of this; for it discards the one efficient cause, and multiplies the inefficient *ad infinitum*. If simplicity be a characteristic of ultimate facts in science, atheism is the opposite to this; for, on the atomic theory, the higher we ascend in tracing the universe to its origin, the more involved and complicated its facts become. If scientific truth shows that proximate causes converge into more general and comprehensive ones, atheism presents the reverse of this; for it resolves the origin of the universe into an infinite number of distinct, particular causes, each equally destitute of efficiency, and unsupported by a particle of evidence. Nothing is so simple, so sublime, and comprehensive as the conception of one eternal, self-existent, and independent Being as the cause of all things; but nothing more complicated, confused, and difficult of apprehension than the proposed theory of an infinite number of separate atoms, each self-existent and eternal, constituting the efficient cause of the universe. If these consequences involve so many absurdities, they are the absurdities of the atheistic hypothesis.

2. *Matter is a passive substance; and in its passivity there are qualities incompatible with independence, self-existence, and eternity.*

An eternal and self-existent being is an independent, free, active, and immutable being. It must be independent, if it exist from itself; it must be free, for, existing eternally alone, there was nothing to control it; it must be essentially active, for it is the source of all activity; and it must be immutable, for there is nothing superior to it to effect any change in its nature. But, we ask, do the known properties of matter harmonize with the attributes of independence, freedom, activity, and immutability? On the contrary, they afford the most unequivocal proofs of passivity, of inherent helplessness, of change, of subordination, of subjection to the control and dominion of mind, or of something extraneous to itself.

Let me take a piece of matter: I can give it motion, I can retard its motion, I can accelerate its motion, and I can arrest its motion altogether; I can change its place, its shape, and alter its combinations at pleasure; I can break it in pieces, and pound it to atoms; I can dissolve it when hard, and harden it when soft; I can change the fluid into a solid, and the solid into a fluid; I can separate and compound it, analyze and combine it, and compel one particle to act against another; I can convert its rudest materials into forms of elegance, utility, and mechanism, or, with equal ease, I can destroy its forms; I can make it, in ten thousand ways, the servant of my wishes, my necessities, my comforts, or my caprice—the instrument of my welfare or of my destruction. At the same time, matter can do nothing for itself: it can originate nothing, change nothing; it cannot act even mechanically, except as prescribed by fixed and immutable laws; and it is as much compelled to obey those laws as to be subservient to my will.

We ask, then, Are these the properties of self-existence and eternity? If passivity and subordination be proofs of independence, if compulsion be a proof of freedom, and change a demonstration of immutability, then, and only then, are the properties of matter compatible with self-existence and eternity.

If it be alleged that though we may render the *substance* of matter, in many ways, subservient to our will, yet we cannot change its *laws*, for these defy all human power, we reply, it is equally true that matter cannot change its own laws, and thus it affords no more proof of independent existence than we do. If we cannot change its laws, we can render its laws, as well as its substance, subservient to our use; and the fact that *we* cannot change its laws is no proof that the resistance lies in matter itself. Indeed, the obvious truth that matter has no inherent power to resist our will in our changing and modifying its *substance*, is evidence that it has no inherent power to preserve its *laws*, but suggests to our reason that both its substance and its laws are in the hand of another, on whom both matter and ourselves are equally dependent for our being, and the laws to which we are subjected.

3. *That various other properties ascribed to matter are not essential to it, but are derived; and a derivation of properties is incompatible with the independence, self-existence, and eternity of the substance itself.*

To that being who is eternal and self-existent, there can be nothing contingent, accidental, or adventitious. Whatever properties it has *now* it always had, and ever will have. A modern atheist remarks, "Self-existence is the most majestic of attributes, and includes all others."* This fully admits the principle now stated, that the self-existent being must essentially and eternally have in its own nature all the attributes and properties which it now presents. Thus, if matter be, as the atheist contends, the eternal and self-existent being, then motion, gravitation, chemical affinity, attraction, repulsion, combustion, the phenomenon of life, as well as all the properties usually ascribed to mind, must have existed eternally and necessarily in matter.

But respecting all these properties we affirm there is no evidence that any one of them is essential to matter; and respecting *some* of them there is certain evidence that they

* Holyoake on "The Logic of Death."

are *not* essential to matter. Let us more minutely examine this point.

(a) *Motion*.—Mirabaud affirms that motion is eternal, and is the necessary consequence of the eternity of matter.* There is, however, no attempt to prove this assertion, nor is it capable of proof; and if it be believed, it must, like the eternity of matter itself, be believed without proof; and thus one hypothesis must be built upon another, to afford the semblance, we will not say of an argument, but even of an objection against the being of a God.

It is a metaphysical axiom that no property can be regarded as essential to a substance when that substance can be conceived of as existing without it. Now, we *can* conceive of matter without motion. Indeed, in its ordinary state, it presents itself to our senses as at rest; and we can certainly conceive of it as being at rest for ever without depriving it of any of its essential properties; for it is as much matter in every respect when conceived of as at rest, as it is when conceived of as in a state of the greatest activity and velocity. It is, therefore, simply absurd to speak of motion being *essential* to matter.

(b) *Gravitation*.—The materialist is compelled to assume also the eternity of gravitation; and to support its eternity, he asserts that it is essential to matter. But this assertion rests upon no better foundation than the preceding one. We can as easily conceive of matter without gravitation as without motion. Abstract gravitation from matter, and it is matter still. It has lost nothing essential to its existence; it retains its essence and all its primary qualities; and is as much a substance, whether considered in its aggregate or its ultimate atoms, as it was before. It is, therefore, a contradiction to speak of gravitation as being an essential property of matter, for nothing can be affirmed to be essential but that which, if annihilated, would cause the destruction of the substance itself; and if gravitation is not essential, it is not eternal.

* "Système de la Nature," tom. i., part ii., chap. ii.

(c) *The chemical properties of Matter.*—By the chemical properties of matter we mean such as chemical affinity, attraction, repulsion, combustion, &c. These the materialist is also compelled to suppose to be eternal, and, to support their eternity, he avers them to be essential to matter. Mjrabaud, speaking of these properties, says:—“That they form a vast circle of generation and destruction, of combination and decomposition, which it is quite reasonable to suppose could never have had a beginning, and which, consequently, can never have an end.”* When an atheist makes this assertion, and declares it “*quite reasonable*,” we may be permitted to ask him on what grounds it is “*quite reasonable* ;” but our demand is only met by another assertion equally without evidence, namely—that these properties are essential to matter. So far, however, from *any* of these properties being essential to matter, we can conceive of matter devoid of them *all*, and yet retaining its existence. The mind may abstract them all, one by one, from matter, and yet conceive of matter as a solid substance. The savage, who knows nothing of the chemical properties of matter, who has no conception of their existence, has as real an idea of the existence of matter as the most profound philosopher. The assertion, therefore, that the chemical properties of matter are necessary to the existence of matter, is a simple contradiction. But if these properties be not essential to matter, how will the materialist prove their eternity? We ask again, from what sources will he produce his evidence? These are inconvenient questions; and hence we are told that “to go beyond this, to find the principle of action in matter, to trace the origin of things, it is for ever to fall back upon difficulties.”† We are quite aware of the difficulties, but they are the difficulties of the atheistic theory. It is always difficult to give proofs when there are none to give.

Thus, then, in reference to the eternity of motion, of gravitation, and of the chemical properties of matter, as well as of

* “*Système de la Nature*,” tom. i., part i., chap. ii.

† *Ibid.*

matter itself, atheism has no proofs to give. All, so far, is confessedly supposition and conjecture, and conjectures contradictory to all the evidence which the nature of the subject enables us to adduce.

(d) *Life and mental phenomena are not essential to Matter.*

—We know from consciousness and observation that there are such phenomena as life, sensation, thought, emotion, moral sentiment, &c. ; now, if matter be the *one*, that is, the *only* one, self-existent and eternal being, it follows that these, as well as motion, gravitation, chemical affinities, &c., must be essential properties of matter ; and if essential, eternal also ; but if it be proved that they are *not* properties of matter, it follows that they are derived from another.

Our argument, in this instance, does not so much require abstract reasoning, as an appeal to the facts which come constantly under our observation. That life and mental phenomena are not essential to matter, is evident from the fact, that the great bulk of matter is destitute of these properties. We never see life, but in connection with some form of organization ; and we never see mental phenomena, but in connection with life ; but we daily and hourly *see* matter destitute of them all. Again, we see matter, at one time, connected with life and mental phenomena ; and, at another time, we see that same matter bereft of them by death. Here is another proof that life and mental phenomena are neither essential to matter nor eternally existing in it. Moreover, it is always admitted, even by the materialist, that the unorganized, amorphous, and atomic state of matter is its *original* condition ; and hence all matter must originally have been absolutely devoid of life, sensation, consciousness, thought, emotion, moral sentiment, and all other mental phenomena ; and even if matter had been eternal, it must have been, through an antecedent eternity, absolutely destitute of these properties.

These facts are fatal to the atheistic hypothesis that matter is the one eternal and self-existent being ; for if matter was eternally devoid of these properties, it must have remained devoid of these properties for ever, unless they had been super-

added by another Being distinct from matter. But the fact that matter derived its properties from a superior Being, proves that matter itself is not self-sufficient and independent, and, therefore, cannot be self-existent and eternal. Matter, not being eternal, must have been created, and it must have received its existence from the same source as that from which it derived its motion, its gravitation, its chemical affinities, together with all the vital and mental phenomena connected with physical organization.

Summary of the Argument.

We present a brief summary of the points examined, and the evidence adduced. In the first instance, the several arguments adduced by the materialist in support of the eternity of matter were examined one by one, and it was shown—

1. That the eternity of matter is not a self-evident proposition.

2. That the creation of matter involves no impossibility.

3. That the indestructibility of matter, even if it were true, affords no evidence of its eternity.

4. That the opinions of ancient philosophers on the eternity of matter are not identical with those of modern materialists; and if they were they would have no weight in this argument, because opinion, whether ancient or modern, cannot be a substitute for evidence.

The conclusion to which we are conducted by an examination of these points is, that the eternity of matter is ~~totally~~ unsupported by evidence, and is therefore a mere hypothesis.

In the next place, direct evidence was adduced to show that this hypothesis is contradictory to reason—

1. Because the eternity of matter involves the absurdity of supposing an infinite number of eternal and self-existent beings.

2. The passivity of matter exhibits qualities which are incompatible with self-existence and independence, and argues its non-eternity.

3. That various other properties ascribed to matter are derived; and the derivation of properties is incompatible with

the independence, self-existence, and eternity of the substance itself.

A review of these arguments, and a comparison of them with the criteria of truth laid down in our category of principles (in Proposition 4, pages 28, 29), will show that the hypothesis of the eternity of matter has not any of the marks of truth, but the image and superscription of error; for it is neither supported by evidence, nor is it in harmony with ascertained truth. Reason, therefore, requires us to reject it as false.

On the other hand, having shown that there are cogent reasons for the non-eternity of matter, it follows that ~~every reason for the non-eternity of matter~~ is a direct argument for ~~the existence of God~~; for, if matter be not eternal, it is derived and dependent; it is a creature, and as such it must have a Creator, and that Creator must himself be uncreated and eternal; or, in other words, must be God.

CHAPTER III.

THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT THE UNIVERSE, OR THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION OF NATURE, IS NOT ETERNAL.

FROM the existence of matter in its simple and elementary state, we pass on by an easy transition to contemplate matter in its orderly arrangement and organization, as presented to our view in the general constitution of Nature. To some minds an argument on the non-eternity of the universe may appear superfluous, because it is logically a necessary consequence from the argument in the preceding chapter. But it is a characteristic of truth that it is not confined to one line of argument, nor to one method of proof. The variety of its evidence bears proportion to its multifarious relations. If matter in its unorganized and amorphous state supplies evidence of a creating cause, much more clearly and legibly may it be expected to bear the impress of the Creator's hand when in its orderly and

systematic arrangement ; and to ignore this evidence would be to do injustice to truth. We propose, therefore, to view the evidence for the non-eternity of the universe in a distinct and independent aspect, so that either with or without leaning on the preceding argument, the reader may examine its testimony to the truth.

The visible universe presents itself to our contemplation under a two-fold aspect ; we have matter organized and connected with vital phenomena, and we have matter devoid of vitality and organization, but the subject of systematic arrangement and mechanical and chemical action. As these two divisions of the universe are essentially distinct from each other in their nature, so, in considering their origin, we have to adduce evidence distinct in its character and somewhat different in its degree. The evidence which proves the origin of all the forms of vital phenomena possesses, we think, the character of a physical demonstration ; and the evidence which proves the origin of the orderly arrangement of matter in the general system of Nature, if not demonstrative, is yet of a class which commands a rational assent. We shall begin the investigation with *vital* phenomena, and thence extend our inquiries to the general constitution of the material fabric.

SECTION I.—ORGANIZED EXISTENCE CONSIDERED.

1. *That every form of organized existence must have had a beginning, is evident from the fact that it has invariably the properties of derivation and dependence.*

That ourselves, and the numerous individuals comprising the present generation in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, have had a beginning, is palpable to our senses. The origin of existence by propagation, and its termination by death, place a narrow limit to ourselves and the various forms of life by which we are surrounded. Each existing individual has had a beginning, and we know that each, within a comparatively

transient period, must have an end. The same may be affirmed as to the origin of the preceding generation, and the same again of others preceding that; and thus derivation and dependence characterize each generation. Therefore, in tracing back the derivation of each species or genus along the converging lines of generation to its ultimatum, we necessarily come to a first individual or a first pair, as the case may be, from which the whole race has descended; but it is equally evident that the first individuals or the first pairs, who were the primogenitors of the whole race, must either have existed eternally or have derived their existence in a mode totally different from generation. That each primogenitor existed eternally and independently, involves a tissue of absurdities too obvious to be named, and too glaring to be maintained by the atheist himself. Now, the alternative logically necessitates the admission of a Creator as the great author of all vital existence; but to avert this conclusion and entangle the argument in a metaphysical labyrinth, the atheists of a former school contended that there were no primogenitors of each race, but that the series of generations had been eternal.

This supposition, however, has no claim to the dignity of an argument, for, like the alleged eternity of matter, it is purely an hypothesis suggested by the imagination, not by the judgment; and as totally void of evidence from reason as it is of testimony from scientific fact. Its only value, even to atheism itself, is that for a moment it diverts an inquirer from the evidence of facts, and imposes upon the theist the task of exposing its futility.

The fiction has, indeed, long since been logically exploded. It has been shown that the notion of an eternal series of derived and dependent beings involves a contradiction and an impossibility—for each individual in the series being derived from and dependent on its predecessor, the properties of derivation and dependence must belong to the whole; and derivation and dependence necessarily involve a primal origin, which must be underived and independent, and therefore

eternal.* It avails nothing to extend the series to infinity; that lessens not the dependence of each individually, nor of the whole collectively. If we push the series into an imaginary infinity, their dependence goes along with them just as far as they go; and imagination itself cannot escape from the intellectual necessity which is felt for an independent cause, as the originator of a derived and dependent being.

Conclusive and satisfactory as this argument may be, we need not rest upon it alone. In fact, this argument is almost rendered obsolete by the more tangible and impressive evidence of facts. Like a mediæval weapon, effective enough in its day, it may now be suspended in honour of past achievements, while we employ, in modern times, the still more efficient weapon of physical demonstration.

→ 2. That all organized existence has had a beginning is evident from the facts of geology.

Paley begins his admirable treatise on Natural Theology by a concession which registers the state of science at that period, but the rich contributions which philosophy has since yielded to the cause of truth have rendered such a concession now impossible to be made. He says: "In crossing a heath, suppose I pitched my foot against a stone, and were asked how

* This argument has been well illustrated by Wollaston:—"Suppose a chain hung down out of the heavens from an unknown height, and though every link of it gravitated towards the earth, and what it hung upon was not visible, yet it did not descend, but kept its situation; and upon this a question should arise what supported or kept up this chain, would it be a sufficient answer to say, that the first or lowest link hung upon the second, or the next above it; the second, or rather the first and second together, upon the third; and so on *in infinitum*? For what holds up the whole? A chain of ten links would fall down unless something able to bear it hindered; also one of twenty links, if not stayed by something of yet greater strength, in proportion to the increase of weight. And thus it is, in a chain of causes and effects, tending, or (as it were) gravitating towards some end. The last, or lowest, depends, or (as one may say) is suspended, upon the cause above it. This again, if it be not the first cause, is suspended as an effect upon something above it," &c.—*Religion of Nature Delineated*.

the stone came to be there; I might possibly answer, for anything I knew to the contrary, it had lain there for ever—nor would it, perhaps, be very easy to show the absurdity of this answer. But suppose I had found a *watch* upon the ground, and it should be inquired how the *watch* happened to be in that place; I should hardly think of the answer which I had before given—that for anything I knew, the *watch* might have always been there. Yet why should not this answer serve for the *watch* as well as for the stone? why is it not as admissible in the second case as in the first? For this reason, and for no other—namely, that when we come to inspect the *watch* we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are framed and put together for a purpose.”

The case is well put, and shows how forcible the evidence for a Creator was, even under the disadvantage of a feebler light and a more imperfect testimony. It is not eighty years since Paley wrote that passage; yet within this period a new* science has risen into existence to demonstrate that the stone could not now be supposed to have lain on the heath for ever; for the very stones, whether examined in detached fragments, or as built up in the massive rocks, declare plainly a beginning, and their very composition often proclaims a Creator.

The rocks which compose the crust of our globe are admitted by scientific men to be, not mere chaotic masses heaped together amid the desolations of volcanic and oceanic catastrophes, but venerable archives, stored with instructive volumes of natural history and lithographic illustrations of our earth's tenantry and condition during its ante-Mosaic existence. The science of geology furnishes ocular demonstration that the notion of an eternal series of beings is a mere figment of the imagination.

It would not comport with the extent and design of this work to enter minutely into the details of geological science,

* We mean new in reference to its claims to be regarded as a science; for the imperfect discoveries of Lehman, Werner, and Hutton, and their respective theories, did not entitle geology to be placed among the sciences.

but it may be generally stated that the numerous rocks which compose the crust of the earth, classified according to the chronological order of their formation, are presented thus:— Lowest in the series, and as the foundation of the stupendous masonry, we have the granite, &c., of igneous origin, and of a thickness which cannot be determined. On this solid and crystallized basis lie a series of aqueous rocks, formed by slow sedimentary deposits during unknown ages, in which are entombed the various forms of organized existence, animal and vegetable, which occupied old ocean or earth while the stratified rocks were in course of formation. The various strata, forming altogether deposits of about eight or ten miles in thickness, are, for the sake of convenience, compendiously classified according to the periods of their formation. Each period comprises several series of rocks, which, arranged in a descending scale according to their chronological order, may be thus presented:—

Post-tertiary.	{	Recent.
	{	Post-pliocene.
Tertiary.	{	Pliocene.
	{	Miocene.
	{	Eocene.
Secondary.	{	Chalk.
	{	Walden.
	{	Oolite.
	{	Lias.
	{	Trias.
	{	Permian.
Primary.	{	Carboniferous.
	{	Devonian.
	{	Silurian.
	{	Cambrian.
	{	Laurentian.

Below these lie the crystalline stratified series, and these finally rest on the ancient granite as the supposed primeval foundation of them all.* The *chronological* formation of the

* Some geologists, however, suppose that granite is, in some particular

various strata, as above stated, is attested by the general consent of competent geologists; but the *actual* position of the rocks has been greatly changed. The crust of the earth has been torn, fractured, and transposed; internal agencies of amazing power have agitated the interior of the earth at different periods, and forced through the superincumbent strata those masses of granite which form the central columns and peaks of the most elevated portions of our globe. The very foundations of the earth are upraised to its loftiest summits, and the fractured strata which repose on the mountain-side, or build up the walls of the frowning precipice and deep ravine, reveal to the geologist the successive formations which lie between the lowest known rocks and the soils on which our harvests wave. What, then, is the testimony of these venerable monuments? Do they teach that existing species are derived from an eternal succession of progenitors? Do they furnish specimens of the *present* tribes of animal life being continuous in each geological formation down to the ancient granite, and within its crystalline texture? On the contrary, they reveal a period when only few of *existing* species had a place in our world. They reveal distant periods, when forms of being widely different tenanted the earth and ocean. They carry us again to eras when these had no existence, and thence to periods still more remote, when no anterior species of either animal or vegetable life had begun to be; and, indeed, when the conditions of our earth were such that the existence of any organized being was, according to our best geologists, apparently impossible.

(a) *Evidence that the human species has not existed in an eternal series.*

Now, as fossil remains attest the various species of beings which in different ages have occupied either the surface of the earth or the waters of the ocean, ~~it follows that, if man had existed in an eternal succession, we should find remains of the~~

places, of recent formation. Still the *ancient* granite is regarded as the foundation of the entire series of known rocks.

human species, and of human arts, through all the series of stratified rocks, from the surface soil down to the oldest strata which human observation has examined; but the soil which man ploughs for his subsistence is almost the only deposit where his remains have been found. As the result of the most careful investigations in every part of the world, evidence is conclusive as to the comparatively recent origin of man. Remains of other animals are numerous for thousands of fathoms deep in the strata of the earth, and some of those remains comprise almost entire rocks of prodigious thickness, which must have occupied myriads of ages in their formation; but the remains of man have no true place except above the surface of the tertiary system. Even the rude flint instruments recently discovered in certain caves and stratified gravel, are, by the most competent geologists, admitted to belong to the deposits of the post-tertiary series.* Not a human bone is found, not a monument of human art is discovered, coeval with the piles of strata which for miles form the crust of the earth beneath the post-tertiary age. Nor can this absence of human remains be accounted for by the supposition that the land and ocean have changed their places, and that deep waters now conceal the records of generations that lived in dateless ages past; for, if the present continents occupy the beds of the ancient ocean, the various strata which the geologist explores would unfold the memorials of man's marine adventures, or give some attestation of his existence in those far-off times. Suppose that some catastrophe in the future should transfer the ocean from its present beds to the continents now occupied by the nations, would not the new regions thus recovered from the seas be found prolific in the monuments of human history? Would not the spoils of the ocean now accumulated, and which have been accumulating through successive ages, and now being imbedded among contemporaneous deposits, yield innumerable remains of the existing race, and supply to the scientific and literati of a future day instructive monuments of the arts, the sciences, the wealth, and

* See Owen on Human Remains, in his recent work on "Palaeontology," pages 401—3.

enterprise of the present nations? Such remains would fill the cabinets of the curious and the museums of the learned in every part of the world. Why, then, do we not now find, throughout the series of rocks, the remains of man's existence and enterprise in ages contemporaneous with the formation of those geological deposits? Simply because man had then no existence.

Nor can it be pretended that human remains once existed, but have all been decomposed and obliterated; for the remains of both animals and vegetables whose organization was the most delicate, frail, and perishable, have been preserved through myriads of ages; and even where the substance itself has been destroyed or transmuted into the texture of the enveloping rock, the forms and impressions of its organization have been preserved. The beautiful crinoid, the tender leaflet of the fern, the gossamer wings of an insect, and the filmy, gelatinous animalcule, have left the impression of their existence in chiliads of ages past. Even the trail of a worm, and the minute prints of the rain-drops left on the sands of the earliest seas, may still be seen as the records of the meteorology of our world in ages which the mind almost staggers in computing; but not a fragment of the human system, not a statue, or medal, or utensil, or intaglio, or inscription, or pillar, or building, or artificial work of any kind, has been found to attest man's existence at any age earlier than the formations of the post-tertiary system.* In every system of geology that has yet

* Human skeletons have been discovered embedded in solid limestone rock, on the shores of Guadaloupe, and in the West Indies; but, as Dr. Buckland observes, the rock in which they occur is of recent formation. Sometimes, too, human bones have been found in caves, inclosed in stalactite, or mingled with the fossils of extinct species of quadrupeds; but such cases may be accounted for in various ways. "Many of these caverns have been inhabited by savage tribes, who, for the convenience of occupation, have repeatedly disturbed portions of the soil in which their predecessors have been buried. Such disturbances will explain the occasional admixture of fragments of human skeletons, and the bones of modern quadrupeds with those of extinct species." "In the case of caverns which form the channels of subterranean rivers, or which are subject to occasional

seen the light, whether from friend or foe to the agency of a creating cause, Man is invariably placed last in the series of organized existence. Even Sir Charles Lyell, in his latest work on "The Antiquity of Man," says, "The time assigned to the first appearance of Man, so far as our geological inquiries have yet gone, is extremely modern in relation to the age of the existing fauna and flora, or even to the time when most of the living species of animals and plants attained their actual geographical distribution." * This admission is enough!

Thus, the existence of man is proved to be of recent origin. If natural generation carries us back to the logical conclusion of a single pair of human beings as the primogenitors of our species, Geology soon carries us back to a period when the first human pair had not begun to exist.

Whilst the recent origin of man is thus proved by the direct testimony of geology, the evidence is unopposed by any counter-facts in the actual condition of nations. It is in harmony with all the facts which come within the range of human observation. The testimony of all authentic history, the recent period in which many important discoveries have been made, in which some arts and sciences have been originated, and in which others have obtained their present development—all accord with the modern date of human existence. The art of printing, the true system of the universe, the science of geology, the application of steam to mechanical purposes, the electric tele-

inundations, another cause of the admixture of human bones with the remains of animals of more ancient date may be found in the movements occasioned by running waters." See Buckland's "Bridgewater Treatise," 105, 106; Cuvier's "Theory of the Earth," 114—121; Lyell's "Principles," vol. iii., 134—190. All such cases furnish no evidence against the recent origin of the human species. Even should human remains be found occasionally in lower strata, the fact would not overturn the palpable evidence of man's recent origin, seeing there are many ways in which the remains of one age may have become mingled with those of another.

See this subject examined in the Author's work on "The Fallacies of the Alleged Antiquity of Man."

* "Geological Evidences of the Antiquity of Man," by Sir Charles Lyell, F.R.S., p. 289.

graph, and many other discoveries of the greatest importance to human comfort and well-being, are but of recent origin; and these facts, though difficult to be reconciled with either an eternal or a very protracted succession of human generations, perfectly harmonize with the facts of geology, which declare the introduction of man to be an event connected with the latest epoch in the history of our world.

(b) Evidence that the various tribes of inferior animals and vegetables have not existed in an eternal series.

Had the various classes, orders, and genera of existing animals and vegetables lived through an eternal series, their fossil remains would be found in the various stratified rocks downward, however far we descend. Thus the elephant, the ox, the goat, the stag, &c., among the animal tribes; and the oak, the vine, the nectarine, &c., among the vegetable classes, would be found in the Silurian and the Cambrian rocks, as well as on the surface soil of the tertiary system. In fact, wherever remains of the lowest tribes of existence are found, we might expect to find remains of the highest as well as the lowest forms of organized life; and not only so, but evidences of the condition of our planet being then adapted to their sustenance and well-being. But there is the clearest proof that there were periods in the history of our planet when neither any species now existing, nor others of anterior origin, inhabited the earth.

In leaving the surface soil and penetrating the tertiary series of rocks, we find at once a distinct and remarkable change in the preceding tenantry of our globe. While the lord of the creation is absent, so are many of the existing species of animals. Though remains of shells are found there belonging to species still existing in our seas, and remains, too, of fishes and quadrupeds identical with existing genera, yet they are combined with many others which have no living representatives. Indeed, the names applied to the different classifications of rocks comprised in the tertiary series, are given to indicate the gradual departure of fossil remains from the types of animals now existing in the world. The *pliocene* division denotes the rocks in which fossils corresponding with

existing species are predominant; the *miocene* denotes the period wherein the representatives of present tribes are found in diminished numbers, and when extinct species had the ascendancy; the *eocene* indicates the period wherein forms of life corresponding with only *some* existing animals had just begun to appear.

As we descend lower, and enter the secondary series, the dissimilarity increases, and as we proceed we pass through remarkable eras, when the gigantic megalosaur and iguanodon roamed through the umbrageous ravine; the pterodactyle, like the fabled dragon, darted through the air in quest of prey; the huge plesiosaur and ichthyosaur paddled in the turbid estuary; the bulky cheirotherium hobbled on the muddy strand; and various scaly beings, of grim aspects and monstrous proportions, were the potentates of our world. But no remains of the elephant, the horse, the stag, or the goat, or other mammals, are found here; no vines, or figs, or nectarines are found here; and that not because they had ceased to exist, but because they had not yet begun to be.

As we descend through the primary series of rocks, we seem to leave behind us all forms of animal existence except the amphibious and marine, which, though in some species abundant, and elaborately organized, yet differ from existing types; and as we near the verge of the Cambrian formation, we approach the outer bounds of organized existence. Descending into the series of crystalline stratified rocks, we come to that equivocal era when, but a few years ago, the few and doubtful fossils hitherto found left geologists undecided whether or not organized life had yet begun to be; but in the year 1875 Dr. Dawson published an interesting volume under the title, "The Dawn of Life," in which he showed that deep in the Lower Laurentian Rocks he had discovered numerous remains of a simple and humbly-organized marine animal, which he designated *Eozoon Canadense*—"a creature of the lowest type of organization," which, he says, "may be regarded as the simplest and most ready media for the conversion of

vegetable matter into animal tissues."* But passing these rocks and entering the ancient granite, we arrive at a period when no types of animal or vegetable existence are found; and the only rational conclusion is, that then no form of organized life had begun to be.

There are three facts, which unitedly, we think, render this conclusion irresistible. *Firstly*, Granite rock is the lowest, and consequently the most ancient formation of the whole series which is known to exist. *Secondly*, No organic remains of any kind have been found in the granite. Search as deep and extensively as we may in the masses of granite, not an indication of the simplest forms of life is discovered. *Thirdly*, This total absence of life in granite rock is preceded by a gradual diminution of the species, as we descend from the surface to the foundation. First, Man disappears; next, mammals and birds; then every other form of terrene animals; and, finally, the number of individuals, as well as of the species, become diminished, until, before we reach the granite, every remnant of organized life disappears; and thence downward, however deep the geologist may explore, the solid masonry is one unbroken region of silence and death. Now, had all the various species of animal and vegetable fossils been continued in each descending stratum, and at last suddenly and abruptly ceased to appear, it might have been suggested, that at this period some general catastrophe had destroyed the whole; but, seeing the decrease is *gradual*, and the older the rocks the fewer the species, until the oldest of all are totally destitute of every form of organized life, there is but one conclusion to which the mind can arrive, and that is, we have now probably reached that distant era in the history of our planet, which preceded the commencement of life, when the surface of our globe was one dreary waste, unoccupied by animal or plant; and organized existence, even in its humblest form, had not begun to be.

We may conclude this branch of our argument in the

* "The Dawn of Life," by Dr. Dawson, pp. 60, 69.

language of one of the most eminent geologists of the age. "From the *absence* of all organic remains in the primary strata, we may derive an important argument, showing that there was a point of time in the history of our planet (which no other researches but those of geology can possibly approach) antecedent to the beginning of either animal or vegetable life. This conclusion is the more important, because it has been the refuge of some speculative philosophers to refer the origin of existing organizations either to an eternal succession of the same species, or to the formation of more recent from more ancient species, by successive developments, without the interposition of direct and repeated acts of creation; and thus to deny the existence of any first term, in the infinite series of successions, which this hypothesis assumes. Against this theory, no decisive evidence has been accessible, until the modern discoveries of geology had established two conclusions, of the highest value, in relation to this long-disputed question: the first proving that all existing species have had a beginning, and these for the most part at a period comparatively recent; the second showing that they were preceded by several other systems of animal and vegetable life, respecting each of which it may be no less proved that there was a time when their existence had not commenced, and that to these more ancient systems, also, the doctrine of eternal succession, both retrospective and prospective, is equally inapplicable." These last remarks apply to the stratified rocks, the lowest series, lying next to the granite itself. Anticipating an objection, he further states:—"Those who contend that life may have existed during the formation of the primary strata, and the animal remains have been obliterated by the effects of heat on strata nearest to the granite, do but remove to one point further back the first term of the finite series of organic beings; and there still remains, beyond this point, an antecedent period, in which a state of total fusion pervaded the entire materials of the fundamental granite; and one universal mass of incandescent elements, wholly incompatible with any condition of life which can be shown to have ever existed, formed the entire substance of the globe."

SECTION II.—EVIDENCE THAT THE COSMICAL ARRANGEMENTS OF THE UNIVERSE HAVE HAD A BEGINNING.

It is not in the tactics of modern atheists to deny that the earth with the solar, and even the stellar systems, have had a beginning. The advance of science has effectually exposed the absurdity of ascribing eternity to this mundane system, or to the arrangements of the material fabric. The theories of Lamarck, Buffon, Mirabaud, Monboddo, the author of the "Vestiges of Creation,"* and other cosmogonists, whether avowed atheists or not, admit a beginning, and only aim to show that the orderly system of Nature spontaneously arose from the properties of matter. These theories will hereafter be examined; at present, we shall glance at the evidence afforded that the fabric of the universe is not eternal, so that we may base our subsequent arguments on a foundation more stable than the concessions of an opponent.

I. *Evidence that the various chemical agencies and other phenomena have had a beginning.*

Every one will see that it is owing, in a subordinate sense, to the activity of chemical forces, that the earth is rendered a fit habitation for animal and vegetable existence.—It is by the action of these antagonistic forces that combustion, evaporation, refrigeration, and all the innumerable forms of analysis, combination, and dissolution have been, and are still, effected. It is, indeed, by their agency that the various strata of the globe have been built up, the air and water have been constituted, and the world rendered fit to sustain animal and vegetable life. But in the activity of chemical forces there is a constant struggle of the elements to find a state of equilibrium and repose; and is not that ultimate repose an event which is gradually, slowly, yet certainly, coming on? Dr. Prout observes—"Amidst all that endless diversity of property, and all the changes constantly going on in the world around us, we

* It is only just to state that the author of the "Vestiges of Creation" avows his belief in a creating cause.

cannot avoid being struck with the general tendency of the whole to a state of repose, or equilibrium. Moreover, this tendency to equilibrium is not confined to the ponderable elements, but prevails also in the same remarkable degree among the imponderable agencies, heat and light, which, as we have seen, cannot be anywhere long retained in a state of excess, on account of their natural disposition to acquire a certain state of equilibrium." Dr. Whewell, whose philosophical research has given him a commanding position, remarks—"We can no longer maintain the infinite past duration of the earth; for chemical forces, as well as mechanical, tend to equilibrium, and that condition once attained, their efficacy ceases. Chemical affinities tend to form new compounds; and though, where many and various elements are mingled together, the play of synthesis and analysis may go on for a long time, it must at last end. If, for instance, a large portion of the earth's mass were originally pure potassium, we can imagine violent igneous action to go on so long as any part remained unoxidized; but when the oxidization of the whole has once taken place, this action must be at an end; for there is no (physical) agency which can reproduce the deoxidized metal. Thus a perpetual motion is incapable in chemistry as it is in mechanics; and a theory of constant change, continued through infinite time, is untenable when asserted upon chemical, no less than upon mechanical, principles."

The gradual diminution and ultimate cessation of the activity of chemical forces must result, we think, from the gradual refrigeration of the earth and the sun. Heat, though itself an effect of an antecedent cause, is one of the most powerful agents in exciting the activity of chemical forces; and the gradual withdrawal of this powerful agent must necessarily subject chemical forces to a corresponding diminution of their activity. The geological history of our planet presents evidence of this, for it reveals the fact that, however fixed and uniform may be the *laws* of chemistry, the intensity of chemical forces has diminished in proportion as the heat of the earth has declined. In the crystallization of the masses of granite

and metamorphic rocks, which constitute the geological platform, and in the subsequent uplifting of those masses to the loftiest altitudes of our globe; in the catastrophes which have frequently submerged the land beneath the ocean, and raised the floor of the ocean to the mountain ridges of the Andes and Himalayan heights, we see the action of chemical forces on a scale of magnitude and violent grandeur, which strangely contrast with the repose of the present day. In the vast accumulations of mountain limestone, and the luxuriant flora of the carboniferous period, we see an excessive evolution and absorption of carbon, combined with great and sudden revolutions in earth and sea, which indicate the potency and activity of chemical forces in that era. In the geological epochs following the carboniferous period, we witness further modifications evidenced by the diversified fauna and flora of the earth—the diversified species exhibiting meteoric change, and meteoric change involving the subsidence of some chemical forces and the ascendancy of others: and the combined action of all progressively advancing towards the present state of things. It is, indeed, by no means improbable that a considerable change has taken place in the action of chemical forces even during the brief period of human history. The shortness of life in the human race, since the deluge, intimates a meteoric change as at least one of the causes. Looking, then, at the known tendency of all the elements to produce an equilibrium—a state in which antagonistic properties neutralize each other, and produce a state of rest—we ask, What should prevent this tendency to equilibrium from proceeding to ulterior results? The tendency still exists in the elements: why should not that tendency continue to operate until the last antagonism between the elements shall cease—until analysis and combination shall have completed their cycle, and perfect repose, quiescence, and death, shall succeed the activity and animation of the present order of things? We see nothing but the interposition of a Divine agency to prevent this result. Philosophy teaches it *a priori*, and the history of our planet confirms the decision.

If it be a philosophical axiom that the same causes produce

the same effects, the facts adduced may apply to other orbs as well as our earth. If there be unity and uniformity in the laws of matter, an end may be predicated as to the action of chemical forces in the planets, the sun, and the stars also ; indeed, in every part of the material universe where the same laws prevail. If, then, the laws of chemistry and their operations lead us to conclude there will be a cessation of action in the future, they as certainly lead us back to an origin in the past. A cycle which has an end must have had a beginning. The fact that it has not yet completed its series shows that it has not yet had time for that completion, and, therefore, cannot be eternal.

II. *Evidence from Astronomy that the mechanism and motion of the universe are not eternal.*

It may be admitted that the present state of astronomical science does not furnish evidence of a beginning to the solar and sidereal systems, so clear and decisive as geology does of a beginning to organized existence, and to the antecedent igneous condition of our planet, yet modern discoveries in astronomy do supply some facts which, we think, afford reasonable grounds to regard the whole universe as having but a limited duration, both in its past and future existence. We wish those facts to be estimated at their proper value in this argument, and nothing more.

1. *The effects of a resisting medium in the retardation of comets argue the cessation of planetary revolution.*

That the space of the earth's orbit is a vacuum, is contradicted by the fact that light is incessantly streaming forth from the sun, through every part of the solar system, and to a distance inconceivably beyond the wanderings of the most distant comet. Whether light be regarded as a direct emanation of particles from the solar atmosphere, or the vibrations of an ethereal fluid, the existence of material particles, diffused through and beyond the entire expanse of the solar system, is established. The existence, too, of a gravitating force, whatever it be, if material, implies the presence of something pervading every part of our system. That there is one or more

media, however ethereal and attenuated, through which the planets move, must therefore be admitted; but the effects of this medium, as to planetary motion, could scarcely be conjectured, until recent observations upon Encke's comet showed a small retardation, affecting the periodical returns of that vaporous and attenuated body.

Two hundred years ago, indeed, Dr. E. Halley stated,* "He thought he could demonstrate that the opposition of the ether to planetary motion would in time become sensible;" but it remained for more modern astronomers to sustain this opinion by actual observation.

The solid and compact bodies of the planets present, indeed, within the brief period of human observation, no *appreciable* difference in their periodical revolutions; but Encke's comet, being a body of light and vaporous substance, and consequently the more easily affected by any resisting medium, has had the time of its revolution diminished by about two hours and thirty minutes in each revolution, or about two days since its discovery in 1786. This diminution, however, in the time of its revolution, is accompanied by the fact of its being ten days in advance of the place which it would have reached, had it not been influenced by some retarding force.† This apparent paradox arises from a conjunction of the facts that while the comet's motion is slower its orbit is narrower, and it gains more by the narrowing of its orbit than it loses by the diminution of its velocity. These effects can be accounted for only by the existence and influence of a resisting medium. Professor Airy, our present royal Astronomer, observes, "I cannot but express my belief that the principal part of the theory, viz., an effect similar to that which a resisting medium would produce, is perfectly established by the reasoning in Encke's memoir." A similar conviction is expressed by Professor Nichol, and by the greatest astronomical authorities, and a resisting medium may now be regarded as a scientific fact.

* "Miscellanea Curiosa," p. 59.

† "Hind on Comets," pp. 58—70. Humboldt, vol. iii., pp. 34—36.

Seeing that the existence of a resisting medium is established, it is argued by astronomers that its ultimate effect will be, that the comet, which is made to narrow its orbit in each successive revolution, will be dragged into collision with the sun, unless its vaporous constitution become dissipated by the intensity of solar heat, before it shall have completed its course. Indeed, Amedée Guillemin, in his splendid work on "The Heavens," referring to the diminishing period of this comet's revolution, says that, if this progressive diminution continues at the same rate, the time can be calculated when the comet shall be plunged into the incandescent mass of the sun.*

It is further argued by scientific men, that the same destiny awaits the earth, and the whole planetary system. Captain Smyth, in his elaborate and admirable work on "The Cycle of Celestial Objects," remarks, "The projectile impulse which produced planetary motions might continue unimpaired in void space; but if those motions are through space occupied by matter, however thin and weak that matter may be, they must be continually enfeebled and diminished, till the motive power, except such as depends on gravitation, becomes quiescent. He further says—

"Astronomy enables one to divide, as it were, eternity into intelligible periods, and the period may require millions, or millions of millions of years in its consummation; but the catastrophe which threatens can be pronounced upon—the celestial orbs may not endure for ever. A resisting medium is now known to exist, and, however faint that resistance may be, or however vast the period of the retarding action, the visionary eternity of the planetary movements is dispelled, and finite duration indelibly stamped." †

The same final result is argued by Dr. Whewell in his admirable "Bridgewater Treatise." ‡ He says, "The same medium

* "The Heavens," by Amedée Guillemin. Edited by J. Norman Lockyer, F.R.A.S., F.R.S., 1876, p. 247.

† Smyth's "Celestial Cycle," vol. i., p. 264.

‡ Dr. Whewell's "Bridgewater Treatise," p. 197, &c.

which is thus shown to produce an effect upon Encke's comet, must also act upon the planets which move through the same spaces. The effect upon the planets, however, must be very much smaller than the effect upon the comet, in consequence of their greater quantity of matter." The same writer goes on to state the consequence of this resistance to a planet. "If a planet, revolving about the sun, were to lose any portion of its velocity by the effect of resistance, it would be drawn proportionately nearer the sun, the tendency towards the centre being no longer sufficiently counteracted by that centrifugal force which arises from the body's velocity. And if the resistance were to continue to act, the body would be drawn perpetually nearer and nearer to the centre, and would describe its revolutions quicker and quicker, till at last it would reach the central body, and the system would cease to be a system."

"This result is true, however small be the velocity lost by resistance; the only difference being, that when the resistance is small, the time requisite to extinguish the whole motion will be proportionately longer. In all cases, the times which come under our consideration in problems of this kind are enormous to common apprehension. But," observes this writer, "the changes themselves must, sooner or later, take place, in consequence of the existence of the resisting medium. Since there is such a retarding force perpetually acting, however slight it be, it must in the end destroy all celestial motions. It may be millions of millions of years before the earth's retardation may perceptibly affect the apparent motion of the sun; but still the day will come (if the same Providence which formed the system should permit it to continue so long) when this cause will entirely change the length of our year and the course of our seasons, and finally stop the earth's motion round the sun altogether. The smallness of the resistance, however small we may choose to suppose it, does not allow us to escape this certainty. There is a resisting medium; and, therefore, the movements of the solar system cannot go on for ever. The moment such a fluid is ascertained to exist, the eternity of the move-

ments of the planets becomes as impossible as a perpetual motion on the earth."

Nor do we see how this conclusion can be successfully resisted. It avails not that Laplace and Lagrange have demonstrated that planetary perturbations and oscillations, arising from mutual attraction, are confined within a limited cycle, and are subject to a self-adjusting economy; for in the resisting medium there is another cause of change which their calculations had not embraced, and for the counteraction of which no agency seems to exist. Nor does it avail that within the period of human observation, no such effect as that resulting from the action of the resisting medium upon the revolution of comets, has been observed upon the earth and other planetary bodies. The solid masses of which the planets are composed may render that effect too diminutive to be perceived within the brief period of human science. The few thousand years of man's existence are but as a day compared with the dateless ages of our planet's previous existence, and but a moment contrasted with the vast cycles of celestial bodies; and, though the effect of the resisting medium should be so small upon our planet as not to be rendered sensible before myriads and myriads of years had elapsed, yet any effect, however diminutive, and however distant the period of its sensible manifestation, is enough to indicate the non-eternal duration of the planetary system. An element of change is discovered, and, however remote its final issue, it involves an inevitable catastrophe from physical causes now in operation, if those causes should be permitted to work out their ultimate results.

2. This argument may be applied to the stellary universe as well as to the solar system. The fixed stars are now admitted to be suns—*independent sources of light and heat*—like that which illumines and invigorates our world; and like him, very probably, attended by revolving planets, too remote for the human eye or any optical instrument to descry; and what may happen to our system as the effect of a resisting medium, may be predicated as probable with respect to every solar and stellar system in the universe.

There are numerous stars which revolve around one another, and astronomical observation demonstrates that our entire solar system is shifting its place in the universe, and moving towards a point (a star marked π) in the constellation of Hercules ; and probably revolving around some remote centre. Indeed, the sublime hypothesis is gaining ground, that the countless myriads of stars, with the crowds of nebulae, too remote to be deciphered into stars, are all revolving around a common centre, "in an orbit so vast, that no measurable arc, in any calculable period of duration, would ever appear otherwise to us than a straight line."

This hypothesis is sustained by the analogy of Nature, so far as the observations of man have extended. But, apart from this hypothesis, which connects and binds all the systems into one magnificent whole, subordinate to and revolving around one common centre, it may be affirmed that wherever there is a system there is motion, and probably wherever there is motion there is gravitation, and wherever there is a resisting medium there is a physical cause for the final cessation of motion and the ultimate destruction of the system itself. Hence, if the universe be a congregation of such systems, and if a resisting medium exist in connection with *them*, as it does with our solar system, there is in each an element of final destruction, and the ultimate dissolution of the whole must flow from the physical laws now in operation, unless prevented by the interposition of some agency, distinct from Nature, and superior to it. Thus, from the ephemeral fly to the whole frame-work of Nature, there is nothing eternal : though the one continues but a day, and the other for ages incalculable, yet both are finite, and as nothing compared to the cycles of eternity. The heavens as well as the earth shall perish, and wax old as a garment, and like a vesture shall be folded up and laid aside.

Every advance which superior instruments and more accurate observation enable the astronomer to make in the starry regions, supply new facts, accumulating the evidence that gravitation and motion prevail in the remotest regions which the telescope can reach ; and that their effect, like that upon

our system, is to narrow the orbicular sweep of the stars, to congregate them into more dense and compact clusterings—thus prognosticating their final approximation and consequent destruction, by the slow but certain operations of physical laws. Let any one examine the diagrams of nebulæ and starry clusters, as copied from the spectrum of Herschel's or Rosse's telescopes, and he will find that the prevailing forms of nebulæ and starry clusters are more or less spherical, and the prevailing characteristic observable is that of central condensation. When the telescope is turned to the Milky Way, it appears to be breaking up into separate clusters, as if the stars were being gradually drawn closer together, and forming distinct groups. "Sir William Herschel counted no less than two hundred and twenty-five such groups or subordinate clusters within the extent of the Milky Way he examined; and as all those were of a kind indicating the action of gravity, he concluded the existence of a clustering power *drawing the stars into separate groups*—a power which had broken up the uniformity of the zone, and to whose irresistible influence it was still exposed. 'Hence,' says he, 'we may be certain that the stars will there be gradually compressed, through successive stages of accumulation, till they come up to what may be called the ripening period of the globular cluster, and total insulation; from which it is evident that the Milky Way must forcibly be broken up, and cease to be a stratum of scattered stars. We may also draw an important additional conclusion from the gradual dissolution of the Milky Way, for the state into which the incessant action of the clustering power has brought it is a kind of chronometer that may be used to measure the time of its past and present existence; and although we do not know the rate of the going of this mysterious chronometer, it is, nevertheless, certain that since a breaking up of the parts of the Milky Way affords a proof that it cannot last for ever, it equally bears witness that its past duration cannot be admitted to be infinite.'"*

Add to these considerations the fact, that while some stars

* Professor Nichol. Sir W. Herschel in *Philos. Transact.* for 1817, part ii., p. 328; Arago, in the "Annuaire," 1842, p. 459.

are augmenting in their brightness and apparent magnitude, others are diminishing in both; and others, again, are totally disappearing. "It is an extraordinary fact," observes Dr. Mason Good, "that within the period of the last century, not less than thirteen stars in different constellations, none of them below the sixth magnitude, seem totally to have perished; forty to have changed their magnitude, by becoming either much larger or much smaller; and ten to have supplied the place of those that were lost. Some of these changes may, perhaps, be accounted for by a proper motion in the solar and sidereal systems, by which the relative positions of several of the heavenly bodies have varied. But this explanation, though it may apply to several of the cases, will by no means apply to them all; in many instances it is unquestionable that the stars themselves, the supposed habitations of other kinds or orders of intelligent beings, together with the different planets by which it is probable they were surrounded, and to which they may have given light and fructifying seasons, as the sun gives light and fruitfulness to the earth, have utterly vanished, and the spots which they occupied in the heavens have become blanks. What has befallen other systems will assuredly befall our own. Of the time and manner we know nothing, but the fact is scarcely controvertible; it is foretold by revelation, it is inscribed in the heavens, it is felt throughout the earth. Such is the awful and daily text: what ought to be the comment?"*

In closing our appeal to astronomical facts, a passing allusion may be made to the phenomena of asteroids and aerolites. The discovery of one hundred and sixty small bodies between Mars and Jupiter moving so near to each other in orbits which intersect each other, has suggested to scientific minds the probability of the destruction of a planet once revolving in that region, and indicates at least the possibility of a similar catastrophe to others; and the falling of numerous meteoric stones, of diverse magnitude, from planetary spaces, proves the presence of material masses floating unseen, until ignition and destruction

* Dr Mason Good, whose remarks are founded upon Herschel's observations, compared with Flamstead's.—*Phil. Trans.*, vol. lxxiii., art. 17.

reveal their existence. In these facts, as well as in the numerous comets traversing planetary orbits, there are signs by no means prophetic of eternal stability and duration to the larger masses which are everywhere floating in immensity.

Such, then, are the facts of science, and such the opinions founded upon them by philosophers. If analogy is a safe guide when based on the uniformity of Nature and the simplicity and universality of its laws, that reasoning appears conclusive and satisfactory.

The application of the argument from astronomy is this: That if the solar and stellar systems are perishable, they must have had a beginning. If they are physically incapable of continuing for ever—of enduring through an eternity to come—so it is physically and mathematically impossible they can have endured through an eternity past. Eternity swallows up all conceivable duration, and if an element of certain destruction does exist in the mechanism of the universe, it would have worked that fatal result already; had its duration been long enough continued, the vast horologe would have run down, and Nature have become a chaos. The fact that the universe still exists as an orderly system, performing its mighty revolutions, proves that it has not yet had time to run down; and, therefore, compared with eternity, its existence is but as yesterday.

Summary of the general argument that the universe is not eternal.

To refresh the memory of the reader, by presenting a condensed view of the argument, it may be stated that we have endeavoured to show—

1. That as all organized existence has the property of derivation and dependence, it cannot be eternal.

2. Geology proves the non-eternity of all organized existence, by revealing a period when it had no being.

3. Geology proves this also by revealing a period when, in the opinion of scientific men, such was the condition of our planet as to render the existence of organized beings impossible.

4. That as the activity and power of chemical forces have declined in past ages, and from the gradual abstraction of heat must continue to decline in future, their ultimate cessation must transpire, if the same laws continue, and Nature is permitted to run its chemical course.

5. That the resisting medium which retards the revolution of comets must retard also the revolution of our earth and the planets, and terminate the mechanical arrangement and motions of the solar system; and, if Nature be uniform, must also ultimately produce the same results in the general systems, and congregations of systems, in the universe. That this *finale* is corroborated by various astronomical phenomena.

Desirous only for truth, and that every part of evidence should be held at its proper value, we wish the reader to discriminate between that reasoning which has the force of a physical demonstration and that which may be based only on analogy and the constancy of Nature. The argument for a beginning to organized existence we regard as having the force of a physical demonstration; but for that part of the argument which refers to the planetary and stellar systems of the universe we do not claim a conclusion so demonstrative. The evidence is, indeed, satisfactory to our own minds, and sufficient, we think, to convince any reasonable mind, that the heavens, as well as our earth, must have had an origin; yet, as this rests partly upon analogy, it may be open to dispute. But it must be observed that had there been no scientific facts accessible to our minds, pointing to an origin of the solar and stellar systems, yet the establishment of a beginning for *organized existence alone* would have been amply sufficient for our argument. Moreover, the non-eternity of matter is of itself an irresistible proof that all organized life and all cosmical arrangements must necessarily have had a beginning. All evidence beyond this is supplementary, and not essential to sustain our conclusion. We now proceed to our next chapter.

CHAPTER IV.

IF THE UNIVERSE, OR THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION OF NATURE, IS NOT ETERNAL, IT MUST HAVE HAD AN ORIGINATOR; OR, IN OTHER WORDS, IT MUST BE AN EFFECT, AND MUST THEREFORE HAVE HAD AN ADEQUATE CAUSE.

THIS is substantially but a repetition of the second proposition laid down in our statement of principles, and is introduced here in order to preserve unbroken the chain of our argument. It requires but a passing observation. That which has had a beginning must, at one period, have had no existence, and must be the effect of some pre-existent cause; and as it has been shown that the universe is not eternal, but has had a beginning, and that matter itself is not eternal, there must have been a period when they had not begun to be. They are both, therefore, the effects of some pre-existing cause. In endeavouring to ascertain that cause we must be careful to find the *true* cause; and to ascertain the true cause, we must be sure that we fix upon an *adequate* cause; for if any alleged cause be inadequate, it is no true cause at all. A cause, to be fully adequate to any effect, must possess powers which are fully equal to its production. Whatever powers are seen in the effect must substantially or virtually exist in the cause that produced them. The cause cannot be inferior to the effect. It may have more attributes, but cannot have less; it may be incomparably greater, but it cannot be less. The effect depends upon the cause for its existence, but the cause is entirely independent of the effect for its existence, as it is also for its powers and its mode of operation.

CHAPTER V.

THERE ARE NO POWERS EXISTENT IN NATURE ITSELF ADEQUATE
TO THE PRODUCTION OF THE UNIVERSE.

So forcible is the evidence of a beginning to the present system of Nature, that modern schemes of atheism admit this as true, but contend that we are not necessitated to look for any originating cause beyond matter itself; for matter alone is adequate to produce all the cosmical arrangements and the diversified forms of organized being which exist now, or have existed in preceding ages. In support of this assertion various theories have been propounded, to show how the existing universe may have been spontaneously originated by the operations of matter.

Before we proceed to examine these theories, we may just remark that there are no schemes, ancient or modern, which ascribe to matter itself the origin of the universe, but what are marked by two essential characteristics, which divest them of all claim to rational assent: one is this—every such theory is built upon a bundle of hypotheses; and the other is this—every such theory is contradicted by obvious facts.

SECTION I.—EVERY SCHEME WHICH ASCRIBES THE PRODUCTION
OF THE UNIVERSE TO MATTER ITSELF IS BUILT UPON A SERIES
OF HYPOTHESES.1. *It assumes the eternity of matter.*

This notion, though the very substratum of the theory, is merely an hypothesis, and one which we have already shown is not only unsupported by reason, but opposed both to reason and scientific facts.

2. *It assumes that gravitation is eternal, and an essential property of matter.*

This is a second hypothesis built upon the preceding conjecture. That illustrious prince of philosophers, Newton,* who discovered the law of gravitation, never regarded it as an essential property of matter. Nor did Laplace contend for it.† Nor has science since their day elicited any new fact to invest gravitation with a different character than it had then; and, indeed, so long as matter can be conceived of as existing without it, gravitation cannot be rationally regarded as one of the essential properties of matter.

3. *It assumes also that the chemical properties of matter are essential and eternal.*

This is a third hypothesis, and one equally gratuitous with its predecessors, as we have already shown in Chapter II., on the non-eternity of matter, and we need not here repeat the arguments adduced.

4. *It assumes the eternity of motion.*

This is a fourth hypothesis, and one which is opposed to scientific facts. The *vis inertiae* of matter, or the indifference of matter to either motion or rest, is an admitted principle in physical science; and that which is essentially indifferent to motion cannot be reasonably supposed to have been eternally in motion. In a preceding chapter it has been shown that motion is not essential to matter, and, if not essential, not eternal. It having been further shown that matter itself has no evidence of eternity, but to the contrary, the supposition of motion being eternal is to build one conjecture upon another, equally unfounded.

These hypothetical principles are fundamental to every theory that ascribes the origin of the universe to matter itself. At whatever period an atheistic cosmogonist may suppose the

* Newton's "Principia Phil. Nat.," p. 676. Only nine years before his death, Newton, in the preface to the second edition of his work on optics, says—"To show that I do not take gravity for an essential property of matter, I have added one question concerning its cause," &c.

† Laplace asks, doubtfully, "Is this principle a primordial law of Nature, or is it a general effect of an unknown cause?"—*Exposition du Système du Monde*, liv. iv., chap. 15.

universe to have been formed, he must suppose matter to have previously and eternally existed, and existed, too, in possession of the same properties it has now. He cannot, therefore, make an attempt to conceive any scheme for the production of the universe without the use of these hypothetical principles. Thus, the foundation of the scheme consists of a series of conjectural assumptions, and, as a conclusion, can never have more solidity than its premises—the whole theory is a baseless fabric, which can have no higher authority than the imagination; and though the imagination is potent in poetry it is feeble and childish in science. Sir Isaac Newton, in his immortal work, “The Principia,” justly says, “Hypotheses have no place in philosophy;” * and Lord Bacon in his “Novum Organon” shows that “true science can only build on a true foundation by discarding theories and substituting the evidence of facts.† But the atheist inverts this order by discarding facts and substituting hypotheses, and making these his foundation. If a believer in the existence of a Supreme Being were to propound an argument with no better foundation than this, the atheist would pity his folly, and complacently smile at his credulity. An hypothesis, if based on fact, or some self-evident axiom, may be allowed in the process of investigation; yet it is still only an hypothesis, and cannot take the place of a fundamental principle; but when, instead of being based on fact or some self-evident truth, it rests only upon another hypothesis, and that again upon another, the whole scheme is visionary and unworthy the name of science, and of the reception of scientific minds. It reminds one forcibly of the fabulous Indian cosmogony, which supports the world on the back of an elephant, and the elephant on a tortoise, but provides no *locus standi* for the tortoise itself: it is a system without foundation.

* *Hypotheses non fingo.* Quicquid enim ex phaenomenis non deducitur, Hypothesis vocanda est; et Hypotheses seu Metaphysicæ, seu Physicæ, seu Qualitatum occultarum, seu Mechanicæ, in Philosophia Experimentalis, locum non habent.—*Philos. Nat. Principia*, p. 484.

† Bacon shows, indeed, that true science is injured by speculation.—See “*Novum Organon*,” vol. i., pp. 274—309.

SECTION II.—WHILE ALL SUCH SYSTEMS ARE GROUNDLESS IN PRINCIPLE, THEY ARE OPPOSED TO THE MOST OBVIOUS SCIENTIFIC FACTS.

WHEN we are told that Nature herself is adequate to the production of all existing phenomena, we feel impelled to ask for evidence. We turn our eye to Nature's operations, and ask, Where can we find proof of this all-sufficiency in Nature? Mirabaud defines atheists to be "men who follow the evidence of their senses;" but when we ask to be supplied with this evidence, we ask in vain. When Buffon would account for the origin of our earth, by supposing it to have been struck from the body of the sun by the concussion of a comet, we look in vain into the science of astronomy either for direct proof or evidence from analogy; nor does the astute philosopher inform us, that had the earth been thus struck from the sun's disc by concussion, it would, in each revolution, have grazed upon the surface of its paternal orb! When the disciples of Frey assert, "This earth, and the several planets of the solar system, have originally derived the whole of their materials, whether they be gaseous, liquid, or solid, from the particles which issue from the body of the sun, and that the four elements—fire, air, water, and earth—are but the modifications of the solar rays," they do not furnish us with proofs, nor exemplify the definition of the atheist as a "man who follows the evidence of his senses." When Mirabaud, in seeking to account for the origin of man, tells us that "it is probable that man was a necessary consequence of the disentangling of our globe, or one of the results of the qualities, of the properties, of the energies of which it is susceptible in its present position,"* he gives words, but corroborative facts are still absent. The "evidence of the senses" is still wanting. We have conjecture clothed in hard words, and nothing more.

A more compact and specious theory for the all-sufficiency

* "Système de la Nature," tom. i., chap. vi.

of Nature has been propounded in our own day by the author of the "Vestiges of Creation," which, though neither original nor avowedly atheistic, yet, as it resolves all the phenomena of the universe into the operation of what are called "natural laws," and thus dispenses with the direct agency of a Creator, has been warmly adopted by modern infidels as the most complete and systematic exhibition of their creed. More recently, however, this theory, so far as it embraces the origin of man, and of the various forms of animal and vegetable life, has been elaborately defended by C. Darwin, F.R.S., and some of his scientific compeers. The whole theory, however, is no modern speculation; for in all its essential elements it was strenuously maintained by Epicurus above two thousand two hundred years ago, and about two hundred years afterwards was embodied with artistic elegance, by Lucretius, in his poem *De Rerum Naturâ*. This theory, commonly designated "the hypothesis of gradual development," propounds the doctrine that all systems and all forms of organization and life have been gradually developed by Nature itself, beginning with the lowest, and thence proceeding to the highest classes of existence. It assumes that man was derived from a species of inferior animal next in order to himself, and that species from another inferior to it; and so on, pursuing the gradation downwards to the lowest animalcules,* which, in their turn, were derived, some say, from the action of electricity, and some say from vegetation; and the vegetable sprang up spontaneously, from matter in a peculiar state of fecundity; and, by another process of evolution, the earth, the solar and stellary systems, are said to have derived their modified existence and orderly adjustment from masses of diffused nebulae, floating in immense fields through boundless space. In testing this development theory by the evidence of scientific facts, we shall begin with the outer circle of existence, or the most recent and perfect forms of Nature's operations,

* Darwin speaks doubtfully as to the number of originals. He says, "I believe that animals are descended from at most only four or five primogenitors, and plants from an equal or lesser number.—*Origin of Species*, p. 424.

and thence proceed on the track of this supposed development to its centre or origin—the point where Nature is supposed to have performed her earliest and simplest labours. For if the latest and most complicated forms of organized existence sprang from the earliest and simplest operations of matter, then the whole are bound together by a continuous and indissoluble chain. If it be true that congregated systems sprang from floating nebulae, that life spontaneously “grows out of dead matter, the higher out of the lower animals, and man out of the brute,” then it follows that every intervening link in the great chain is essential and indispensable—the connection between the man and the monad, and the monad and the filmy nebula, is as necessary as the connection between the son and the father. But if anywhere that chain be broken, the last and the first links cannot be connected together. We think it possible to show that the supposed connection is fictitious throughout, and has no cohesion anywhere but in the imagination of its authors.

THE TRANSMUTATION THEORY AMONG THE VARIOUS TRIBES OF ORGANIZED EXISTENCE DISPROVED.

At the outset of our argument, it is just to Mr Darwin to state that he does not propose his theory from an atheistic standpoint; for he avows his belief in the existence of the Deity, and ascribes the whole process of evolution to a superintending providence.* And further, he candidly and repeatedly admits that his theory has not the evidence of a scientific demonstration. It can, indeed, only be regarded as a speculation on its trial. Hence his arguments limp all the way through, and are mingled with confessions of uncertainty, admissions of ignorance on many important and *essential* points, and at times with a tremulous apprehension of the unsoundness of his foundations, as if he were conscious of imposing an enormous tax on

* “Descent of Man,” vol. ii., p. 396.

the credulity of his readers. Hence he says, "Long before the reader has arrived at this part of my work, a crowd of difficulties will have occurred to him. Some of them are so serious that, to this day, I can hardly reflect on them without being in some degree staggered."* If Mr Darwin himself is staggered, his less-informed readers may well be staggered, unless they are more credulous than himself. Again he says, "If it could be demonstrated that any complex organ existed which could not possibly have been formed by numerous, successive, slight modifications, my theory would absolutely break down."† Remarkable reasoning this! When he fails to prove his theory by facts he challenges his reader to prove it is *impossible!* Such a shift shows the desperate state of his own argument, which, to use his own favourite phrase, is "*a struggle for life.*"‡ Yet a hopeless struggle, for the contest is against facts and laws so obvious, so patent, and irresistible, that we wonder not at his numerous confessions of doubts, embarrassments, and insurmountable difficulties. Speaking of the possibility of that wonderful organ, the eye, being formed on his own theory of natural selection, he says, "It seems, I confess, absurd in the highest degree;" and yet in spite of this seeming absurdity he argues for its truth! In his concluding chapter on the origin of man from the ape, he says, "I am aware much remains doubtful." Again he admits that "his views want scientific precision." Again he further admits, "Many of the views which have been advanced are highly speculative, and some, no doubt, will prove erroneous."§ With these and many other confessions of the uncertainty of his theory, he will feel no surprise that men of logical minds, who demand proof instead of speculation, and facts instead of conjectures, will, as he says, "very properly disregard all that he has written in the later chapters on man."|| Yes, indeed. After reading with care and logically analyzing the volumes of Darwin on "The Origin of Species," and "The Descent of Man," we close them with a firm

* "Origin of Species," p. 133. † Ibid., p. 146. ‡ Ibid., p. 143.
 § "Descent of Man," vol. ii., p. 385. || Ibid., 383.

conviction that his theory is a mere speculation, bold and mischievous; but illogical, and contradicted by the voice of Nature, and therefore untrue. This we shall now endeavour to show.

FIRST: *The Darwinian theory is contradicted by Nature's own mode of evolution*, namely, by generation. The numerous forms of organized life, animal and vegetable, are thus derived from living predecessors. The mode of generation is, indeed, wonderfully diversified—gemmiparous, fissiparous, oviparous, and viviparous. In this process there is a real evolution from the simplest rudimentary forms to the most elaborate organization. Along with the organization come also the instincts, both derived from the same source—generation. In each generation both are perfect in their kind, and both are rendered perfect in a comparatively short period of time. This is Nature's own mode of evolution, and it is constant and universal, from the lichen to the cedar, and from the monad to the man. It is here that Nature confronts the Darwinian theory; for generation supersedes the theory as unnecessary; and because unnecessary, unnatural; and because unnatural, without Nature's evidence of truth. It is an axiom in philosophy to seek for no causes beyond the one that is of itself sufficient for the effect. Generation asserts its sufficiency for all the diversified forms of existence by actually producing them. The Darwinian theory, therefore, is not in any sense required. It is, even in idea, an encumbrance, an intrusion.

Moreover, Nature produces her diversified forms of organized existence and instinct within brief and definite periods. The theory of Darwin and his disciples requires millions on millions of years, ages incalculable, for the production of a single class, yea, even for a single being of high organization and instincts. No one can even conjecture, no one indeed pretends to conjecture, the period with the least degree of scientific probability; for Nature affords no data to guide the helpless speculator, because the theory is not hers. But by generation Nature produces every class perfect in its kind, every year, every day, every hour, every moment, without ceasing. The spore produces a plant, the seed grows into a tree, the vital globule into

a monad, the egg into a bird, and the liquid *semen* into a horse, an elephant, or a man, all with their organization and instincts complete and perfect, within the several periods of a few hours, a few days, a few months, or a longer term, according to the nature of the creatures respectively ; but always within a period which we know to be brief and fixed, and indeed so perfectly defined by Nature herself that it can be easily and accurately foretold. Here is energy, active, incessant, and universal, but definite and uniform, because determined by law—the law of generation—the one law for the production of organized existence. Nature owns no other law of evolution but this.

SECOND : *Nature preserves and perpetuates the various types of existence which she produces by generation.* Here is another law, constant, uniform, and, so far as known, universal. While each progenitor yields offspring after its own generic type, Nature persistently preserves and perpetuates that type from one century to another, in all countries, in all climes, and under all conditions, so long as the species continues to exist. Some species we know have, through catastrophes and other causes, become extinct ; but this affects not our argument ; for so long as the species is continued, generation repeats and perpetuates the typical organization and instincts of the species.

Alternate generation does not infringe this law, but exemplifies and sustains it, because the cycle of alternation, when complete, results in the production of the same type. For instance, the polype gives birth to a generation of medusæ, which lay eggs, which again yield polypes. The medusa, on the other hand, lays eggs (gemmules), which develop into polypes, which at length divide themselves into colonies of medusæ. A more familiar illustration is presented in the butterfly, which lays eggs which produce a caterpillar, the caterpillar is changed into the chrysalis, and from the chrysalis emerges the butterfly ; here the cycle is complete ; the original type reappears and is perpetuated ; and so in millions of instances every year. Why so ? How is it, when the intermediate transformation and instincts have become so unlike the original type, that they do not either remain in that altered condition, or else run out into

other forms of organization? The facts so constantly repeated proclaim the law. Nature persistently preserves her own original type, whatever intermediate diversities she may produce; and while thus perpetuating the typical organization, she perpetuates the instincts also, and thus reasserts her own law, and displays its wonderful potency.

The varieties seen in individuals of the same type do not infringe this law, but exemplify and sustain it. I use the word type because the term species is often indefinite and made the ground of needless controversy. Men are not agreed as to the application of this term. Scientists have classified the various forms of organized life under divisions and subdivisions, which are often arbitrary, artificial, and misleading.* Nature does not own them, and we shall not follow them. For instance, mankind are classified under several species, and some assign to each imaginary species of man a distinct and separate origin. Discarding such artificial distinctions as untrue to Nature, we look to those distinctions only which Nature herself has made, and which she persistently maintains from age to age. In individuals of the same family there are unquestionably varieties: as in *size*, sometimes from the quantity and quality of food; in *colour*, from the nature of food; in the *thickness* and colour of the skin and hair, from climate, &c. Varieties are produced also by domestication, cross-breeding, and other special modes of treatment. Nature herself, in her own free domain, produces numerous modifications, as in the human stature, countenance, and voice; and varieties too in animals and plants, though retaining at the same time the essential characteristics of each type. Modification is no doubt often beneficial, for it adapts the creature to different conditions; yet sometimes it is injurious; but whether the modification be the effect of Nature alone, or of domestication and artificial influence exerted by man, it is always limited by the restraints

* Darwin himself says, "Naturalists differ much in determining what characters are of generic value; all such valuations are at present empirical."—*Origin of Species*, p. 12.

of Nature—so limited as to preserve the essential identity of the organization of its own class; for the tendency of variations is to revert to the original type. In this limitation, and this reversion to the original type, we have again the proclamation of Nature's own law—adherence to original organization and instinct by the process of generation.

Nature constantly shows an aversion to all attempts to invade the order she has established of preserving and perpetuating the respective organizations and instincts of each species, genus, and class. Man has tried every means—means often reprehensible and even immoral—to confound the distinctions of Nature, but he has failed; often failed to *produce* even a hybrid, because of the natural aversion of animals to copulate with species distinct from their own; and always failed to *perpetuate* the hybrid race which artifice or coercion have produced. Buffon reared puppies of the wolf, fox, and dog together to familiarize them with each other; but when they were in heat, the females of each species exhibited an insurmountable repugnance to the males of the others; and mortal combats ensued, instead of fertile union, between the different sexes of the different species. In a few exceptional cases, serving only to establish the rule of their infertility, specific hybrids have been produced, and known to propagate together and yield a degenerate intermediate race which soon became extinct; but it more commonly happens that the hybrid is sterile. Darwin himself admits that “many species resembling each other most closely are utterly sterile when crossed.”* And when referring to plants, Darwin again expressly states that, “When pollen from a plant of one family is placed on the stigma of a plant of a distinct family, it exerts no more influence than so much inorganic dust.” He further avers, after saying all that is possible in favour of his theory, “Finally, considering all the ascertained facts on the intercrossing of plants and animals, it may be concluded that some degree of sterility, both in first crosses and in hybrids, is an extremely general result.”†

Besides, if the hybrid race could be established, and made

* “Origin of Species,” p. 256.

† Ibid., p. 241.

permanent by propagation, it would *deteriorate*, and not improve, the animal tribe. The mule is inferior to the horse, and exhibits a marked tendency to degenerate in organization. The procreation of a hybrid always involves that either the dam or sire is of a *higher* nature than the hybrid itself; and the perpetuation of such races, if possible, would have the effect of collapsing, not developing, existing properties or faculties—of *deteriorating*, not *improving*, the species; but we need not enlarge. Nature invariably maintains that graceful and dignified distinction established in her own domain, and omnipotently resists all the efforts of human contrivance to break down the invisible guards she has erected around her own works.

With these important and decisive facts before us, we have to seek for the law which thus preserves and perpetuates the normal type or pattern of organization and instinct of each class. Why this limitation to modification and variety in the respective species? Why this aversion, this repugnance to the crossing and mixture of breeds? Why this stern resistance, in many cases defeating every effort of the artifice of man to produce a monstrous race? Why, when a hybrid is produced, is the creature generally barren? Why do monstrous productions become extinct? Why the tendency of even modified forms and varieties to revert to their original and normal types? How is it that in alternate generation, the cycle, when complete, yields the normal form and instincts of the propagating creature? How is it that in the larva and pupa of the insect there is neither the organization nor the instinct of the original animal, but both organization and instinct in the larva and pupa state are as diverse from the original pattern as we can conceive them to be; and yet both reappear, and reappear in definite periods of time? To all these questions there is but one answer. It is this: Nature resolutely maintains her purpose to preserve and perpetuate her normal patterns and instincts, or die in the attempt. Modifications and varieties become arrested and reverted; and artifice itself, with prolonged domestication and attempted coercion, fail to

break up the order which Nature has established. This constancy and uniformity proclaim Nature's own law—the law of preserving and perpetuating the normal pattern by generation; this repugnance to essential change, this resistance to artifice and attempted coercion, proclaim the falsehood of the opposite theory—the theory of development by so-called “natural selection.” Horace has well said, “Naturam expellas furcâ usque recurret.” Though you expel Nature with a pitch-fork, she will return to her place. The fact that each type of being is distinct, permanent, and impassable, proves that each must have had a distinct and separate origin; and, if a distinct and separate origin, the development theory by transmutation of species is found to be false, and must be rejected.

THIRDLY: *The theory of conatus, or the natural tendency of the creatures to advance, examined.* Lamarck says that the structure and organs of animals have resulted from their propensities—that as any animal has been driven by its wants to new or peculiar habits for which it was not originally adapted, it has thereby acquired the variation of organization necessary for its new state, although he admits that many generations must persevere in their exercise before the new powers are acquired. Thus, for instance, a bird is driven by its wants to take to the water, and either to swim or wade; its successors do the same: in the course of many generations the outstretching of its claws produces a web between them, and it becomes a regular water-fowl; or it extends its limbs to walk in deeper places, and gradually its legs are prolonged to the length of the crane's or flamingo's. If some birds which swim have long necks, as the swan and goose, it is from the custom of plunging their heads in the water to fish. These two agencies combined—new wants, and the tendency of Nature to meet them—have conspired, our theorist says, to make a gradual advance in the organization of animals, and have ultimately succeeded in developing the ape into the man.

If this were true we should see it abundantly exemplified in Nature; but where, or in what instance, has one species of animal been transformed into another? Slight modifications

have occurred to adapt a creature to altered conditions of climate, &c., but this is all; and there is always a tendency to return to the original pattern and plan. Millions of facts assert the uniformity and constancy of Nature to maintain and perpetuate her normal organizations and instincts.

The theory of Lamarck and his disciples is contradicted by the general organization of animal existence. Look at the mechanical structure by which the joints are fitted for action. As Paley observes, "The ligaments or strictures by which the tendons are tied down at the angles of the joints, could by no possibility be formed by the motion or exercise of the tendons themselves, by any appetency exciting these parts into action, or by any tendency arising therefrom. The tendency is all the other way; the *conatus* in constant opposition to them. Length of time does not help the cause at all, but the reverse." Look at the valves in the blood vessels—"They could never be formed in the manner which our theorist supposes. The blood in its right and natural course has no tendency to form them; when obstructed or reflux, it has the contrary effect. These parts could not grow from their use, though they had eternity to grow in." It would puzzle our philosopher, too, to show how toes, by being stretched apart, could become united by a web; and we may ask, with Dr. Wiseman, "If the swan and the goose have long necks from plunging their necks under water for their food, how is it that the same habit has not produced the same effect in the duck or teal? The bee has been striving, without intermission, in the art of making its sweet confection since it sipped the flowers of Paradise; the ant has been constructing its labyrinths, and the beaver its dwelling-place, from the morning of their existence until now, without acquiring a new perception or a new organ for these purposes."

Look at the senses of animals—"How will our author get at vision or make an eye? How should the blind animal affect sight, when we know blind animals have neither conception nor desire?" How should an oyster form a conception of sight? And the conception would be equally remote from an animal of higher organization destitute of that faculty, and as remote

from either as from a stone. And the same applies to any other sense. If Lamarck himself, to support his own theory, requires first an *appetency* or desire for a faculty, as necessary to its organization, and if that desire requires an antecedent conception of the thing desired, then if there be no conception to begin with, there can be no organization as the result. But the truth is, the propensity never anticipates the faculty, but the faculty always anticipates the propensity, and is formed prospectively. The faculty is not the consequence of a new condition, but a preparation for it. Thus, "The larva of a winged insect can only walk, but if we take it and dissect it just before its metamorphosis is completed, we find an apparatus in progress for flight through the air. The embryonic animal has a life adapted to its condition; but this life is subordinate to the formation of its organs for a life after birth, and for which, during the whole period of gestation, it is unconsciously preparing."*

In the absence of proof our theorists continue, however, to defend their speculations by the most improbable and extravagant suppositions. Thus, while Darwin admits the seeming absurdity of the eye having been developed by natural selection, he contends for it as possible.† He thinks it probable, too, that the grunt of a gorilla is the origin of human speech and of music.‡ He argues, also, that the progenitors of whales might originally have mouths lamellated like the beak of a duck; and yet, at the same time, as if half ashamed of the idea, he says, "he hopes he may not be misconstrued into saying that the progenitors of whales did actually possess such a formation."§ After these, we are prepared for some other suppositions—that the skull of an animal has been metamorphosed from its backbone, the jaws of a crab derived from its legs; and all three—backbone, jaws, and legs—derived from

* Dr. Harris, "Preadamite Earth."

† Darwin on "Origin of Species," pp. 143—5.

‡ "Descent of Man," vol. ii., pp. 336—7.

§ "Origin of Species," p. 183.

some common simple element. Such language, Darwin says, may be used literally; and yet all this is mere speculation, and even admitted to be such.* Huxley himself admits that "the theory is not proven." And Professor Owen, one of the greatest authorities on this question, says expressly in his latest work that—"the hypothetical transmuting influences in changing any known species into another has not yet been recorded."† If Christianity were propounded for the acceptance of men with no better evidence than this, it would be scouted with disdain.

Let us look at man, who, as the highest form of existence, would have the influence of appetency or conatus for advancement the most powerful in its operation within him; and, as an intellectual being, he has resources at command beyond all others, to improve his own nature and organization by natural selection, sexual selection, and all the natural forces which his intellect could control and subordinate to his volition and desires.

If, then, new organization and additional faculties proceed from an endeavour to meet fresh exigencies, how is it that man, with all his intense acquisitiveness, has never been able to elicit from bounteous and prolific Nature a new organ or an additional sense? As he stands at the head of animal existence, how is it that the force of development in him has not elicited a *sixth* sense? As he is incessantly aiming at something beyond his physical ability, and puts all Nature under contribution to aid him in his attempts, how is it that this intense and active appetency does not work out some new physical energy? He strains his sight to search through Nature in quest of new wonders; he constructs optical instruments to aid him in examining the minute, and in exploring the vast and the distant; yet, though still dissatisfied and longing for further powers of discovery, Nature dilates not his pupil, enlarges not the sphere or the extent of his vision. He looks upon the

* Darwin's "Origin of Species," p. 386.

† Owen's "Palæontology," p. 406.

eagle as he soars, and envies the velocity of his flight, but still remains himself fixed to the earth's surface. He desires to move across continents with speed, and invents engines of locomotive power to convey him, but this propensity elicits no new faculty of action. He desires to communicate rapidly with his fellow-men, and makes the telegraph flash his thoughts with the speed of lightning across the globe ; and yet he has personally no new sense ; no member or power more than his predecessors had thousands of years ago ! However bountiful *Art* may be in obeying his call to aid his senses, and facilitate his action, parsimonious *Nature* never comes to his help. Prolific as she is to swans, and geese, and apes, in developing new powers for new wants, she is most niggardly to man. Though she has raised an oyster to a man, she sternly refuses to add one new faculty or power to the lord of the inferior tribes ! Here is experience, and experience which contradicts the speculation. True philosophy, irrespective of all religious considerations, teaches that the propensities of an animal are *not* the determining cause of its organization, but its organization is the cause—the proximate cause—of its propensities. For if otherwise, the inventive faculty of man, urged by his powerful desire for advancement, would long ere this have exalted him to a higher and more perfect stage of existence.

FOURTHLY: *If the development theory were true, then the perfection of figure and the perfection of intellect would be uniformly combined.* Now, as man is admitted to be the type of perfection, both as to organization and intellect, it would follow, on the development theory of Darwin and his disciples, that the animals which have most intellect would conform the nearest to man in external symmetry. But this is contradicted by fact. An elephant, a dog, a bee, or an ant, displays at least equal sagacity to an ape ; and yet how remote the figure of these quadrupeds and insects from the symmetry of man ! Many species of birds, and some serpents, are remarkable for their sagacity, yet how far removed from the symmetry of the human species ! Or, if it be alleged, as Darwin holds, that there were four or five original types from which all the forms

of animal organization have sprung, then the development principle, continually operating in the various orders of animals, would in time lead to the production of not merely *one* rational species, conforming to the type of human nature, but to the production of rational animals of multifarious species, having the most diversified forms, shapes, sizes, and modes of existence. And, as innumerable species of animals have existed through untold ages longer than man, they ought, on the development theory, to surpass him in sagacity and intelligence. If this result be contradicted by all the facts which natural history affords, it is because the theory is contradicted by the universal voice of Nature.

FIFTHLY: *If the Darwinian theory were true, the various forms of animal organization would be linked closely together by the finest, by almost infinitesimal gradations.* Darwin himself admits this. He says, "Looking not to any one time, but to all time, if my theory be true, intermediate varieties, linking closely together all the species of the same group, must assuredly have existed."* This admission is most true, and indeed the intermediate varieties must have vastly outnumbered the distinct species; for the principle of development, acting uniformly, constantly, and universally, would have filled up every intermediate gap between the species, and left no hiatus between them, except an occasional break here and there, caused by some catastrophe. But where are the varieties that closely link together each species? They are not to be found. The tribes of animal and vegetable existence *are* separated from each other by wide distinctions and disparities. Darwin himself says on this point, "Here, as on other occasions, I lie under a heavy disadvantage, for, out of the many striking cases which I have collected, I can give only one or two instances of transitional habits and structures in allied species; and of diversified habits, either constant or occasional, in the same species. And it seems to me that nothing less than a long list of such cases

* "Origin of Species," p. 138.

is sufficient to lessen the difficulty in any particular case like that of the bat."* And if a long list of such cases is required to lessen the difficulty, and he has no list to furnish, the difficulty remains unlesened. What then must be the amount of the difficulty in thousands of other cases, where he has neither a long list, nor a short list, nor any list at all, nor any individual instance at all, to produce in favour of his theory? It is left to sink under the load of its own acknowledged difficulties, because contradicted by the general voice of Nature.

SIXTHLY: *The theory of development, as held by Darwin and his disciples, is contradicted by the testimony of all past ages.* Our theorists demand enormous periods of time for working out their speculations. Let us grant them all the time they desire. However far back we trace the annals of recorded time we find the forms of ancient organization specifically and generically such as they are now. Darwin dwells much on cattle, and the changes produced in them by domestication, cross-breeding, and the careful development of certain qualities as to their size, the length of their horns, their shape, &c.; but what does it all amount to? they are still of the same species. He fills many pages with an account of experiments in breeding pigeons, and the varieties produced by such means; but all the modifications he describes—as fantails, pouters, tumblers, carriers, and such like, leave them pigeons still. He tells us of the Egyptians keeping pigeons 3000 years ago; but the pigeons of that day were the same as those of our own day in all essential organization, distinguishing them from birds of every other sort. So of the camel, the dromedary, the horse, the swine, the kine, and all other animals noticed in the history of nations—all organized like those of the present day. We read of mules in antiquity as far back almost as human records reach; but though the mule was bred because he had properties which render him specially useful to man, no nation has been able to propagate a permanent race of mules as a distinct species—they

* "Origin of Species," pp. 138—9, where he nominally applies it to the bat, but virtually to all others.

are to this day, after being used by man for thousands of years, obtained by a cross between the horse and the ass. All the ingenuity and all the power of man have not been able to break down the barrier which Nature has fixed between the species. Egypt, amid the ruins of her ancient glory, has preserved for the scientific investigation of the present day a museum of natural history, not only in her paintings, but in the mummies of her animals, and, after the lapse of three or four thousand years, presents every species perfectly unchanged. In the disintombed monuments of Assyrian cities we have the same uniform testimony as to the identity of species. During the whole history of man we have had the monkey and the ape as man's contemporaries; but with the same difference between them in organization and the same wide disparity in intellectual faculty. Darwin speaks of man "having a God-like intellect, which has penetrated into the movements and constitution of the solar system,"* but where is the God-like intellect of the ape? Man emerges from a babe, without ideas, without one scintillation of knowledge, into the lofty attainments of a Newton within the brief period of 40 years; but apes and baboons never rise higher than the beast, though they have had all the time of man to rise in, if they had power to rise at all. Time has brought the monkey not one degree nearer to man. Thousands of years have made no advance in apes, in anatomical structure, in any effort, or power, or sense, to speak, or to reason. The monkey and the ape were beasts so far back as known to exist, and they are beasts now, and nothing more, without speech, without moral sense, and incapable of being one-tenth so useful to man as some other animals are.

Wide as the difference is admitted to be between the highest ape and man in his lowest condition, there is no semi-ape, and no semi-man, no creature or creatures between the two to form any connecting link or links, or any intermediate gradations between the two species; nor is there any record or evidence of

* "Descent of Man," vol. ii., p. 405.

any kind to prove that there ever was such in the past. Darwin himself admits that there is a "great break in the organic chain between man and his nearest allies, which cannot be bridged over by any extinct or living species."* Yet such a connecting chain or finely-graduated intermediate species there must have been, as Darwin himself admits, if his own theory be true; and the intermediates must have existed in immense numbers; and immense numbers of these semi-apes, or semi-men, must have existed ever since men and apes were contemporaries; and immense numbers ought still to exist, as they are contemporaries now: but the intermediates do not exist now; no, not one; and there is no evidence that any such ever did exist in any past period of time. If, then, the theory necessarily demands the existence of such intermediates, their non-existence is evidence that the theory is false.

On the other hand, the same physical organization which man has now, has been his normal type during all the centuries of his being; and intelligence and moral sense, and the capability of mental expansion and elevation, have distinguished his mind as its normal condition in every age of his history. Go back as far as history can carry you, and you find these high qualities constitute his normal condition. We know, indeed, that man is found in many parts of the world a savage, and was such in some regions many centuries ago. But the savage state is not man's normal state, but is a degradation into which he has sunk from an anterior condition of intelligence and wisdom. In an old book, which has more evidence of its authenticity than any other ancient book in the world (apart from its claims to inspiration, and regarding it only as a record of the past), we find man an intelligent, dignified, moral being, from the earliest period of his existence; and its representations of man as such are sustained by the monuments and records of the most ancient nations on the earth; and recent discoveries augment and brighten the evidence. Instance the great Pyramid of Egypt, which Dr. Ferguson, the highest

* "Descent of Man," vol. i., p. 200.

authority of the age on ancient architecture, admits to be *the oldest, the largest, and the most symmetrically perfect stone building known in the world*; * and which Pyramid has been lately discovered to embody in its form and proportions a number of grand Geometrical, Geodesical, and Astronomical truths, which surpassed the knowledge of modern philosophers. Indeed some of the errors of modern philosophers stand corrected by its teaching, and some of their great discoveries have been there embodied in stone for more than four thousand years. Those great truths must have been built up in that monument either by accident or design. If the latter, which is the most probable, then the architect of that monument must have known those truths; and if he knew them, it follows that the knowledge of men in the infancy of our world must have been, in some of the highest departments of science, fully equal to the attainments of philosophers of the present day; and thus the farther we go back into the annals of human history, the evidence becomes clear that the mental, as well as the physical, constitution of the earliest men known, was fully as much in advance of the monkey species as the highest types of humanity are in the present day.

SEVENTHLY: *The Darwinian theory is opposed by the discoveries of geology.* Darwin has hunted through nature, but has not been able to catch one species of animal changed into another; and if thousands of years have not been sufficient for this, there is no probability that millions of ages would suffice for it. But let us see what geology says.

When the advocates of this theory find their speculations confronted and disproved by *existing* facts, and by the persistence of species during all historic periods, they tell us that the process of Nature is slow, and the transmutation of one species into another requires many ages. But how many ages they cannot tell, nor even conjecture within probable bounds; somewhere, however, they say, between twenty and four hundred millions

* Ferguson "On rude Stone Monuments in all Countries," p. 31.

of years.* Pretty wide limits these, for a theory which proposes to revolutionize our philosophy and undermine our faith! Yet even here our theorists stumble, for some of them hold that the world itself could not have continued in existence during the enormous period necessary for the evolution of the various species; and this, Darwin says, "is probably one of the gravest objections yet advanced."† But let us grant our theorists all the geological eras, however vast, which the earth's stone records present for their investigations. Here, then, is Nature's own volume, revealing the past from the earliest period, however remote, when life began, up to the surface soil of the present day. If, then, one species has been developed from another slowly and by almost infinitesimal gradations, we shall undoubtedly find evidence of this in the fauna and flora embedded in the piled-up strata forming the crust of the globe.

Now, how do geological facts square with this infinitesimal gradation of classes? Naturalists classify all animated beings into four general divisions—the *Radiata*, or animals whose parts are distributed around a common centre, as the star-fish; *Mollusca*, or soft-bodied animals, such as the cuttle-fish; *Articulata*, or jointed animals, such as the lobster; and *Vertebrata*, or animals with a spinal column or back-bone. Now this must be the order of succession if the theory be true: each of the series commencing with the lowest species, of the lowest genus, of the lowest order, of the lowest class; and thence advancing, by imperceptible gradations, and through myriads of ages, until organized existence had crept through all the inferior classes up to the quadruped race, and thence ascended to the human race. And as Nature operates uniformly, this order of succession ought to be maintained throughout; admitting of no hiatus, no interruption, no sudden formations, and of no inconstancy but what may fairly be accounted for by the catastrophes or other changes which, in different periods, may have suddenly occurred. But does the geological record show this uniform and finely-

* "Origin of Species," p. 286.

† *Ibid.*, p. 409.

graduated development? Darwin himself admits that it does not. He says, "We do not find infinitely numerous fine transitional forms closely joining them all together."* He says again, "The abrupt manner in which whole groups of species suddenly appear in certain formations has been urged by several palæontologists as a fatal objection to the belief in the transmutation of species."† Again he says, "The sudden manner in which several groups of species first appear in our European formations—the almost entire absence, as at present known, of formations rich in fossils beneath the Cambrian strata — are all undoubtedly of the most serious nature."‡ Again he says, "To the question, why we do not find rich fossiliferous deposits belonging to these assumed earliest periods prior to the Cambrian system, I can give no satisfactory answer."§ Again he says, "The case at present must remain inexplicable; and may be truly urged as a valid argument against the views here entertained."|| Again he says, "Those who believe the geological record is in any degree perfect will undoubtedly at once reject the theory."¶ And on the same page he admits that for these reasons the most eminent palæontologists, namely, Cuvier, Agassiz, Barrande, Pictet, Falconer, E. Forbes, &c.; and all our geologists, as Lyell, Murchison, Sedgwick, &c., have unanimously, often vehemently, maintained the immutability of species.** To these we might add Mantell, Miller, Professor Owen, and many others, whose facts and sentiments will soon be stated. With such remarkable admissions, made by the apostle of the theory, our readers will see at once how hopeless the support to be derived from geology. But let us particularize the facts furnished by the discoveries of science.

Geology shows that, as Professor Owen states, there has been

* "Origin of Species," p. 289. † *Ibid.*, p. 282. ‡ *Ibid.*, p. 289.
 § *Ibid.*, p. 286. || *Ibid.*, p. 287. ¶ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

** *Ibid.*, p. 289. Lyell, with strange inconsistency, became in his old age a disciple of Darwin; but his facts, as recorded in his works, testify most conclusively against him.

“an ascent in the main,” in general accordance with the advance of organic life as recorded in the book of Genesis ; but no development of one species from another. In the Laurentian rocks we find the Eozoon before referred to ; and, leaving those rocks and ascending to the Cambrian series, Owen says we find invertebrate animals which exist at this day, and may be found “in deposits formed by the floods of last winter and the tides of yesterday.”* Ascending higher to the Silurian series, we come to a period where various forms of life are represented, but without any of those finely-graduated links which the theory demands ; for it is a fact fatal to the transmutation theory, that all the four great divisions of animal life are found in the Silurian rocks.

In reference to the Silurian period, we have the following important testimony from Lyell himself :—“In the lower Silurian there is a full representation of the radiata, mollusca, and articulata, proper to the sea. The marine fauna, indeed, in those three classes, is so rich as almost to imply a more perfect development than that which now peoples the ocean. Thus, in the great division of the radiata, we find asteroid and helianthoid zoophytes, besides crinoid and cystidean echinoderms. In the mollusca of the same most ancient epoch M. Barrande enumerates, in Bohemia alone, the astonishing number of two hundred and fifty-three of cephalopoda. In the articulata, we have the crustaceans represented by more than two hundred species of trilobites, not to mention other genera.”

Yet in these creatures we have a perfect organization ; and though some of the species have died, others still abound in our own seas, and with an organization like that they had in the remotest periods, having made no advance during the myriads of ages through which the species have continued to exist. The oldest of the Silurian fauna was as highly developed as the corresponding fauna in the recent seas.† The cephalopods of this early

* Owen's "Palæontology," p. 17.

† Lyell's lecture at Ipswich on "Progressive Development."

period are among the most highly-organized of all molluscs. In some families they have an internal skeleton, together with a heart and a head, having some resemblance in form and armature to that of the parrot tribes. They were carnivorous and predatory.

The great family of trilobites is entirely confined to the palaeozoic age; Professor Owen says none are found even in the Upper Coal Measures or Permian system. Above four hundred species have been described; of these forty-six are Silurian. Some are enormously large; the fragments indicate a creature eighteen inches long.* In these creatures we see an organ of the most elaborate construction—the eye. Dr. Buckland remarks, “We find in the trilobites of these early rocks the same modifications of the organ of sight as in the living crustacea. The same kind of instrument was also employed in the intermediate periods of our geological history, when the secondary strata were deposited at the bottom of the sea, inhabited by limuli, in the regions of Europe which now form the elevated plains of central Germany.”† Dr. Mantell observes, “The eye (of the trilobite) is made up of a vast number of elongated cones, each having a crystalline lens, pupil, and cornea, and terminating on the extremity of the optic nerve. Each organ of sight is, therefore, a compound instrument made up of a series of optical tubes or telescopes, the number of which, in some insects, is marvellous.”‡ Owen says that the trilobite called *Asaphus caudatus* has four hundred facets in each eye; and another species, named *Asaphus tyrannus*, is computed to have six thousand.

The theory of the transmutation of species receives an equally strong contradiction in the fact that the Silurian system, yea, *the lowest member of the series*, is found to contain reptiles as well as fishes and trilobites. If the transmutation theory were true, the lowest reptiles would be formed out of the highest class of fishes, and therefore they ought not to be found in

* “Palaeontology,” pp. 44, 45. † “Bridgewater Treatise.”

‡ Mantell’s “Wonders of Geology,” vol. ii., p. 591.

any strata in the Silurian series. But we find reptiles co-existent, if not at a period even earlier than fishes. For in 1847, footprints of a chelonian, or tortoise, were found in the lowest stratum of the whole Silurian series; and since then (1850-1) "numerous other trails of the same species of reptile have been observed in various localities: all in the same very ancient fossiliferous rock."*

Ascending from the Silurian series to the Old Red Sandstone, we find again numbers of trilobites—many large, and of elaborate and complicated organization. In the same series of rocks we find also fishes in abundance—one hundred and fifty species of them; of all sizes, and of such elaborate organization as flatly contradicts the transmutation theory. Professor Sedgwick has pronounced the oldest known fishes to have been among the very highest types of their class.† And Hugh Miller, in his usual forcible style, justly remarks: "If fishes could have risen into reptiles, and reptiles into mammalia, we should necessarily expect to find lower orders of fish passing into the higher, and taking precedence of the higher in point of time, just as in the 'Winter's Tale,' we see the infant preceding the adult. If such be not the case—if fish made their first appearance, not in their least perfect, but in their most perfect state—not in their nearest approximation to the worm, but in their nearest approximation to the reptile—there is no room for progression, and the argument falls. Now it is a geological fact, that it is fish of the higher orders that appear first on the stage, and that they are found to occupy exactly the same level during the vast period represented by five succeeding formations. There is no progression. The infidel substitutes progression for Deity. Geology robs him of his God."‡

* Lyell's Postscript to the Third Edition of his "Manual of Geology," p. 19.

† See the beautiful plates of these ancient organisms, with their respective classifications, descriptions, &c., in the splendid "Fasciculi," by Professors Sedgwick and M'Coy. Published by Parker, London.

‡ "Old Red Sandstone," pp. 76, 77.

In the Old Red Sandstone we find also evidence of the existence of reptiles of the lizard family. In the year 1850, no less than thirty-four footprints of a quadruped of the cheilonian genus were observed on a slab of old red sandstone, near Elgin, in Morayshire, a drawing and description of which have been furnished by Captain Brickenden to the London Geological Society; and in the year 1851, Mr. Patrick Duff obtained from the same rock the skeleton of a reptile resembling a terrestrial lizard. To this animal Dr. Mantell has given the name of *Telerpeton*, as expressive of its remote antiquity; but whether it be an amphibious or a terrene animal can scarcely be determined. In strata still deeper and more ancient have been found clusters of what are considered by Mantell, Lyell, and other competent geologists, the eggs of an animal of the Batrachian order.*

In ascending from the Devonian to the Carboniferous, the Oolite periods, and upwards, we meet with contradictions to the development hypothesis in every part of the series.

On entering the Tertiary system of rocks, millions of organic remains appear, including representatives of every order, from corals to quadrupeds, numerous species of which are now extinct, and some which stand between existing species; but here again we perceive nothing like a gradual and insensible transmutation of one species into another. Indeed, the theory which insults our nature, by deriving the human species from the monkey tribe, is here most flatly contradicted by geological facts. For that theory supposes the monkey tribe to be the most perfect development of the brute species, and consequently of the latest formation next to man. But geological discovery proves that the monkey race existed in the earliest period of the Tertiary series.

The remains of monkeys, of three and four feet high, are found in the Eocene period; not only myriads of ages before man, but myriads of ages before the appearance of other tribes of type inferior to the monkey race itself. Another fact contradictory to the gradual transmutation theory is witnessed in

* "Quarterly Journal," Geological Society.

the contemporaneous existence of carnivorous and graminivorous animals. In this era, as in others, no imperfect animal or half-formed senses, are found. Numerous species had died out, and numerous others were introduced, yet so distinct in their nature, attributes, habits, and modes of existence, so different in anatomical structure, and presenting so many exceptions, interruptions, and inversions of any graduated scale of succession, as to preclude the possibility of one species being derived from the other. In the Tertiary series multitudes of fishes, reptiles, birds, and quadrupeds lived in the same eras; and each appears complete in all its organs, perfect in its senses, fixed in its habits, and impassable in its class, order, genera, and species.

In the Miocene epoch of the Tertiary series of rocks, the fossils of an animal have been found which from having some resemblance to the horse is termed the *Hipparion*; and Professor Huxley regards the horse of the present day as having descended from this animal. But the foot of the *Hipparion* had *three* toes, while the horse has one solid hoof. Nor can any process be shown by which, with any probability, a three-toed foot can become a solid hoof. It is, of course, a mere speculation, the product of a fertile imagination, unworthy of a philosopher; and the eminent Professor T. W. Jones, F.R.S., Mr. Huxley's master in physiology, shows the thing to be unscientific—"a phantom, a mere conceit." *

The theory of the transmutation of species supposes an advance in the organization of the later species; and if in organization why not also in size, beginning with diminutive animals, and gradually developed into more massive proportions? But the facts unfolded by geology show the contrary; for in many species, and those of a highly advanced class, we see this order reversed—the gigantic often appear first, the dwarfish come after—as if instead of development there was a degradation in the species. In geological strata we see no small beginnings of animals to be hereafter developed into more magnificent pro-

* "Evolution of the Human Race from Apes, a Doctrine unsanctioned by Science," pp. xi., xii.

portions. On the contrary, every fresh plant and animal is perfect in its own nature; every new form and pattern of life is introduced suddenly, at once, with sharp and well-defined outline, and structure distinct from all its compeers and predecessors, and many of these with proportions of magnitude with which no existing animals of similar genus can vie. Indeed, so far from development from a lower to a higher order being the process, the subsequent reduction and degeneracy of some species seems to have been the process. Buffon himself believed in a degradation of the species. The Eozoon, regarded as the "Dawn of life" in the lower strata of the Laurentian rocks, is represented by a *smaller* species in our own day. The large crinoids of the Carboniferous era disappear, and are succeeded by a few dwarfish specimens of the apiocrinite: the gigantic birds of the New Red Sandstone become extinct, and are succeeded by a race not more than one-fourth their magnitude; the plesiosaurs, ichthyosaurs, megalosaurs, and iguanodons, of thirty and forty feet, give place to a race of not half their magnitude; and the same may be said of the extinct megatheria, the mastodons and mammoths of a later era, compared with the elephants, and sloths, and other mammals of the present day. In the Silurian and Old Red Sandstone there were trilobite crustaceans seven feet in length; and loricated armadillos nine feet in length; and enormous Marsupials (of the kangaroo kind), with skulls three feet in length.* It is thus the development hypothesis is confronted, and often the theory is reversed, by geological facts.

It is a favourite resort with Darwin and his disciples to argue against what they *do* know by what they do *not* know! Hence they allege that the record of geology is at present imperfect, and therefore we may infer that were that record rendered more complete by more extensive discoveries, facts would probably be found to support their views. But judging of the future by the past, the probability lies on the opposite side of the argument. Let us look at facts. The author of "The Vestiges of Creation" maintained there were no fish, no ver-

* Owen's "Palæontology," pp. 43, 392, 394.

tebrate animals of any kind in the Silurian system; and challenged any opponent to prove the contrary; but the assertion has been disproved, and the challenger humbled by the clearest evidence, as we have already seen in page 103. Up to the year 1846 it was held by geologists that there were no quadrupeds in strata so early as the Old Red Sandstone, but it has since been discovered that they are there, and numerous traces of them have been found far below that series of rocks, even in the lowest formation of the Silurian system.* Up to the year 1832 the Old Red Sandstone was deemed poor in organic remains; but it has since been discovered that it contains one hundred and fifty species of fish—a larger number than all the ichthyolites of all the systems put together, as formerly estimated by the highest authorities. Since that period it was held, and published, that there was a gradual increase of size in the progress of ichthyolitic life, from the minute fish of the Silurian system up to the enormous *Holoptychius* of the Coal Measures; but more recent discoveries have proved that there were giants among the dwarfs; for the remains of the largest fish found anywhere in the system have been discovered in its lowest formation.† And the large fish of the Coal Measures, remote as that period is, are pronounced to be more highly organized than any fish now living in our own seas.‡ Not long ago it was held that the whole series of birds came not into existence until the comparatively recent period of the Eocene formation; but more than thirty years ago numerous foot-prints of colossal birds were found in the New Red Sandstone—a formation of the primary series. The foot-prints of the toes are twenty inches in length, and indicate a bird apparently of the ostrich kind, but four times larger than any living species of that bird. More than two thousand foot-prints had been discovered by Professor Hitchcock in 1842, in more than twenty places, scattered

* Postscript to Lyell's "Manual of Geology," p. viii.

† Miller's "Old Red Sandstone," pp. xii. and 102.

‡ Lyell's "Manual of Geology," p. 336.

through an extent of nearly eighty miles, and repeated through a succession of beds of more than a thousand feet. Among the foot-prints of these colossal birds, were the impressions of large quadrupeds, supposed to be of the lizard and frog kind; but of those enormous birds there were reckoned thirty species.*

Nor do the forms of vegetables as presented in the strata accord with any scheme of transmutation or gradual development—for the most primitive flora “show no defect in their structure, no imperfection in their outline,” but are perfect in their kind. Nor are the ancient series of rocks the receptacles of only the lowest class of vegetable organisms, though the theory of transmutation locates them there. Not many years ago the earliest existence of dicotyledonous or polycotyledonous trees was placed by the development theorists in the secondary series, but the discovery of Mr. Miller has given them a far more ancient place on the verge of the Silurian; and he further discovered in the Old Red Sandstone a coniferous lignite, the relic of a forest tree, showing, as he tells us, that “on the dry land of the lower Old Red Sandstone, on which, according to Adolphe Brogniart, nothing higher than a lichen or a moss could have been expected, the ship-carpenter might have hopefully taken axe in hand, to explore the woods for some such stately pine as the one described by Milton—

‘Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great admiral.’ †

The growth of forest trees on land contemporaneously with the fucoids and various algae of the most ancient seas, is another fact fatal to the development hypothesis.

It is conceded that here and there geologists find the remains of some extinct ancient animal, the organization of which comes between some existing species; “but it furnishes no genealogical link to show that the existences of one race derive their lineage from the existences of another;” ‡ and the facts now

* Lyell's "Manual of Geography," p. 336.

† "Footprints of a Creator," p. 204.

‡ Hugh Miller's "Old Red Sandstone," p. 73.

adduced, which might be indefinitely increased in number, show that the Darwinian theory has nothing to hope for in the discoveries of the future; and in any case to argue against what we *do* know by what we do *not* know, is to substitute imagination for reason, and fancy for fact. This is indeed "a struggle for life."

We must accept Darwin's own and oft-repeated confession, "that the facts adduced from geology may be truly urged as a valid argument against his theory;" so valid, indeed, as to satisfy the most scientific minds of the age that the theory is erroneous. Professor Owen, in summing up the facts at the close of his elaborate work on Palæontology, says, "So far, however, as any general conclusion can be adduced from the large sum of evidence above referred to, and contrasted, it is against the doctrine of the Uniformitarian."* Professor T. W. Jones, F.R.S., an enlightened and influential physiologist, pronounces it "a conceit and a phantom," and concludes his second lecture against Evolution in these words:—"Our present advanced knowledge in Natural Science has not rendered the idea of evolution a bit more probable than it was in former times. And it must be firmly denied that the conceit of Natural Selection by survival of the fittest has in any degree imparted to the theory more substantial body than it had before, or raised it to the scientific position which Darwin and his followers claim for it." †

Dr. Mantell, a geologist of high authority, whose statements are based upon a wide and scrutinizing survey of the science, affirms that the facts of geology warrant no such inference as this development or transmutation theory adduces. ‡ Sir Charles Lyell, another geologist of great eminence, asserted in his better days that geological researches afford no countenance whatever to the fancied evolution of one species out of another. §

* P. 410.

† "Evolution of the Human Race from Apes, a Doctrine unsanctioned by Science," pp. 68, 69.

‡ Mantell's "Wonders of Geology," vol. ii., p. 667.

§ "Principles," vol. ii., pp. 396—7.

Agassiz, another eminent geologist of our own times, says:—"I cannot admit the idea of the transmutation of species from one formation to another. In advancing these general notions, I do not wish to offer them as inductions drawn from the study of one particular class of animals (of fishes, for instance) and applied to other classes, but as results of direct observation of very considerable collections of fossils of different formations, and belonging to different classes of animals; in the investigation of which I have been specially engaged for many years."* Darwin himself is compelled to confess, "Geology assuredly does not reveal any such finely-graduated organic chain;" and "this," he remarks, "is perhaps the most obvious and gravest objection which can be urged against my theory." Certainly it is a dilemma grave enough, that when he demands extended periods for the working out of his theory, and we refer him to the records of all organized existence, those records, he says, furnish "the gravest objections which can be urged against his hypothesis."

GENERAL SUMMARY.—Such, then, are the facts presented in the chronology of our globe, from the first dawn of organized existence up to the period which immediately preceded the dynasty of man; from which it is manifest, that while, on the whole, a *general* progress is evident in the several periods, that progress has been interrupted by many exceptions and inversions. We have seen that, from the lowest formation of the Silurian system, beings of high order, of elaborate organization, and fully developed as to their size, were contemporaneous with the lowest orders and the simplest forms; and that geology alone can scarcely determine whether fishes or reptiles existed first. We have seen that genera, of the highest class of the four great divisions of the animal kingdom, not only existed among the early formations, but appeared *suddenly*, without the existence of any intermediate or connecting links of genera, leaving wide and impassable gaps between their own nature

* "Twelfth Report of the British Association," p. 85.

and anatomical structure and that of their contemporaries. We have seen that the most perfect of the senses—that of the eye, for example—and the most complicated organs always appear complete, even in the deposits of the earliest strata. We have seen that while ancient species of extinct animals were equal, and some superior, to any of their living representatives in organization, many surpassed them in magnitude. The derivation of one species from another was, therefore, physically impossible. While, then, a former argument from geology showed that all species of animal and vegetable existence had a beginning, and while the law of generation carries us down to the first individuals as the primogenitors of each species, the present argument from geology shows that those primogenitors must have been brought into existence at once, complete and entire in their nature and attributes ; perfect in their symmetry, members, and internal organization ; fitted for their appropriate element and distinctive habits ; and endowed with power to propagate their kind.

Now this immediate origin of the species must be the effect of some cause. If Nature itself be the cause, it must have produced each species of organized existence, not gradually, but perfectly. There is no other mode admissible from the facts patent to science. If creation be the work of Nature alone, she must spontaneously have brought into existence perfect beings of the highest as well as of the lowest class—as an oak, a cedar, a whale, an eagle, an elephant, a lion, a man. The incapacity of mere matter to do this is sufficiently manifest. No history furnishes any record of such a spontaneous production. If such ever had taken place, it would take place now. But it would be *absurd* to dwell longer upon this absurdity. Its impossibility is admitted, even by our opponents ; hence their forced resort to the theory of a *slow and gradual* transmutation. That slow and gradual transmutation, however, being disproved, we are irresistibly driven to seek for a more satisfactory origin—an origin distinct from Nature, and superior to it. How, or in what manner, the Creator effected this we presume not to conjecture, though we think

the process of existence evinced by Nature in her present operations may suggest a mode by no means improbable.

SECTION III.—NO SPONTANEOUS GENERATION IN NATURE.

As the spontaneous production of *superior* from the *lower* orders of existence is disproved, it will not be out of place to notice the doctrine in reference to the *lowest* animalcula and plants. At the same time, it must be observed that this subject is quite distinct from the preceding argument; so distinct, indeed, that even if it could be proved that certain species of animalcula and plants were produced spontaneously, yet, unless it could be shown that the higher species were derived from the lower species by gradual evolution—unless it could be shown that these spontaneous animalcula and plants were the progenitors of all the rest of animals and plants, there would remain the same necessity for a creating energy, distinct from and superior to Nature. That derivation has already been disproved by a series of palpable facts, and, therefore, the argument stands complete of itself, and is totally unaffected by the question now under consideration. But is there such a thing as the spontaneous production of the most minute and simple forms of animal and vegetable life? Facts, as far as our imperfect organs, aided by the most powerful instruments, can trace them into the secret operations of Nature, reply, "*There is not*;" and when those operations become too subtil for our senses to pursue them further, analogy comes in to confirm that decision. Cicero says, "*Opinionum commenta delet dies, nature judicium confirmat*"—*Time obliterates human opinions, but brings to light the true principles of Nature.* This seems verified with respect to the present question. Aristotle, with many of the ancients, and some speculators of modern date, held the doctrine of spontaneous production; but as true philosophy has advanced—as Nature has become subjected to the test of experiment, and her operations scrutinized by the use of optical

instruments and chemical tests—that opinion has been found untenable.

Lyell justly remarks :—“ We must be on our guard not to tread in the footsteps of the naturalists of the Middle Ages, who believed the doctrine of spontaneous generation to be applicable to all those parts of the animal and vegetable kingdoms which they least understood, in direct contradiction to the analogy of all the parts best known to them; and who, when at length they found that insects and cryptogamous plants were also propagated from eggs or seeds, still persisted in retaining their old prejudices respecting the infusory animalcula and other minute beings, the generation of which had not then been demonstrated by the microscope to be governed by the same laws.” *

By the advocates of spontaneous production it has been urged that from decayed animal and vegetable matter, from stagnant water, and by chemical experiments, numerous animalcula might be produced where no pre-existing germs could be traced; and that even in the interior parts and fluids of animals species of animalcula are formed, where it could not be supposed possible, as they alleged, for *ova* (germs or eggs) to be introduced; and, therefore, such animalcula must be spontaneously produced by a prolific energy inherent in Nature. To this specious theory various replies may be furnished. But before proceeding further it may here be stated that Dr. John Tyndall, F.R.S., has recently startled some of our theorists, by announcing as the result of scientific experiment, that “*spontaneous generation is an absolute impossibility.*” This we fully believe; yet it may be well to fortify the truth by stating at some length the grounds of our conviction. We observe then—

1. *Life is not essential to matter. There is no life in the unorganized particles of matter, as our senses themselves declare.*

There is no more vitality in a sunbeam than in a clod; in an electric spark than in an aerolite; in the most volatile and ethereal gases than in the most ponderous metals; in the most elaborate compounds than in the simplest elements. If “the

* Lyell's “Principles,” vol. ii., p. 348.

atheist is a man who follows the evidence of his senses," he must admit that unorganized matter is *dead*, for there is nothing more patent to our observation. Matter, therefore, being devoid of life, it might be argued *à priori* that matter cannot give that which it does not possess. Nor is life essentially connected with *organized* matter, as our senses also declare; for we often see an animal perfect in its organization when the vital principle is absent. It is, therefore, to say the least, unphilosophical to speak of matter having an inherent power to produce life; for it cannot have a power to produce properties which it does not essentially possess.

2. *As far as our senses are capable of tracing the economy and habits of animals, from the largest to the smallest, all are produced by procreation from living predecessors.*

The recent discoveries by Ehrenberg have proved that the very simplest forms of microscopic animalcula are thus propagated. Let us take a few examples. We select the Infusoria—animalcula called by that name, from the circumstance of their swarming in all infusions of vegetable or animal substances, which have been kept for a sufficient time in a state of exposure to the atmosphere. They are, in general, far too small to be seen by the naked eye. We select these because they present animal existence in its minutest forms, and at one time the mystery of their existence was the stronghold of the theorists of spontaneous production. But, as Roget observes, "their fanciful dreams have been dispelled by the important discoveries of Ehrenberg, who, by introducing colouring matter into the liquids where the animalcula reside, and by his unwearied application of the best microscopes, has been able both to detect their organization and explore the secrets of their physical economy. He has ascertained that the Rotifera (wheel animalcula) have a structure and functions indicative of elaborate organization. He has observed these diminutive beings discharge their *ova* in the form of minute globules, and watched these *ova* expand into animalcula corresponding with the parent, and having grown seven times their original diameter, they were distinctly seen to excite currents and to swallow

food. The same diligent observer detected the young of the *Rotifer vulgaris*, perfectly formed, moving in the interior of the parent animalculum, and brought forth in a living state: thus constituting these viviparous animals, as the former were oviparous. Other species again imitate the hydra, in being what is called gemmiparous, that is, producing gemmules (like the budding of a plant), which shoot forth from the side of the parent, and are soon provided with cilia (small projecting filaments which they put in motion), enabling them, when separated, to provide for their own subsistence, although they are of a very diminutive size when thus cast off.* The volvox (a spherical animalculum) propagates its kind in a singular way:—"The germs of this animal are developed in great numbers in its interior, having a globular shape, and visible by the aid of the microscope through the transparent covering; and while yet retained within the body of the parent, other still minuter globules are developed within these, constituting a third generation of these animals. After a certain period, the young, which have been thus formed, escape by the bursting of the parent volvox, which, in consequence, perishes. Similar phenomena are presented by many of the infusoria."† The monad is the smallest animalculum which the microscope of the highest magnifying power has rendered visible. It was formerly thought to be nothing more than a homogeneous globule of living matter, without organization, but endowed with the single attribute of voluntary motion; and even this property was denied by some authors. It was described as the ultimatum of animality "spontaneously produced by the prolific energy of Nature. And Buffon and Lamarck conjectured that here they saw an illustration of the natural development of a particle to a mammal, at that point of the process where the organism stands between the vegetable and animal worlds."

* Roget on "Animal and Vegetable Physiology," vol. ii., p. 592. See Pritchard on "Infusorial Animalcules," pp. 34—86.

† Roget on "Animal and Vegetable Physiology," vol. ii., p. 591. Pritchard on "Animalcules," pp. 34—86.

But Ehrenberg has demonstrated that this species, the smallest in size and the simplest in form of all the infusoria, has a mouth, a digestive and a reproductive system.* Many of the discoveries of Ehrenberg have since been confirmed by others, and even extended by Messrs. Brightwell and Gosse, who have ascertained that some of these minute organisms are characterized by sexual distinctions, and their progeny are generated like those of the higher classes of existence.† Thus recent discovery puts to flight the reveries of our *theorists*, and places the microscopic tribes of animalcula under the same general law of procreation as animals of the greatest magnitude and the most elaborate structure. The infusoria, to whom a drop of water is an ocean, are derived by propagation, as well as the elephant, and the leviathan of the mighty deep.

3. *The production of animalcula where we can perceive no pre-existing germs or ova, is no proof of spontaneous generation.*

From the inadequacy of our senses, we are not able to follow Nature in all her secret laboratories, nor to trace all her minute operations. If the animalculum itself is so diminutive as to elude the observation of our senses, well may its infinitesimal germs and ova evade our observation. If eight millions of these diminutive beings, endowed with the organs and faculties of animal life, are equal only to the bulk of a grain of mustard seed, to what shall the size of their germs or ova be compared? and what shall hinder their access to every part where the atmosphere can penetrate? and what shall prevent them from combining with all animal and vegetable substances?

These minute organisms have their habitation, not only in the watery element and in the moist earth, but the very atmosphere teems with them and their germs, and the gentlest breezes are sufficient to waft them in myriads over the distant waters, and to diffuse these living atoms over the face of Nature.‡ Carried up by evaporation, their lightness admits of

* Roget on "Animal and Vegetable Physiology," vol. ii., p. 584.

† "Ann. Nat. Hist.," 1848, p. 155.

‡ See Pritchard's "History of Infusorial Animalcules, Living and Fossil," p. 9.

their floating in the air, and they descend in dust-rain at a distance of hundreds of miles from their native localities. Ehrenberg has written a memoir occupying one hundred and ninety-two folio pages, on showers of infusorial animalcula, in which he shows that the numerous dust showers, which have fallen at different periods in various parts of the world, are fraught with myriads of animalcula of every variety, and he supposes that millions of tons weight of microscopic organisms have thus descended to the earth.

In connection with their diminutiveness and their volatility, we must consider their amazing fecundity, and the vitality of their germs. Ehrenberg ascertained that such is their productiveness, that a single infusoria would multiply into a million in ten days, and into sixteen millions in twelve days ; * while such is the vitality of their ova that they seem capable of retaining the principle of life under circumstances where more elaborate organisms quickly perish. Thus numerous, volatile, everywhere present, and endowed with such amazing powers of fecundity and vitality, there is no marvel in their being found pervading all animal and vegetable substances, nor in their sudden appearance by myriads where their presence was never suspected.

That bodies so inconceivably numerous, and so extremely minute, as the ova of infusoria and of other microscopic animalcula, should enter into and combine with all other animal and vegetable substances, is a natural and unavoidable result ; and that animal and vegetable matter, fraught as it is with these ova, should, in certain conditions, favour their development, is only in accordance with the well-known laws of generation in the higher orders of animals. If the warmth of the fowl's body, or heat artificially obtained, develops the principle of life in the eggs of a bird, why should not a physical change in animal or vegetable substances serve to hatch or develop the microscopic ova deposited therein ? These results are in harmony with the known laws and operations of Nature, and

* Jones reckons that the *Paramecium aurelia* is capable of producing 268,435,456 in four weeks.

from known facts in the history and economy of microscopic animals, might be predicated *à priori*, were there no demonstration of the phenomena.

4. *The experiments of some chemists and physiologists to produce animalcula considered.*

Within the last few years numerous experiments have been made to elicit, by chemical agency, the formation of animalcula; but the results are pronounced fallacious by scientific men. In 1834, Cagniard Latour made a public declaration that he had manufactured animalcules by the aid of carburetted hydrogen. This assertion led to an examination, subsequently, of the creatures, by M. Audouin, who did not hesitate to pronounce the method, by which they were said to be formed, fallacious. In the same year, Professor Bonsdorff communicated to the German Naturalists' Association the results of an experiment he had made on the imaginary production of infusoria. It appears that by a chemical process the result produced was a fictitious representation, in form and evolution, of the *Amœba diffluens*. Such appearance is considered by its able discoverer as bearing no more relationship to the real animalcule than a doll or a figure, moved by mechanism, does to a living child.* If it were admitted that the presence of real animalcules is found after some chemical process, it does not follow that the experiment has created the life, but simply evolved it from pre-existing ova. The experiment is equivalent to incubation, which quickens and evolves the seed into animal or vegetable existence. This is further confirmed by the fact, that experiment never results in bringing into view the simple seed or egg, but the perfectly developed animal or plant—a fact which implies the prior existence of the germs or ova from which they have been derived; and this derivation is further confirmed by another fact, that the animalcula which are evolved by experiment are found to have their bodies full of eggs or young—thus propagating their species like larger animals, and like them being propagated by others of the same

* Pritchard's "History of Infusorial Animalcules," pp. 27, 28.

race. If ova and germs be the incipient state of animal or vegetable existence, the experimenters, to be producers of life, should elicit that life in its nascent form, as ova or germ; till this is done, the experiments can only be regarded as ingenious fallacies, fitted to deceive, but by no means competent to create.

5. *Experiments show that animalcula are not produced from either animal or vegetable matter when certain and effective means are used to exclude the presence of animalcular ova.*

If, indeed, this were not the case—if all experiment had hitherto failed to prevent their production, the failure ought from analogy to be regarded as arising from the impossibility of our excluding the presence of ova so extremely minute and volatile. Experiments, however, have precluded their production. M. Schultz, a careful observer of Nature, states:—"I filled a glass flask half full of distilled water, in which I mixed various animal and vegetable substances; I then closed it with a good cork, through which I passed two glass tubes, but at right angles, the whole being air-tight. It was next placed in a sand-bath, and heated until the water boiled violently, and thus all parts had reached a temperature of 212° Fahrenheit. While the watery vapour was escaping by the glass tubes, I fastened at each end an apparatus which chemists employ for collecting carbonic acid; that to the left was filled with concentrated sulphuric acid, and the other with a solution of potash. By means of the boiling heat, everything living, and all germs in the flask or in the tubes, were destroyed, and all access was cut off, by the sulphuric acid on the one side, and by the potash on the other. I placed this easily-moved apparatus before my window, where it was exposed to the action of light, and also, as I performed my experiments in the summer, to that of heat. At the same time I placed near it an open vessel, with the same substances that had been introduced into the flask, and, also, after having subjected them to a boiling temperature. In order now to renew constantly the air within the flask, I sucked with my mouth, several times a day, the open end of the apparatus filled with the solution of potash, by which process the air entered my mouth from the flask

through the caustic liquid, and the atmospheric air from without entered the flask through the sulphuric acid. The air was, of course, not altered in its composition by passing through the sulphuric acid into the flask, but, if sufficient time was allowed for the passage, all the portions of living matter, or of matter capable of becoming animated, were taken up by the sulphuric acid and destroyed. From the 28th of May, until the early part of August, I continued uninterruptedly the renewal of the air into the flask, without being able, by the aid of the microscope, to perceive any living animal or vegetable substance, although, during the whole of the time, I made my observations almost daily on the edge of the liquid; and when at last I separated the different parts of the apparatus, I could not find in the whole liquid the slightest trace of *infusoria*, of *conferve*, or of mould; but all the three presented themselves in great abundance a few days after I had left the flask standing open. The vessel which I placed near the apparatus contained on the following day vibriones and monads, to which were soon added larger polygastric *infusoria*, and afterwards *rotatoria*.*

A similar result was obtained from experiments by M. Pasteur, who pronounced spontaneous generation a chimera; and more recently by Dr. Tyndall. In his opening address as president of the meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science held at Belfast in 1874, Dr. Tyndall "admonished scientific men either to open their doors to the conception of creative acts; or abandoning them, radically to change their notions of matter." It was little expected then that Dr. Tyndall himself would be the next eminent scientist who would openly reject and disprove the doctrine of spontaneous generation. Yet such is the fact. "For on Thursday, January 13th, 1876, he read a paper before the Royal Society in London," when, as reported, "he showed by brilliant experiments that spontaneous generation is an absolute impossibility; and that if solutions open to the air swarm with life, it is because they have been impregnated by living organisms floating

* Ed. "Phil. Jour."

in the air." The air on being thoroughly filtered excluded all organic life, and "solutions left therein remain unaltered though left for months. The number and variety of Dr. Tyndall's experiments left no room to doubt his conclusions."*

6. *Intestinal worms not spontaneous in their existence, but derived from infusoria.*

The great difficulty long felt by the opponents to spontaneous generation was found in the case of intestinal worms—no facts of science being available to account for their origin from living predecessors: that difficulty has now vanished before the light of true philosophy. It was some time ago observed by Blanchard, that one species of infusoria, the *Planariæ*, bore a near relation to the intestinal worms, under the name of *Trematoda*; and recent discovery, by the persevering and energetic Agassiz, has determined that the one is the larval state of the other. On this important subject we cannot withhold the words of this distinguished philosopher. In a letter to Mr. Dana he remarks, "Although, for want of time, my investigations on intestinal worms have been limited, I have arrived at one important result. You may remember a paper I read at the meeting at Cambridge (America), in August, 1849, in which I showed that the embryo which is hatched from the egg of a *Planaria* is a genuine polygastric animalcule of the genus *Paramecium*, as now characterized by Ehrenberg. In Steenstrup's work on alternate generation, you find that in the extraordinary succession of alternate generations, ending with the production of *Cercaria*, and its metamorphosis into *Distoma*, a link was wanting—the knowledge of the young hatched from the egg of *Distoma*. The deficiency I can now fill. It is another infusorium, a genuine *Opalina*. With such facts before us, there is no longer any doubt left respecting the character of all these polygastrica; they are the earliest larval condition of worms."† Professor Owen himself

* "Athenæum," January 15th, 1876.

† "Siliman's Journal of Science," May, 1852; "Jameson's Journal," No. 106.

remarks, in reference to the singular transformation of this infusoria, revealing as it does the mysterious origin of the flukeworm, and the termination of the cycle of its being—“When the ciliated monad has given birth to the gregarina, and this to the cercaria, and the cercaria to the distoma, the fertilized egg of the flukeworm again extrudes the progeny under the infusorial or monadic form, and the cycle recommences.”* Thus we see that science has at length ascertained a true living paternity for a class of beings, whose mysterious existence was argued as a stronghold of the theory of spontaneous generation; and there can be no doubt but as facts are more and more elicited by patient scientific investigation, the supports of error will, one after another, give way, until every phase of philosophy will blush at the weakness and folly of the theory.

Nor does this transformation of the infusoria into a worm involve a fact that favours the doctrine of transmutation of species, for the one is but the larval condition, and the other the consummation, of the same animal; just as the caterpillar is the larva of the butterfly, and the tadpole of the frog; nor can the one pass over its prescribed bounds any more than the other.

7. The cellular origin and structure of organized bodies affords no countenance to the development hypothesis.

The organic structure of both plants and animals is composed of cells, as the elementary basis; and because the most complicated structures, when traced to their ultimate points of organism, are found to consist of simple cells, the thoroughgoing advocates of the development hypothesis have the sagacity to conclude that man is only the latest and most perfect development of the monad—the simplest form of cellular organization. The author of the “Vestiges of Creation” says: “The idea which I form of the progress of organic life upon our earth—and the hypothesis is applicable to all similar theatres of vital being—is that the simplest and most primitive type, under the law to which that of like productions is sub-

* President's Address at the British Association at Leeds.

ordinate, gave birth to the type next above it: that this organ produced the next higher, and so on to the very highest: the stages of advance being in all cases very small, namely, from one species only to another; so that the phenomenon has always been of a simple and modest character."

This hypothetical advancement by a very slow progress, we have shown, is contradicted by the most obvious facts in geology, which prove that species of a higher organization were contemporaneous with, and sometimes anterior to, lower species of the same class; and as to the theory of cellular development, it is characterized by the prevailing error of confounding identity with resemblance. In the first rudimentary forms of organized life, there is undoubtedly a resemblance, but not identity. So far from it, results show that there is an essential difference in their specific characters. It is a fundamental axiom, that the same physical causes produce the same physical effects, and diverse causes produce diverse effects. If all cellular germs were absolutely the same in their nature, they would have produced beings of the same identical nature; but the fact that the effects uniformly differ, and always have differed, argues that the causes themselves are different. Dr. Mantell has justly observed, "The single cell which embodies vitality in the monad, or the yeast fungus, is governed by the same immutable organic laws which preside over the complicated machinery of man and the other vertebrata; and the single cell which is the embryotic condition of the mammal, has no more relation to the single cell which is the permanent condition of the monad, than has the perfect animal into which the mammalian cell becomes ultimately developed. The cell that forms the germ of each species of organism is endowed with special properties, which can result in nothing but the fabrication of that particular species." Were these cells identical, they would all, under the same conditions, run the same course, and reach the same destiny. The fact that each species is circumscribed within certain defined and impassable limits, disproves both the identity of the cells and the development theory which is based upon it.

8. *The transmutation theory is also at fault in seeking to support itself by the analogy of foetal development.*

It has been alleged that each animal of a higher kind, in its embryotic state, passes through the successive stages of the lower kinds; the character of these stages being taken from the brain and the heart, and man being the highest point of the series. To this we reply, that the theory is incorrect in fact, and without force in argument; for the fallacy of this notion has been demonstrated by the highest anatomical authority. Von Baer has proved it to be without foundation, and others have since confirmed his decision. Müller remarks: "The human embryo, in fact, at no period, resembles a radiate animal, or an insect, a molluscous creature, or a worm. It is not true even that man resembles at one time a fish, at another time the amphibia or reptiles, and at another time a bird; he merely bears the same resemblance to a fish which he does to a bird or reptile; namely, the resemblance which all vertebrate animals bear to each other."* Another eminent physiologist asserts, as the result of careful examination, that "the brain of the human embryo does not resemble, at any period, however early, the brain of any mollusc, or of any articulate, which are two of the lower stages. It never passes through a stage comparable or analogous to a permanent condition of the same organ in an invertebrate animal. And, in like manner, the spinal cord in the human vertebræ at no period agrees with the corresponding part of the lower kinds of animals. The moment it becomes visible in the human embryo, it is entirely dorsal in position; while in molluscs and articulates a great part, or nearly the whole, is ventral. The same is true of the heart or centre of the vascular system, which has always a different relative position to the great nervous centre, in the human embryo, from what it has in any articulate animal, and in most molluscs."†

But apart from this testimony, valuable as it is, it may be

* See G. Moore, M.D., on "The Use of the Body in relation to the Mind."

† "Indications of a Creator," by Dr. Whewell, pp. 38, 39.

replied, that should the foetal development of the various classes of being be so identical within a certain stage as that the nicest observation could perceive no difference, what then? Does this favour the transmutation theory? We think the specific differences which immediately succeed the earliest stages of foetal development in each class, order, genera, and species, would prove just the reverse. For if there were absolute identity in the rudiments of all organic life, and if all species were essentially alike and capable of transmutation, what hinders each, when starting from the same point, from running the same course? or what prevents one germ from being developed into an animal of a different order from its parent? Why does the one always terminate in a worm, another always proceed to a fish, another to a reptile, another to a bird, another to a quadruped, and another to a man? The only philosophical reason is, that each is endowed from the first with a distinct specific nature, as essentially distinct as the highest organization, and that the transmutation is as impossible in the germ as it is in the full-grown animal. We need not pursue this subject further. Scientific facts and experiments, at every turn, confront and disprove the notions of spontaneous generation and gradual development. The microscope itself has proved a deadly foe to these hypotheses.

Now, had our inquiries on the production of animalcula led to a different result—had facts even favoured their spontaneous generation—that result would not have sustained the development theory. It would have left *intact* every preceding argument by which that theory is overthrown. It would still have been demonstrated that, so far as human observation can reach, an impassable barrier is placed between one species and another; the hypothesis of transmutation would still have been contradicted by facts in every department of the economy of Nature, and the necessity for some originating and creating power, superior to Nature, would have been established. But when we have evidence which is directly against the spontaneous theory; when facts and analogy lead to the conclusion that a creating power is as essential to the production of a

monad as to the production of an animal of the most elaborate and complicated structure, we have an additional fact to place on the roll of evidence for a creating power.

In the last chapter it was proved that all things had a beginning; it has now been proved that neither animal nor vegetable life began of itself, nor has been produced by any inherent energy in Nature; hence the corollary necessarily follows, that all *organic* existence has been produced by something distinct from Nature, and superior to it.

SECTION IV.—THE NEBULAR HYPOTHESIS EXAMINED AND REFUTED.

WE now proceed another step in the inquiry, in which we propose to show that the inanimate and unorganized masses composing the vast universe could not have received their present arrangement and disposition from the operation of any natural law. But here let it be observed, this argument is not essential to the force and conclusiveness of the preceding one. The former proofs of a creating cause are each independent of one another, and equally independent of this; and are equally conclusive and satisfactory, though we should not be able to carry our evidence a step higher. The existence of a man, a quadruped, a reptile, a mollusc, an animalculum, or a plant, each proves a creating cause, even if we could not demonstrate the creation of the inanimate globular masses which compose the solar and stellary systems.

It has already been argued in Chapter III. that the solar system, and, indeed, the entire universe, must have had a *beginning* (see pages 65—77): it has now to be shown that that origin could not spring from matter and its known properties, but must, like all organized existence, be derived from something distinct from Nature, and superior to it. In the absence of any opposite evidence, analogy itself presents a probable

argument of this. If it be impossible for matter spontaneously to originate organized existence, it is exceedingly improbable that it can originate its own modifications, dispositions, and motions, so as to produce the most perfect mechanism, the most consummate order and harmony, in the arrangement of its several parts. But here we are met by the nebular hypothesis, which proposes to account for the origin of our planet, and, indeed, of the solar system, by supposing that the atoms of which the whole material universe is composed existed primarily, in an extremely diffused and attenuated state through immensity.

There are numerous patches of apparently dull, cloudy matter, irregularly interspersed through the heavens. A few of these are faintly visible to the naked eye, but by far the greater portion are revealed only by the telescope. Some of these were always resolvable into clusters of stars, while others long resisted all attempts, even with telescopes of the highest magnifying powers, to reduce them into determinate bodies. Even when Herschel's great reflector was turned to the heavens, many of these nebulae still remained unresolvable; changed they were in figure, but still they presented the aspect of masses of cloudy vapour. It was, indeed, thought that some of these unresolvable masses were nearer to the earth than others which had yielded to telescopic power; and hence arose, during the close of the last century, various conjectures respecting their nature, and the purposes they served in the universe. Some philosophers thought they served to supply the systems of stars in their vicinity with materials to replenish the waste brought on by emission of light; but the most imposing theory was the hypothesis, that these nebulous masses consisted of luminous matter in its primitive condition, ere it had condensed itself into a compact body of spherical form. Assuming this as the first principle in the hypothesis, and assuming as the second, that the law of gravitation was inherent, and constantly operating, the different degrees of luminosity presented by the various nebulae were supposed to be characteristic of the different degrees of condensation to which the respective

masses had advanced, in their progress from a state of primitive diffusion towards that of solid globes. Hence, system-makers arose, in *quantum sufficit*. Mechanical laws were conjectured, diagrams were drawn, and books were written, to show us how our planet had arisen; how systems grew; how constellations of burning suns, attended by revolving worlds, and humble satellites, were formed; and how other young systems were growing. At this period worlds were made and hurled into immensity with as much facility as the schoolboy casts his tennis-ball. Infidels expounded the theory to show us what Nature could do without a God; and good men took it up to show us how it harmonized with the nature of God and his word. These systems are still fresh, and their drawings and diagrams look beautiful on paper; but they have no other foundation than the paper on which they are displayed.

This specious generalization has been adopted as the ultimatum of the development theory. It may be viewed in a twofold aspect, according to the mode in which it is advocated by its admirers. By some, as we have intimated, it is advocated simply as the mode in which the Creator is supposed to have produced the universe; and, by others, as the mode in which the universe has been spontaneously produced by the operation of natural law, without the agency of a Creator. Viewed simply as an hypothesis, it is unsupported by the phenomena on which it was founded; but viewed as an atheistic scheme, it is fraught with palpable contradictions and absurdities.

I. *The nebular hypothesis is proved by astronomical discovery to be without foundation.*

It stands precisely in the same position with respect to the telescope, as the spontaneous production of animalcula once did to the microscope. Both systems could boast a species of plausibility, while the unassisted eye, or limited and imperfect instruments, were the only means of investigation; but both alike vanish, as idle dreams before the light of day, when science employs more perfect instruments and more patient attention. As a conjecture, it rested mainly on the supposition that the vast masses composing nebular phenomena were unresolvable

from their *nature*, and not from their *distance*. This was the foundation on which its pretensions were supported, and which gained for it a temporary credit among men. It availed not how greatly augmented was the magnifying power which Sir William Herschel was able to apply. When he turned to the heavens his telescope of forty feet, with its four-foot mirror, penetrating into space nearly two hundred times beyond the distance of unaided vision, still these nebular masses were unresolvable. Every other celestial object seemed to yield to its power. Stars, which had appeared single, and scarcely visible from their minuteness, were found to be double, triple, and quadruple. Myriads, which the human eye had never seen to twinkle from the birth of time, were now beheld scattering their brilliant dust on the blue canopy of the sky. The faint light of the Milky Way was found to proceed, as Democritus anciently suggested, from millions of brilliant orbs, congregating in the form of an immense belt suspended in space. Cloudy appearances, whose grey and dusky aspect was invisible except in the clearest atmosphere, were ascertained to be clusters of stars of diversified forms and splendour. Multitudes of other nebulous masses were brought into view—some light and well-defined, but many diffused, sparse, and dull of aspect. These latter, and some faintly visible to the naked eye, would yield to no power which the great astronomer could bring to bear upon them. They sternly resisted all his attempts to resolve them into starry clusters. Under the amazing power of his four-foot reflector they still appeared cloudy, vaporous substances; and hence they were supposed to be masses of matter diverse from other celestial objects, and, from their *nature*—not their *distance*—incapable of being resolved by telescopic power. They were supposed, in fact, to be the crude materials, the primordial elements, of nascent worlds. Furnished with these materials, imagination supplied gravitation and mechanical laws, and, by their aid, attempted to account for the spontaneous origin of the universe.

Thus, the nebular theory was based upon a conjecture, and subsequent discoveries have proved the conjecture was founded

in error. Time, the great revealer of events and expounder of physical law, has demonstrated that the cause why nebulae were unresolvable was not their *nature*, but their *distance*. Lord Rosse's magnificent telescope has left its noble predecessors far in the rear. With its polished and perfect disc of six feet, it penetrates into space more than twice the distance of that constructed by Herschel. It carries our observation into fields of immensity, at least five hundred times farther than the unassisted vision could reach; or, in other words, it "will descry a single star six thousand times more remote than an average orb of the first magnitude." The instrument of this tremendous power, when turned to the heavens, at once revealed the fallacy on which the nebular hypothesis had reposed. Numbers of the masses of nebulous vapour, supposed to be crude materials in their primordial state, were immediately resolved into splendid constellations—brilliant clusters of stars. The diffused and irregular forms, which had bidden defiance to Herschel's telescope, yielded to the more powerful instrument of Lord Rosse, and placed themselves among the other immense systems of stars, too aggregated and numerous to be calculated. The nebulae of Andromeda and Orion are among the most celebrated of these modern discoveries—objects so distant, that their light reaches not our sphere "until sixty thousand years after it has left the regions where they lie." The nebula in Orion, which once seemed a shapeless mass of unresolvable matter, is found to be a glorious object—a celestial continent, "dotted all over with wisps, not unlike the flakes of a mackerel sky, each of which must, in itself, be almost a universe—even a SANDHEAP of stars." *

It is admitted there are still numbers of nebulae which refuse to yield to the resolving power of even Lord Rosse's telescope; but this does not build again the fallen hypothesis, It is a fact which we should rationally expect; a fact, indeed, which must necessarily be successively repeated after still more wonderful optical achievements, unless man could invent an

* Professor Nichol, LL.D.

instrument which could pierce beyond the utmost verge of creation. Not till then will it be possible to resolve all the nebulae which would successively appear, as the penetrating power of the telescope might be augmented. No such period, however, can be looked for on our planet, with our limited resources. But the fact which we have to regard in our argument is this:—The nebular hypothesis rested on the supposition, that the cause why nebulous material was not resolvable by the telescope existed in the *nature* of that material, not in its *distance*: but telescopic observation on some of the great nebulae has now demonstrated, that the cause of their being unresolvable lay *not* in the *nature* of their material, but in its *distance*; and that its nature is totally different from that which our system-makers had reckoned upon as the foundation of their hypothesis.

We are aware that experiments more recently made, by means of the spectrum analysis, have led some scientists to the opinion that some nebulae are not clusters of stars, but masses of glowing gaseous matter. This opinion, however, seems to rest on a slender basis; but, if true, it can apply only to some of the nebular masses, and leaves untouched the actual and brilliant discoveries which have removed the main foundation of the nebular hypothesis. And, indeed, if we admit the actual existence of nebular matter in the glowing state supposed; and further, if we admit that such was the primordial condition of all matter, it can be shown that there was still an absolute necessity for some cause as its originator and disposer. Matter, when brought into existence (or, if it had eternally existed), must have been in *some* state prior to its present orderly arrangement; and the diffused, nebulous state may be admitted, without impairing the evidence of a creating and disposing energy.

Let us, then, suppose all the matter of which the universe is composed to have been originally in a diffused, nebulous state; we shall soon see that both its primal condition and its orderly disposition afford no countenance to the atheistic system. For—

1. Either the matter of the universe was eternal, or it was not; if not eternal, it must have been created, and thus the existence of a Creator is admitted. But, if matter was eternal, it could not have existed eternally in a nebulous state; for if matter had been in a nebulous state through an eternity past, it must necessarily have continued in the same state through all the eternity of the future, unless changed by some other power superior to it. The fact that *some* matter is not now in a nebulous state, but condensed and formed into solid globes, and arranged and adjusted into an orderly system, proves, either that it was not eternally nebulous, or, if eternally nebulous, that it has been changed into its present state by a distinct and independent agency. Let our theorists take which alternative they please. If they contend that its nebulous state has been eternal, they necessitate the existence of an all-disposing Being, distinct from Nature, and infinitely above it, who has changed its condition; and if they admit the nebulous state to have been *not* eternal, then it must have been derived from some previous state; and thus they surrender their theory of the nebulous matter being now in its original and primordial state.

2. *Moreover, the properties of matter, such as gravitation, cohesion, &c., if eternal, forbid the supposition that planetary matter should have remained eternally in a nebulous state.*

The properties of matter are either eternal or they are not. If not, then matter, if eternal, was eternally devoid of these properties; and if eternally devoid of these properties, it must have remained eternally devoid of them, unless they had been superadded by another power, distinct from matter, and superior to it. The fact, therefore, that matter has *now* these properties, proves that they have been either superadded or have been eternal. If it be affirmed that they have been eternal, then their operation forbids that any part of the planetary matter should have remained until now in a nebulous state; for the force of gravitation acting eternally, incessantly, and uniformly, would have condensed all the nebulous planetary matter into compact and solid masses. As gravitation has done this for part, it must necessarily have done it for the whole;

the portions now supposed to be in the process of aggregation would have completed that process ages ago. This view is sustained by Sir Isaac Newton in the following remarks:—
 “For if there be innate gravity, it is impossible now for the matter of the earth, and all the planets and stars, to fly up from them, and become evenly spread through all the heavens, without a supernatural power; and, certainly, that which never can be hereafter without a supernatural power, could never be heretofore without the same power.”* If it be said that the nebular masses have not yet had time to complete their process of condensation, we reply, this is to confess that the nebular masses are not eternal; for if they have had a past eternity in which to complete the process, that process must long since have been completed, and if not yet completed, it cannot have been eternal.

If it be said, in reference to matter still existing in a nebulous state, that the action of the gravitating force must have been suspended or counteracted, we demand by what agency? There are but two agencies which can be supposed—either a voluntary or a physical agency. If a voluntary force has suspended it, then the existence of a voluntary agent or mind is admitted, which is the truth contended for; if that agency were physical, we ask what was it? Is intense heat alleged as the physical agent to have counteracted the force of gravitation, and kept the primordial particles of matter in a diffused and dissipated state? We reply, again, a state of intense heat is not a permanent condition of any material substance. The property of radiation is the constant associate of heat, and the effect of radiation is refrigeration—a reduction of the intensity of heat; and, whatever may have been the intensity of heat at any given period, radiation would, in time, have reduced it to an equilibrium. Thus, the supposed state of intense heat, if it ever existed, must have had both a beginning and an end, and cannot be eternal. But the property of *gravitation* is permanent and universal, and, therefore, within the ages of an eternity,

* Sir Isaac Newton's Letters to Dr. Bentley.—See his *Life by Dr. Brewster*.

must have overcome the dissipating power of heat, and have condensed the particles of planetary matter, and changed all the nebulous masses into solid globes.

If it be said that the nebulous matter still uncondensed is composed of particles thrown off and scattered into space from comets and other bodies, and slowly aggregating by the power of gravitation, we reply, this is to give up the atheistic view of the nebular hypothesis, for it concedes its non-eternity—it no longer supposes it to be the primordial state of matter. Thus, the very existence of the supposed nebular matter affords no countenance to the atheistic theory, but argues a creating and disposing power.

We proceed to show that the orderly arrangement of the supposed nebular matter is equally unfavourable to atheism, for it involves the existence of a forming, directing, and controlling agency, distinct from matter, and superior to it.

3. *The nebular hypothesis cannot account for the production of the planets, and their cosmical arrangement into a regular system, without admitting a creating energy.*

Where is the *natural* agency adequate to the spontaneous production of the planets? Supposing the primordial matter of the universe had been *evenly* diffused through space, and the gravitating force in action, the particles would have moved towards the centre, and congregated into one spherical mass. If the scattered elements had been *unevenly* diffused, they would have formed several, or, perhaps, an immense number, of such masses. But how were these to form subordinate bodies, such as planets and moons, revolving round their primaries? Our theorists tell us, by the larger masses throwing off portions from their surface by the action of centrifugal force; but we demand, how could there be a centrifugal force without a rotatory motion; and whence this rotatory motion? The effect of gravity upon the elementary particles of matter is to draw them in straight lines towards a given centre, and we cannot conceive that such an action could originate a rotatory motion. Its tendency, we think, would be, by equal pressure on all sides, to produce perfect rest to the aggregated

mass. The author of the "Vestiges," and others, in defending their theory, refer us to eddies and whirlpools, formed by the action of running water, as an example of the manner in which a rotatory motion might be produced in a nebulous mass of matter ; but we can see no analogy between the two cases. If, in a stream of water, the particles were moving in one direction, they would never produce an eddy, except from some interruption or impediment in their course. Widely different, however, from a stream of water is the supposed state of nebulous matter, which is assumed to have been "formed in one mass ;" "the constitution of the whole uniform, consisting of similar elements ;" and "the same physical laws presiding over the whole." * Now, the particles of matter, under these conditions, evenly diffused through space, and uniformly acted upon by gravitation, would gradually move in straight lines towards the centre of the mass, with the most perfect order and regularity, and no impediment arresting their course or disturbing their action, no opposing currents could be formed, but an equal pressure would be exerted on every radius, from circumference to centre. Under such conditions, it cannot be shown how any rotatory action could be generated without the interference of another power independent of matter. The theory is thus burdened with such extreme improbabilities, not to say impossibilities, that it cannot be admitted as rational and philosophical.

4. *The motions of the planets present contradictions to the nebular development hypothesis ; for—*

The axes of the planetary bodies and their satellites are not uniform, but are *variously* inclined from a perpendicular to the plane of the ecliptic. What rotatory motion in the central mass can account for this ? The satellites, also, have their axes inclined from the equators of their primaries. What rotatory action can account for this ? It is vain and fanciful to ascribe these phenomena, as a certain theorist has done, to "undulations in the nebular mass." Whence does the theorist derive his undulations but from his own imagination ?

Again ; the satellites of Uranus, instead of moving from

* "Vestiges of Creation," p. 27.

west to east, as the theory would require, have their orbits nearly at right angles to the ecliptic, and move in a direction from east to west. This is not merely an exception to the mechanical result of the theory—it is a *contradiction* to that result. But the author of the “*Vestiges*” is fertile in invention, and can easily find a cause in his own imagination, even when there is none in Nature. In fact, his theory consists of a bundle of hypotheses; it is one hypothesis built upon many others. To account for the opposite motions of the satellites of Uranus, he has recourse to the supposition of “a curve in the uttermost portion of the nebular mass;” but this, again, is a mere conjecture, contrary to all probability; and, unfortunately for the hypothesis, the discovery of Neptune proves that Uranus is not in the “uttermost” portion, but very far in the *interior* of the system. It is in vain to fabricate an hypothesis to account for the fact in question; it is a direct contradiction to the mechanical result of the centrifugal force, to which the theory ascribes it. The production, therefore, of the planets, and their orderly arrangements and motions, must be ascribed to a power distinct from Nature and mere physical or mechanical law, and infinitely superior to both.

5. *The nebular hypothesis cannot account for one body in the system being luminous and all the planets and their satellites opaque.*

Here is another ultimate fact, which no philosophy can account for by natural law. The nebular theory contemplates the primitive elements as one mass, without any such separation or partial distribution of luminous and opaque matter. The appropriating, then, of light to one body, and the withholding of it from all the planets and their satellites, are effects for which there is no cause to be assigned in natural laws, but which, so far as we can see, require the agency of a Being distinct from Nature, and superior to it.

6. *The nebular hypothesis cannot show why the only luminous body in the solar system should be in the centre of the system.*

That this is a most advantageous arrangement all admit; but what natural law can account for it? Gravitation cannot

account for the central collocation of light ; for, of all bodies, light seems to be the least affected by gravitation ; and if it be affected by it as much as other matter, yet opaque bodies have the property of attraction, in proportion to their respective quantities, equally with the luminous ones. Rotatory motion cannot account for it ; for, if the rotation of a globe have any effect upon particles of light, it must be to throw them off from its surface. The action of light itself cannot account for the phenomenon ; for, whether light be by emission or undulation, its action is in straight lines ; and in passing from a *spherical* surface, it diverges mathematically into a wider area, and, without a controlling or some unknown agency, could never converge to a centre. So far as we can observe, the action of light, whether emitted or reflected from a sphere, is continually passing *from*, not approaching *to*, a centre—being constantly diffused, not concentrated. The collocation of light, therefore, in the centre of our system, is contrary to the known laws of light ; and, consequently, the placing of the luminous body in the centre is another ultimate fact which no known law of Nature can account for, and requires, we think, an agency distinct from Nature, and superior to it.

7. *The nebular hypothesis cannot account for the relative distances, bulk, and density of the planets.*

The theory assumes that the more remote from the central orb, the larger the planets in their dimensions, and the less in their density. The author of the "Vestiges" says, "There is a progressive bulk and diminution in density, from the nearest to the sun to the most distant," and that "the distances are curiously relative." Such, we admit, *should* be the result of the theory, were it correct ; but the actual state of the solar system is widely different from our author's representation. Thus, Venus and the Earth are nearly of equal dimensions and density, though greatly different in distance ; while Mars, though more remote from the Sun, is only about half the size of the Earth or Venus, and of about the same density. These facts flatly contradict our author's theory of "progression in bulk and diminution in density." The same contradiction is seen in the

remoter planets. Jupiter is by far the largest planet, though situated in the middle of the system. He is several times the size of Uranus, though four times nearer the Sun. Again; the newly-discovered planet, Neptune, is said to be 2,900,000,000 miles distant from the Sun, or, in round numbers, six times more distant than Jupiter, and yet not more than half the size.* There is, indeed, a most perfect adjustment between the centrifugal and centripetal forces, clearly proving regularity and design; but there is such a departure from the pretended relation between distance, bulk, and density, as mocks the generalizations of our theorists, and defies every attempt to resolve the collocation of the planets, and the arrangement of the system, into the operation of mere natural law, and compels us to refer the whole to the presiding intelligence and agency of One distinct from Nature, and infinitely superior to it. As Sir Isaac Newton has well observed: "To make such a system, with all its motions, required a cause which understood and compared together the quantities of matter in the several bodies of the Sun and planets, and the gravitating powers resulting from thence; the several distances of the primary planets from the Sun, and of the secondary ones from Saturn, Jupiter, and the Earth, and the velocities with which those planets could revolve about those quantities of matter in the central bodies: and to compare and adjust all these things together, in so great a variety of bodies, argues the cause to be not blind and fortuitous, but very well skilled in mechanics and geometry." †

8. To the reasons already adduced many others might be added; but we shall content ourselves with one which applies to every view which can possibly be taken respecting the origin of the universe. There is no atheistic hypothesis can be of any avail to sustain the theory which does not provide for the eternal *duration* of the universe; for if the universe may have an end,

* Supposing the dimensions, &c., of Neptune to be, as yet, not accurately and nicely ascertained, yet any allowance for error which can be reasonably made will still leave results which show a wide departure from the uniformity required by the operation of mere natural law.

† Sir Isaac Newton's letter to Dr. Bentley, in 1692.

it must have had a beginning, and, if a beginning, it cannot be eternal—it cannot be self-sufficient. The idea of an origin or of a beginning is fatal to the adequacy and sufficiency of Nature. If ever there was a period when the universe did not exist, there must have been an antecedent eternity in which it had no existence, and, consequently, it could never have spontaneously begun to be. Now there is no atheistic hypothesis which provides for the eternal continuation of the universe. On the other hand, there are evidences, as we have already shown, of an end to all organized existence and to all cosmical arrangements. That end necessarily implies a beginning, and a beginning must be the work of a Creator, and not of matter itself.

If it be said that, if the present system of things should be destroyed, Nature may reproduce another, and continue the process of successive reproductions through all eternity, we reply, it has already been shown that there is nothing in Nature adequate to produce the *present* system, nor any part of it, even with the operation of its existing laws; and, if not adequate to produce this—not even a planet or a single species of organized existence—it cannot be capable of reproducing another after the present system is defunct. Its having the clear indications of both a beginning and an end, presents a refutation to every atheistic or self-originating hypothesis which can be conceived.

We have thus traced the development hypothesis through all its parts and pretensions, and proved that it is unsupported by facts, and repugnant to philosophy. The evolution of one species from another is contradicted through the entire length of natural history, though the scroll be unfolded through the dateless eras of geological formations up to the first period of organic existence. The doctrine of spontaneous generation is disproved by facts, so far as the eye, with the aid of the microscope, is capable of extending its observations. The nebular hypothesis—the ultimatum of the theory—we have seen has no foundation in fact; but, if true, affords equal refutation of the atheistic theory, as it clearly implies the agency of a Creator.

The development hypothesis is by far the most specious generalization which has been conceived in order to dispense

with the agency of a Creator; and, that being disposed of, we have no other system of absolute atheism which can claim any lengthened consideration. The hypotheses of chance and of necessity, however, have their advocates, and must be briefly noticed.

CHAPTER VI.

CHANCE IS NOT ADEQUATE TO THE PRODUCTION OF THE UNIVERSE.

Among the varied schemes which Atheism has set up to dispense with the existence of an intelligent Creator, we find the theory of Chance. But, we demand—what is chance? It is not a substance, it is not an attribute; and, if neither, it cannot be the origin of Nature, for it has no substantive existence. If it be replied, chance is the mode of Nature's operating—that Nature is ever active and prolific, and must ever be producing something; but that her operations are such as we see them, is merely a fortuitous result. Now, of the truth of this hypothesis we may demand a proof. If chance means anything, it means the absence of design, and the absence of design can only be proved by the prevalence of disorder and confusion, and by the absence of adaptation of means to ends; nay, rather, by the total absence of either means or ends. Will the atheist undertake to show that there is nothing in Nature but a chaos of disorder, confusion, anomalies, and contradictions? Will he, in seriousness, be responsible to show to his disciples that in all Nature there is no such adaptation of means to ends; or, rather, that there are neither means nor ends—that all Nature's operations are random, isolated, and unconnected efforts? He is bound to do this, or to give up his theory as untenable; but he will never undertake this formidable task.

Let us then look into Nature for ourselves, and see if there be no proof of order, harmony, constancy, law, adaptation, and consequent design; and if either our senses or our reason can

be relied on, we shall find demonstrations of these at every step in our inquiry. When the simple Arab was interrogated, "How do you know there is a God?" he replied, "In the same way that I know that a camel has been in the desert when I see his footsteps." The rude impressions of a camel's foot he could not ascribe to chance. We shall soon find traces of the Divine presence and agency impressed upon every object in the universe, from a world to an atom.

1. *Proofs of order.*

Natural history is the history of the nature and economy of animals. Does the philosopher find nothing but disorder and confusion here? On the contrary, is not the science based upon the regularity, the uniformity, the harmony, and the constancy of Nature? The philosopher divides the animal kingdom into classes, orders, genera, species. Is there nothing but disorder here? He observes that each species, from time immemorial, propagates its own kind, and that the individuals in the species are distinguished into sexes, male and female; and that this distinction in proportionate numbers is continued from age to age. Is there no regularity or harmony here? He sees each individual of the same species possessing the same organs and members, the same number of eyes, ears, and feet, and these situated in the same parts of the body, and performing the same functions respectively. Is there no order or arrangement here? He sees each individual of the same species living in the same element, actuated by the same instincts, and pursuing the same habits. Is there no order or system here? And if order and system be the distinction between chance and design, what does the universal prevalence of order demonstrate, but the absolute falsehood and folly of the atheistic hypothesis?

2. *Constancy: Fixed laws.*

There are numerous laws in the universe—every such law is fixed, and fixed laws afford proof of order and constancy. For what is natural law but a mode or rule, according to which Nature operates with uniformity and constancy?

Thus gravitation pervades all matter, all individual atoms, and all worlds, and operates according to a fixed principle, its

force being invariably determined by the quantity of matter a body contains, and the square of its distance from another body. Does this fact reveal nothing but disorder? Could Newton have successfully applied this principle in resolving the great problem of the mechanism of the universe, if Nature's operations had been random and fortuitous? Light moves with a determined amount of velocity, and always in straight lines, whether emitted or reflected, whether it diverge or converge; and, when reflected, it always rebounds according to a definite angle of incidence. Does this fact exhibit nothing but confusion? The laws of motion are constant and invariable, and hence the regularity of planetary revolutions. So regular indeed are these motions, that they conform to the most rigid principles of mathematics. Their regularity furnishes *data* from which the mathematician can ascertain the relative position of the planets for ages back, and predict, with absolute certainty, the moment of an eclipse for ages to come. Indeed, it was by this mathematical regularity that the celebrated Adams and Leverrier inferred that the perturbations of Uranus indicated the existence of another planet beyond that orb; and shortly afterwards the vigils of astronomers found the stranger in that vicinity, where mathematics had determined his location. Thus, Neptune was added to the spheres of the solar system. Could the discovery have been made if Nature had operated by chance? It has been said, "God works by geometry," and it is certain the motions of the heavenly bodies are our standard of perfect order, perfect time, perfect regularity. The most perfect chronometer constructed by man is a specimen of disorder, compared with the precision, the perfect exactness, of the grand horologe of Nature. We ask, Is this regularity an evidence of chance?

Nearly twenty centuries ago Cicero could ask, "Who is there so stupid that, when he lifts his eyes towards the heavens, he does not feel that there is a God?" Defective and imperfect as the knowledge of astronomy was in his day, encumbered as it then was with the erroneous views of the Ptolemean system, yet even then the Roman sage could teach that the order, the

splendour, and magnificence of the heavens, and the various motions of the celestial orbs, could no more be the effect of chance, than a temple or a mansion could rise without hands.* Since that distant day, what revelations have been made of celestial dynamics—of the order, harmonies, and vastness of the universe, by the discoveries of Kepler, Newton, and since then, through the powerful telescopes of Herschel and Rosse! If the doctrine was chased away before the midnight glories of the Ciceronian age, where shall the phantom find a refuge in the meridian of the nineteenth century?

The laws of chemical affinity, attraction, repulsion, and combination, are definite, fixed, and uniform. Professor Fownes, in his admirable work on Chemistry, states:—"All chemical compounds are definite in their nature, the ratio of the elements being constant." "When gaseous bodies combine it is always in equal volumes bearing to each other a simple relation." "This rule extends to compounds of every description as well as elementary bodies, and indeed embraces every substance capable of existing in the gaseous condition."† There is the same constancy and uniformity in the laws of sound, atmospheric pressure, and elasticity; in heat, combustion, refrigeration, evaporation, rarefaction, solution, and decomposition. Indeed, all the sciences are based on this undeviating regularity in the laws and operations of Nature; Optics, on the constancy of the nature and the laws of light; Astronomy, on the constancy of the laws of gravitation and mechanical forces; Chemistry, on the constancy of the nature and properties of matter; Anatomy, on the constancy of organic structure in the species respectively; so uniform, indeed, that the celebrated Cuvier, from a fossil fragment, could accurately determine the entire form, size, proportions, and habits of the animal to which it once belonged. He could thus build up the structure of species which had been extinct for myriads of ages, and determine their habits, whether graminivorous or carnivorous;

* Cicero, 2 De Nat. Deorum, 15, 90; 1 Tusc., n. 70; De Arusp. Resp., n. 19; 2 De Divin., n. 148.

† Chemistry as Exemplifying the Wisdom of God, pp. 161—8.

whether aquatic or land animals. And this he could do because of the order, uniformity, and constancy of Nature's laws and operations, in all ages, past as well as present.*

It is a proof of the same order and constancy that the same physical causes uniformly produce the same effects, and that not only within the period of human history, but through all those remote cycles of past duration which reach down to the dateless period when the ancient granite rocks were formed, constituting the primitive foundations of the earth. Even the most sudden and violent changes which at times appear to invade and break in upon the quiet and uniform operations of Nature, and convulse the earth, are subject to the same laws of order, regularity, and system. The eruption of a volcano is as much the effect of natural law, as the budding of a primrose; the heaving and rending of an earthquake, as the rising of the morning-star; the fierce and destructive hurricane, as the gentle zephyr of a summer's eve. Indeed, all those apparently fickle and fitful meteoric changes, which consist of varieties in atmospheric temperature, in the humidity and dryness of the weather, in the ascent of vapour, the descent of mists and showers, hail and snow, in the dulness and brightness of the sky, and even in the fantastic drapery of the clouds, are regulated by fixed and unalterable laws. There is not a particle of dust that floats at random; there is not a change, but it is an effect; there is not an effect, but it has a definite cause; and there is not a cause but which operates according to fixed laws. Atoms and worlds, the events of a moment and the stupendous results of ages, the minutest details of Nature's facts as well as the most magnificent systems of congregated worlds, are all under laws which operate uniformly, constantly, and universally. Two thousand four hundred years ago, the celebrated Pythagoras applied the science of numbers and of music to general physics. He considered the order of the universe so complete, that it exemplified the most perfect regularity of numbers, and the most perfect harmony of sounds. Modern science has demonstrated that if "the music of the spheres" is to be ascribed to the

* See Cuvier's "Theory of Earth," pp. 83—93.

poetry of the sage's imagination, the harmony of numbers, of adjustment by weight, measure, and quantity, in every part of the universe, is a doctrine of sound philosophy. Order and harmony pervade all Nature, and if these are opposed to confusion, and confusion be the offspring of chance, there is no such thing as chance in the universe.

3. *Evidences of design.*

Equally conclusive is the evidence of design arising from *adaptation*. Chance has no end to accomplish ; no purpose, either immediate or final, to obtain ; and, therefore, employs no means. The atheist, in speaking of Nature, can never use the word intelligent *adaptation*. If he does, he involves himself in contradiction ; and if he does not, Nature herself contradicts him by myriads of facts. Nature tells him his feet were made to walk, and he uses them for that purpose, yet denies their adaptation. Nature tells him that his teeth were made to masticate food, and he uses them for that purpose, yet he denies their adaptation. Nature informs him that his eyes were formed for sight, and he uses them for that purpose, yet denies their adaptation. The science of optics tells him that if either the laws of light, or the structure of the eye, had been different from what they are, he would have been blind, and yet he denies the adaptation of one to the other. Astronomy tells him that if the centripetal and centrifugal forces had not been balanced with mathematical exactness, the earth could not have been an inhabited world, and yet he denies the adaptation of the one to other. It demonstrates to him that the magnitude, density, and position of the sun were all necessary to sustain his attendant orbs in their places, and his luminosity to supply them with light, yet he repudiates his adaptation. Nature shows him that the animal kingdom is dependent on the vegetable, the vegetable upon the cycle of meteoric influences and chemical laws, and the exact proportions of earth, water, atmosphere, and heat, which are afforded ; and that if the proportions were disturbed, desolation and death would be the results ; and yet he denies the intelligent adaptation of one to the other. Further proofs of adaptation will be given hereafter.

Let these suffice for the present argument, only remarking, just now, that so prevalent is the manifestation of design in the economy of Nature, that scientific men, in pursuing their investigations, have found the postulate, "~~Everything has a purpose to accomplish,~~" is an important guide to the discovery of truth—a principle which every new discovery honours in its turn by an additional verification. Nature is one great system of means and ends. She never works but for a definite result; she produces no result but by means; she never employs her means without success; and this unvarying success flows from the perfect adaptation of those means. In the face of all this, the atheist may still deny the existence of adaptation, but let him not pretend to be governed by reason; never more let him speak of the Christian's credulity—never more let him demand evidence of the truth of religion, and never more let him speak of the parts of a watch as being adapted to indicate time, nor the construction of a telescope as adapted to the eye, nor the locomotive engine as adapted to facilitate human intercourse. As his mode of thinking is contrary to Nature and to axiomatic truth, let his vocabulary exhibit the same perversion of language as his mind does of reason; and then, however unfit for the society of rational men, he will be understood by those of his own class.

4. *Order, law, and adaptation are not to be resolved into the possibilities of chance.*

Another aspect in which chance has been presented is this: that order itself is one of the possibilities of chance, and, as there is a boundless range of possibilities in which Nature may happen to operate, the present constitution of things may be one result of those blind but multifarious operations; and, that as Nature has had eternity in which to ply the energies of her vast laboratory, the present state of the universe has been produced as one out of an infinite number of preceding states. This final subterfuge of the patrons of chance is soon exploded. We have only to apply the principles and facts already before us. If Nature operates fortuitously, without design, without ends or means, though her operations may produce the appearance

of order in a few isolated cases, she can never produce a *system of universal order*, much less can she perpetuate that order with undeviating and mathematical certainty through the whole history of her operations. As the result of the fortuitous operations of antagonistic forces, chaotic disorder and confusion must always be predominant, if not universal; and the *appearance* of any orderly construction, or any regular sequence of events and facts, for even a limited portion of time or space, would not bear the proportion of one to a million. Accordingly, if Nature had operated by chance, the universe must always have abounded with an immense preponderance of malformations and mis-shapen prodigies; and geology, which records her ~~past~~ deeds, must exhibit at every step the absence of law and order—the thick strata must, indeed, be built up with monumental proofs that adaptation and design never ruled. But the strata of the earth carry the contradiction down through all past ages.

5. *Geology shows the same order and adaptation in the past.*

We can read the history of Nature's operations from the most complicated mixtures and combinations down to the simplest element, and from the present date down to the period when the earliest formations were produced; and both past and present events unite in showing that chance has no place, except in the brain of the atheist. If the complicated structure of the human body gives evidence of order and adaptation *now*, so do the structures of animals and plants in all past ages. Among organized beings there were then the regular distinctions of species, genus, order, and class, as definitely marked as they are now; and there were as perfect adaptations of form, instinct, and habit, to element and clime, in the remotest ages, as there are in the present day. Even amid the catastrophes which revolutionized the dynasties of geological eras we see a purpose contemplated, and that purpose realized. If progression indicates order, we have it manifested there; if the fact that successive catastrophes should be the harbingers of a higher condition of animal and vegetable life be an indication of arrangement and plan for a given end, we have this clearly and broadly

marked in the several physical revolutions which have left their impress on the various strata of the globe. If we descend to the period when neither animals nor plants existed—ere organization had been commenced—we find, even in the construction of the granite rock, the operation of law and order—of chemical affinities and combinations carried on in definite proportions. Dr. Buckland remarks :—“The mineralogist has ascertained that granite is a compound substance, made up of three distinct and dissimilar mineral bodies—quartz, felspar, and mica—each representing certain regular combinations of external form and internal structure, with physical properties peculiar to itself ; and chemical analysis has shown that all these several bodies had a prior existence, in some more simple state, before they entered on their present union, in the mineral constituents of what are supposed to be the most ancient rocks accessible to human observation. The crystallographer has also further shown, that the several ingredients of granite, and of all other kinds of crystalline rocks, are composed of molecules, which are invisibly minute ; and that each of these molecules is made up of still smaller and more simple molecules—every one of them combined in fixed and definite proportions—and affording, at all the successive stages of their analysis, presumptive proof that they possess geometrical figures. These combinations and figures are so far from indicating the fortuitous result of accident, that they are disposed according to laws the most severely rigid, and in proportions mathematically exact.

“The atheistic theory, assuming the gratuitous postulate of the eternity of matter and motion, would represent the question thus :—‘All matter,’ it would contend, ‘must, of necessity, have assumed some form or other, and, therefore, may *fortuitously* have settled into any of those under which it now actually appears.’ Now, on this hypothesis, we ought to find all kinds of substances represented occasionally under an infinite number of external forms, and combined in endless varieties, of indefinite proportions ; but observation has shown that crystalline mineral bodies occur under a fixed and limited number of external forms, called *secondary* ; and that these are constructed on a

series of more simple *primary* forms, which are demonstrable by cleavage and division, without any chemical analysis.*

When the crystallographer can proceed no further in the division of these minute atoms by mechanical cleavage or separation, the chemist takes them up, and subjects them to chemical analysis. Here, still, he finds the prevalence of law, order, constancy, and design. When his laboratory has reduced the particles of matter to their ultimate elements, so far as analysis can proceed, he finds new evidences of system and law; for, in the elementary atoms there is no fortuitous or promiscuous combination; but the particles, being endued with elective affinities, enter into union with each other only in fixed and definite proportions.† Dr. Prout, after elaborately proving and illustrating this fact, now so well known, and so generally admitted, remarks :—" We assert, without fear of contradiction, that the molecular constitution of matter is decidedly artificial; or, to use the words of a celebrated writer, ' that the molecules of matter have all the characteristics of a manufactured article.' "

Chance, therefore, has no more place in the elementary particles of matter than it has in the construction of the most elaborate and complicated organization. " When we have, in this manner, traced back all kinds of mineral bodies to the first and most simple condition of their compound elements," says Dr. Buckland, " we find these elements to have been at all times regulated by fixed and universal laws, which still maintain the mechanism of the material world. In the operation of these laws, we recognize such direct and constant subserviency of means to ends—so much harmony, and order, and methodical arrangement in the physical qualities, and proportional quantities, and chemical functions of the inorganic elements; and we further see such evidence of intelligence and foresight in the adaptation of these primordial elements to an infinity of com-

* Dr. Buckland's "Bridgewater Treatise," vol. i., chap. xxiii.

† The merit of this important discovery is ascribed to Dr. Dalton, one of the most distinguished chemists of modern times.

plex uses, under many future systems of animal and vegetable organizations—that we can find no reasonable account of the existence of all this beautiful and exact machinery if we accept not that which refers to the antecedent will and power of a supreme Creator.”

6. *Chance excludes all anticipative arrangement.*

Chance is blind, and as it cannot contrive for the present, it is impossible for it to arrange and provide for the future; but Nature is full of anticipative arrangements and prospective labours. — It is, indeed, one vast and elaborate system of practical economy, as much for the future as for the present. Every vegetable comes into being enfolding within itself the embryotic germs of a successor, and puts on the richest hues of its foliage in the act of evolving its progeny. Every animal starts into life furnished with an organization, and endowed with faculties, instincts, and sympathies, which provide for a coming generation; and if vegetation emits its sweetest odours, and is decked with its gayest robes, in maturing the germs of a coming race, so animal existence finds its highest pleasures in providing for the next generation. The zephyrs are laden with odours, and Nature is made vocal with nuptial rejoicings, while the prolific economy of the present is preparing for the existence and welfare of the future. Is all this the work of chance? Nay, the embryotic germin of the vegetable, the pupa of the coming insect with its gossamer wings folded up and preparing for flight, the ova of the feathered tribes, the teats and the gestative apparatus of the mammalian races, associated with the rich endowments of parental tenderness, care, affection, and joy, evince an anticipative arrangement, which only the highest intellect could contrive. The whole economy is prophetic, and it is only the highest intellect can prophesy, and the greatest skill and power that can fulfil the marvellous prediction.

Nor are these anticipative arrangements and prospective labours confined to organized being. Inanimate Nature looks to the future. The earth, the air, the ocean, the invisible currents of electricity and galvanism, the subtile and ethereal gases, are all acting in concert to provide for the future. The

penetrating frosts, the driving tempests, the ascending vapours, the refreshing showers, the vivid lightning, the solar heat, and all meteoric changes, are so many operations in Nature's great laboratory, to provide for the continuance and multiplication of existing races of animal and vegetable existence. Is such an economy the production of a blind fortuity? Nay, sooner may we expect some process of crystallization to construct a colossal organ, and the howling tempests to play upon it the music of Handel's "Messiah," or the lightning spontaneously to telegraph to us the history of Jupiter, or the future destiny of our world, than that such anticipative and *prophetic* arrangements can spring from chance.

7. *General Summary of the argument.*

The sum of our evidence in refutation of the sophism of chance, then, is this:—Chance is another name for confusion and disorder; but the universe is full of order and harmony. Chance is expressive only of fitfulness and inconstancy; but the universe exhibits everywhere fixed laws, producing the most perfect regularity and uniformity. Chance has no purpose, no end to accomplish, and employs no means—everything is isolated, and operates at random; but the universe is replete with design and adaptation: nothing is isolated—everything, great and small, everything in the infinite multitude of objects which exist, is a part of one great system of means and ends. Chance, which cannot contrive for the present, cannot make any prospective arrangements for the future; but every part of Nature is full of anticipative labours. This order, system, law, constancy, universal adaptation, and anticipation, pervade not only the present and past history which chronicles the period of Mosaic times, but equally so those vast geological cycles which belong to the remotest ages of our planet; and this harmony, system, and rule, apply not only to those masses called worlds, but to all beings therein, and to all atoms composing them, and to all those ethereal elements which escape both the eye and the microscope, and can be examined only by chemical analysis. Thus, chance has no place in creation.

Even Mirabaud is compelled to repudiate the doctrine of

chance. He says: "Nature is not a blind cause; nothing that she does would ever be considered fortuitous by him who should understand her mode of action, who had a knowledge of her resources, who was intelligent in her ways."* Again he affirms, "Chance is a word devoid of sense, which furnishes no substantive idea; at least, it indicates only the ignorance of its employers."† "Never, we are informed, will it be possible to arrive at the formation of a poem such as the 'Iliad,' by means of letters thrown together promiscuously, or combined at random. We agree to it without hesitation."‡ It is important to find these concessions uttered by a professed atheist, especially in a work avowedly designed to disprove the being of a God. Still more striking is the following statement by this author at the close of his argument against the doctrine of chance: "From this it will be obvious, that nothing can be produced by chance; that no effect can exist without an adequate cause for its existence; that the one must ever be commensurate with the other."§ This admission is tantamount to a surrender of the whole controversy—it is all we contend for. It is an act of homage to truth, and subverts all the sophistry he elsewhere employs.

Cicero, appealing to the common sense of mankind, puts this subject in a forcible light. He asks: "Can anything be done by chance which has all the marks of design? Four dice may by chance turn up their aces; but, do you think that four hundred dice, when thrown by chance, will turn up four hundred aces? Colours, when thrown upon canvas without design, may have some resemblance to a human face, but do you think they could make a picture as beautiful as the Coan Venus? A hog, in turning up the ground with his nose, may make something in the form of the letter A; but do you think that a hog could describe, on the ground, the Andromache of Ennius? Carneades imagined that, in the stone quarries at Chios, he found in a stone that was split a representation of the head of

* "Système de la Nature," vol. ii., part. ii., chap. v.

† *Ibid.*

‡ *Ibid.*

§ *Ibid.*

a little Pan (or sylvan deity). I believe he might find a figure not unlike; but surely not such a one as you would say had been formed by an excellent sculptor like Scopas. The truth is, indeed, that chance never perfectly imitates design.* Thus, of old, a heathen could show the absurdity of supposing chance capable of producing a single object indicative of design; but modern discoveries in science have demonstrated the idea of chance, as the cause of the universe, to be a conception not only of an absurdity, but of an absolute impossibility.

If a man should say that all the theorems of Euclid had been constructed by accident, and not by a man; or that all the letters composing the volumes of poetry, history, science, and literature, in the Alexandrian library, or in all the libraries in the world, might have fallen into their orderly location by accident, he would not conceive an impossibility more gross and palpable, than the man who proposes chance as the author of universal order and harmony through all ages. The planetary motions themselves are so clearly indicative of a Creator, that La Place said respecting them, "It is infinity to unity, that this is not the effect of chance." And if the phenomena of the solar system alone, viewed astronomically, justified such an assertion from the great philosopher, the "infinity" becomes, in a manner, multiplied by endless infinities, when extended through all organized existence down to the molecular constitution of matter.

When Aristippus was shipwrecked on the Island of Rhodes, seeing accidentally a geometrical diagram drawn upon the sand,

* "Quidquam potest casu esse factum, quod omnes habet in se numeros veritatis? Quattuor tali jacti, casu Venereum efficiunt. Num etiam centum Venereos, si cecero talos jeceris, casu futuros putas? Adpersa temere pigmenta in tabula, oris lineamenta effingere possunt; num etiam Veneris Coae pulchritudinem effingi posse adpersione fortuita putas? Sus rostro si humi A litteram impresserit, num propterea suspicari poteris, Andromacham Ennii ab ea posse describi? Fingebat Carneades, in Chiorum lapicidinis saxo diffisso caput exstitisse Panisci. Credo aliquam non dissimilem figuram, sed certe non talem, ut eam factam a Scopa diceres. Sic enim profecto se res habet, ut nunquam perfecte veritatem casus imitetur." —Cicero, "*De Divinatione*," lib. i., cap. 13.

"Courage, my friends," said he; "here are traces of men."* The sight of one geometrical diagram was enough to evince the existence of an intelligent being as its author. "God geometrizes," says Plato; yet that philosopher saw but a page of the Divine problems compared with the number which modern science has laid before us, in the volume of the Creator's operations—a number which cannot be numbered. From the petal of a flower to congregated worlds, and from congregated worlds down to the minutest atom of ancient granite which the crystallographer and chemist have examined, geometrical figures and mathematical proportions obtain, indicating the mind and the hand of Infinite intelligence. No mind capable of appreciating an argument can resist the clearness and the force of evidence which Nature everywhere furnishes against the possibility of chance. An interesting illustration of the effects of this evidence upon the mind of a sceptic is graphically related by himself:—"Some years ago, I had the misfortune to meet with the fallacies of Hume on the subject of causation. His specious sophistries shook the faith of my reason as to the being of a God, but could not overcome the repugnance of my heart to a negation so monstrous, and consequently left that infinite, restless craving for some point of fixed repose, which atheism not only cannot give, but absolutely and madly disaffirms.

"One beautiful evening in May, I was reading, by the light of a setting sun, my favourite Plato. I was seated on the grass, interwoven with golden blooms, immediately on the crystal Colorado of Texas. Dim, in the distant west, arose, with smoky outlines, massy and irregular, the blue cones of an offshoot of the Rocky Mountains.

"I was perusing one of the academician's most starry dreams. It laid fast hold of my fancy, without exciting my faith. I wept to think it could not be true. At length I came to that startling sentence, '*God geometrizes.*' 'Vain reverie!' I exclaimed, as I cast the volume at my feet. It fell close by a

* "Diog. Laert. in Aristip. Vitruv.," præfat., l. vi.

beautiful little flower, that looked fresh and bright, as if it had just fallen from the bosom of a rainbow. I broke it from its silvery stem, and began to examine its structure. Its stamens were five in number; its calyx had five parts; its delicate coral base, five, parting with rays, expanding like the rays of a Texas star. This combination of five in the same blossom appeared to me very singular. I had never thought on such a subject before. The last sentence I had just read in the page of the pupil of Socrates was ringing in my ears—'God geometrizes.' There was the text, written long centuries ago; and here this little flower, in the remote wilderness of the West, furnished the commentary. There suddenly passed, as it were, before my eyes a faint flash of light—I felt my heart leap in my bosom. The enigma of the universe was opened. Swift as thought, I calculated the chances against the production of those three equations of five in only one flower, by any principle devoid of reason to perceive number. I found that there was one hundred and twenty-five chances against such a supposition. I extended the calculation to two flowers by squaring the sums last mentioned. The chances amounted to the large sum of fifteen thousand six hundred and twenty-five. I cast my eyes around the forest: the old woods were literally alive with those golden blooms, where countless bees were humming, and butterflies sipping honey-dews.

"I will not attempt to describe my feelings. My soul became a tumult of radiant thoughts. I took up my beloved Plato from the grass, where I had tossed him in a fit of despair. Again and again I pressed him to my bosom, with a clasp tender as a mother's around the neck of her sleeping child. I kissed the book and the blossom, alternately bedewing them both with tears of joy. In my wild enthusiasm I called to the little birds on the green boughs, trilling their cheery farewells to departing day—'Sing on, sunny birds; sing on, sweet minstrels! Lo! ye and I have a God.'"

The individual who thus describes the process of his conviction was a man of education, a scholar, a mathematician, a skilful reasoner—one who could detect a sophism, and carefully

weigh an argument. But the geometrical argument presented by the petals of a flower is one which runs through the universe, multiplied by every organized substance, and even the atomic particles which constitute the crystalline rocks, and all chemical combinations, until the numbers run into infinities. Every animal and vegetable, every star in the firmament, and daisy in the wilderness—every constellation above, every particle of sand below, and every floating atom in the universe, declares chance an impossibility as well as an absurdity, and proclaims a creating and presiding Power.

CHAPTER VII.

NECESSITY NOT ADEQUATE TO THE PRODUCTION OF THE UNIVERSE.

THE theory of necessity is one of the most ancient forms of atheism, and one to which its advocates have tenaciously clung; for while it professed to exclude a Deity, it divested human actions of their moral complexion, and eased the conscience of the burden of all responsibility.

Logically considered, the theory is scarcely worthy of a serious refutation; but it may be useful to expose the flimsy pretexts and shallow sophisms which infidelity employs to uphold its baseless fabric, and so present another example of the manner in which some, professing to be the enlightened sons of reason and philosophy, can dispense with demonstration when arguing against religion, and be content with the most extravagant hypothesis.

1. *Atheistic necessity is a mere mental abstraction.*

We may properly demand, What is this necessity? When it is assumed to be so important as to dispense with a creating energy, and account for the existence of the universe, we think it desirable to ascertain, if possible, what it is. Is it a cause, or is it an effect? If a cause, it must be an absolute and inde-

pendent one; and it must irresistibly exert a controlling, determining power. But such a power implies an agent; and an agent to exercise this absolute power over all Nature, must be distinct from Nature and superior to it. To admit this is to surrender atheism at once.

If it be said that necessity is an effect, we reply, Then it must be caused by something; and that cause cannot be Nature itself, for Nature itself is said to be under the dominion of this necessity. If so, the cause must be distinct from Nature, and superior to it; and this is to admit the existence of a cause somewhere superior to both Nature and necessity too; and this again is to surrender atheism.

If it be said that this necessity is neither cause nor effect, we reply, Then it is nothing but a mental abstraction—it can have no influence over Nature. Thus an atheistic necessity, on examination, fades away into a nonentity—a mere phantom of the imagination.

2. *Atheistic necessity has no ground as a proposition.*

If it be said that necessity means that the present order and constitution of Nature could not be otherwise than as they are, we confess we can still see no alternative but one of the logical results already stated; for are we not entitled to ask, Why was it that Nature could not be otherwise than as it is?—what was it that hindered? If anything hindered, that hinderer must be a cause; and if nothing hindered, then Nature might have been different from what it is; and if Nature might have been different from what it is, there could be no necessity absolutely controlling its destiny.

Thus necessity, in this view, becomes a phantom of the imagination; it has no foundation. Mirabaud, while contending for the theory of necessity, admits that it has no proof. He says, "Nature acts and exists necessarily: all that she contains necessarily conspires to perpetuate her active existence. In point of fact, we cannot go beyond this aphorism—**MATTER ACTS BECAUSE IT EXISTS, AND EXISTS TO ACT.** If it be inquired how or why matter exists? we answer, we know not."* That

* Mirabaud's "Système de la Nature," tom. i., part. i., chap. iv.

is, he contends that matter exists necessarily, but yet he admits it has no proof; he propounds it for our belief, but tells us he can give no reason for it. If this is not to believe without reason, what is it? and if this be not the credulity of unbelief, what is it? Yet this is Atheism!

In other parts, however, of his work this author seems to think that the *order* and *constancy* of Nature argue its necessity. It is no small evidence of the folly of atheism that its arguments are suicidal; it seeks to reach the same conclusion by opposite arguments—arguments which mutually destroy each other. Thus, while at one time it ascribes the phenomena of the universe to *chance*, at another time it ascribes the same phenomena to *necessity*. No two arguments can be more antagonistic to each other than chance and necessity; for while chance assumes a state of chaotic disorder, the pretext of necessity is assumed on the universal prevalence of *order*, *constancy*, and *uniformity*. This subterfuge may, however, be disposed of in various ways.

3. If this necessity exists, it must be in the original particles of matter; but the existence of matter itself was not absolutely necessary. The Atheist himself admits that it is possible to conceive matter not to have existed at all; and what may thus be conceived of is a *contingency*, not a necessity; and what is itself, in its very nature, a contingency, can never be made the foundation of an argument for necessity. The argument, therefore, is unsound from its foundation. But if matter were admitted to be of necessary existence, still the argument for necessity, as the cause of the orderly arrangement and constitution of the universe, is false; for,

4. If the present state of the universe be by absolute necessity, then must this state have been eternal. But we have before demonstrated that it had a beginning, and on this ground, both necessity of existence and necessity of operation fall to the ground.

5. If the existence of the universe as it is be by absolute necessity, then must it be *unchangeable*; but facts already adduced abundantly show that it *has* changed, that it *is* now changing every moment, and that it will *continue* to change

hereafter, and ultimately be destroyed. If it be said that the changes of the universe are themselves necessary, we reply, this is a plain contradiction; for if the laws themselves are necessary, and therefore eternal, they must eternally have produced the *same* effects they do now, and must continue to produce the same effects through all eternity to come. Uniformity and immutability are essentially included in the idea of an eternal physical necessity. The existence, therefore, of change in every part of Nature, and in all ages of its history, contradicts the notion of immutability, and overturns the notion of necessity.

Look at these diverse theories in whatever aspect we may, the absurdities, the contradictions, and impossibilities they involve, meet us at every step. In our argument we have given them the advantage of every possible supposition, and yet we find they cannot be sustained. As Dr. Bentley observes, "Though universal matter should have endured from everlasting, divided into infinite particles, in the Epicurean way, and though motion should have been coeval and coeternal with it, yet those particles or atoms could never of themselves, by omnifarious kinds of motion, whether fortuitous or mechanical, have fallen or have been disposed into this or a like visible system;" but this has been established by myriads of facts, and volumes of evidence which the eye or mind of Bentley never knew.

CHAPTER VIII.

IF THE UNIVERSE BE AN EFFECT, AND NO ADEQUATE CAUSE OF ITS EXISTENCE CAN BE FOUND IN NATURE ITSELF, NOR IN CHANCE, NOR IN NECESSITY, IT FOLLOWS THAT THE CAUSE MUST BE SOMETHING DISTINCT FROM NATURE, FROM CHANCE, AND FROM NECESSITY, OR IN OTHER WORDS, THERE MUST BE A SELF-EXISTENT CREATOR.

THIS proposition is grounded upon the second principle laid down in our category of principles, that "every effect must have

a cause, and the cause must be adequate to the effect." Seeing, then, that the universe has had a beginning, we are compelled to assign its existence to *some* cause. We cannot assign that cause to matter or Nature itself, for matter has been shown to be not eternal, and if eternal, yet not adequate to the production of the universe. We cannot assign the universe to chance or necessity, for we have proved that they are not adequate to its production. The cause, therefore, must be distinct from Nature, or chance, or necessity; and if the cause be distinct from them, it must be itself uncaused and unoriginated. It must be some self-existent and eternal being. Self-existent he must be, for, existing before all things, he could not derive his existence from anything. Eternal he must be, because that which is self-existent could never have had a beginning. Even the atheist will hardly surpass all his other absurdities by contending that God created himself; and unless he can do this he must admit the Creator to be eternal. This Being, then, is the author of all things; the creator of matter by bringing it into existence; the great architect of all worlds, and the originator of all animated existence. This is the Being whom we denominate God.

There is no avoiding this conclusion. It is in vain for Buffon to tell us, that "to ascend higher than visible causes, is to lose ourselves in the regions of fancy;" and equally in vain for Mirabaud to tell us, that "to trace the origin of things is for ever to fall back upon difficulties." The difficulties are with those who deny a first cause, not with those who admit it. It is they that "lose themselves in the regions of fancy," who refuse to reason on this subject as they reason on all others; who reject evidence when it is offered, and surrender themselves to conjecture when proof is at hand; who leave the sound process of induction, and adopt groundless hypothesis for argument. Man from the very constitution of his mind must admit a cause for every effect, and it is the highest office of philosophy to ascertain those causes when they are to be found; and when the faculties of sense cannot perceive, it is the prerogative of reason to inquire and to determine, according to the light that can be had. The philosopher does this in every department of science, and the

atheist himself does this in all other departments but one—the knowledge of God. To be consistent with ourselves, to evince a sincere and thorough love of truth, we cannot exclude the Great Cause of causes from our investigations, nor the evidence it claims to our rational belief. That there is such a cause we have proved, and we must now inquire, “Who is he? and what is his name?” An answer to this important inquiry must be attempted in the ensuing chapters.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GREAT CAUSE OF ALL THINGS MUST BE AN INTELLIGENT BEING, BECAUSE THE UNIVERSE BEARS THE IMPRESS OF INTELLIGENCE.

OUR preceding arguments have carried us to the logical necessity of admitting the existence of some Being distinct from matter, as the author of the universe. Our present proposition is—that this author is an Intelligent Being. This truth rationally springs from the application of the second proposition in our category of principles, namely :—“That while every effect must have a cause, that cause must be adequate to the effect.” An effect may be inferior to the cause, it may be infinitely inferior in its properties, but a cause can never be inferior to the effect. Hence it follows, that the existence of life in the creature demonstrates the existence of life in the Creator; and the existence of intelligence in the creature, and the various manifestations of design in the works of creation, demonstrate the existence of intelligence in the Creator.

Mirabaud asserts that “the faculty called intelligence consists in a capability to act in conformity to a known end in the being to whom it is attributed.”* We accept this definition, and hence it follows, that whatever proofs there be of intelligence in the construction, the laws, and operations of Nature,

* “Système de la Nature,” tom. i., part i., chap. v.

they are so many evidences both of the existence and intelligence of a creating cause. Indeed, the evidences of intelligence in Nature constitute of themselves a moral demonstration of a Creator, so that here we might begin *de novo*, and with Socrates, Paley, Tucker, Chalmers, and others, argue from the evidences of design for the existence of God. In our having started from another point, in having begun our evidence at an earlier period, we neither discard nor undervalue this course of argument. On the contrary, we regard it as conclusive and triumphant of itself, even were the evidence we have previously adduced from other sources either not available or inconclusive. In fact, it comes in now as a supplementary argument to complete our demonstration; for it will be seen that whatever proves the intelligence of a Divine Being, necessarily proves his existence and personality.

SECTION I.—PROOFS OF INTELLIGENCE.

INTELLIGENCE consists in a capability to act in conformity to a known end. Therefore, whatever manifestations there are in Nature, of operations directed to a known end, those manifestations are evidences of intelligence. In pursuing this argument, we would regard Nature as we regard any work of art. Both are effects, and both are effects produced by a cause adequate to their production. Take the structure of a mansion and compare it with the construction of the universe. One has said, "Every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God." In the present advanced state of science, the latter proposition has, we think, the clearness and force of a demonstrative truth, as well as the former. In the construction of a house, there is evidence of an intelligent architect, and in the construction of the universe there is evidence, we maintain, of the existence of an intelligent mind; the difference being only in this—that the evidence in the latter case is indefinitely multiplied, and the character of the mind is infinitely superior.

It is felt to be as much an intellectual necessity to ascribe

the manifestations of design to a *designing mind*, as it is to ascribe any effect to some cause. Even the atheist uniformly does this when speaking of the works of art; and if he refuse to refer the works of Nature to a designing mind, he contradicts himself. Yet this inconsistency is defended by the subtle and sophistical Hume. This apostle of infidelity argues that our mental habit of referring any work of art to an artist, is the result of observation and experience; but that the same cannot be pleaded respecting the works of Nature: that we have *seen* a man in the act of constructing a house, but we have *never seen* a Deity engaged in the construction of a world; and, therefore, though it is logical to ascribe a building to man, we have no right to ascribe the universe to a God. We give his own words: "If we see a house, we conclude, with the greatest certainty, that it had an architect or builder, because this is precisely that species of effect which we have experienced to proceed from that species of cause. But, surely, you will not affirm that the universe bears such a resemblance to a house, that we can, with the same certainty, infer a similar cause, or that the analogy is here entire and perfect. The dissimilitude is so striking, that the utmost you can here pretend to is a guess, a conjecture, a presumption, concerning a similar cause; and how that pretension will be received in the world, I leave you to consider." Again, he asks: "Can you pretend to show any such similarity between the fabric of a house and the generation of a universe? Have you ever seen Nature in any such situation as resembles the first arrangement of the elements? Have worlds ever been formed under your own eye? And have you had leisure to observe the whole process of the phenomena, from the first appearance of order to its final consummation? If you have, then cite your experience and deliver your theory."*

This sophism, however ingenious, is very transparent, and susceptible of an easy refutation.

1. It has already been demonstrated that the universe cannot spring from matter and its laws, but must have an author—

* Hume's "Dialogues concerning Natural Religion."

a Creator. This question is settled, and therefore Hume's objection is, in the present state of science, irrelevant and obsolete. We need not refer to the marks of intelligence to prove the *existence* of a Creator, for that has already been effected by another process of argument; but we refer to the marks of intelligence specially to prove the character of the Creator. It being established that the works of Nature *have* an author, it follows that, so far as those works exhibit intelligence, they exhibit the intelligence of their author, just as the works of an architect, an engineer, a mathematician, or a writer, exhibit the intelligence of their respective authors. Creation is God's work, and exhibits his mental properties.

2. The sophism of Hume may be refuted also from our own experience. The sum of his objection has been already stated, and it is this—that we cannot reasonably conclude the universe to have an intelligent author, because we did not see him in the act of creating it! To sustain this, he assumes that we are not to refer any work of art to man, unless either we have *seen* it produced by man, or else the work has a most *intimate resemblance* to such as we have seen produced by man. Now, our experience contradicts this absurdity every day. In the vast variety of objects of art and manufacture which are presented to our notice, there is as great a disparity in shape, character, kind, material, and use, as can well be conceived; and of these, how few people have *seen* all such fabricated by man! And yet, who, among all the millions of our race, would hesitate to pronounce them all the work of man? A modern volume printed in English characters, and a vellum scroll written in Hebrew, are very dissimilar; yet, who that understands them would deny that each was the work of man? Surely no one except Mr. Hume and his disciples, who, it seems, would rather practise this absurdity than allow Nature to have a Divine author. In the construction of a ship and a chronometer, of a steam-engine and a theodolite, of a telescope and an electric telegraph, there is sufficient diversity; and, though comparatively few persons have seen any of them constructed, there is not a sensible man (indeed, there is not an atheist) on the sur-

face of the earth, who could be found to maintain that either one or the other was not the work of man. There must be a reason for this fact. If every work of art is thus ascribed to man, there must be some common ground or reason for it. The reason is simply the one which is embodied in our second axiom—"That every effect must have a cause, and every cause must be *adequate* to the effect." So, then, if the effect exhibit contrivance, it must have a contriver; and if it exhibit design, it must have a designing mind for its author.

3. The mental habit—nay, the intellectual necessity—of inferring an intelligent author from the manifestation of design in any work of art or manufacture, is so uniform in its operation, that the *measure* or *degree* of a man's intelligence is estimated by his productions. It is thus we judge of the degree of the genius and mental cultivation of an individual or a nation. Thus, if a traveller find the ruins of an African village, consisting of rude and comfortless huts, he determines that its inhabitants were in a low state of civilization; but if he discover the ruins of an ancient city—as Pompeii, or Herculaneum, or Nineveh, with numerous fragments of beautiful pillars, temples, palaces, and monuments of elaborate structure—he infers that its inhabitants were a polished and highly cultivated people. On the same principle, we assign a higher order of intelligence to the original inventor of a science, than to him who merely comprehends it when explained to him. There is intelligence necessary even to *understand* the various parts, relations, and uses of a complicated machine; but there was more intelligence required for its *origination*. There is no ordinary intelligence required to understand all the problems and theorems of Euclid; but a far higher faculty is displayed in originating those problems and theorems with their demonstrations. There is intelligence—and, indeed, a high order of intelligence—requisite to understand the discoveries which some men have made in astronomy; but a still higher order of intelligence is justly conceded to those gifted minds who have pierced into the hidden principles and truths, and led their contemporaries and successors into untrodden paths of scientific discovery. Yet there is no truth in

philosophy discovered by man but what previously existed in Nature. All man's knowledge is borrowed—there is no originality here. The first discoverer of any truth in Nature gets it but at second hand. When, by superior penetration, he makes some magnificent discoveries in science, the fact implies that there is another mind vastly wiser than his own, whose skill had previously originated the truths he has discovered, and which had been employing those truths for ages in universal Nature, and working out great practical results from their application. Nature is always man's instructor, and, however far his mind may proceed in receiving her lessons, ultimate facts are constantly reminding him that he is only on the margin of the vast ocean of truth, which lies still unexplored before him; and all that truth implies the existence of a mind in which the whole was originally preconceived.

4. All the sciences are only so many classifications of great truths existing in Nature, and existing there because previously conceived in the mind of the great Author of Nature. All human arts are only imperfect imitations of Nature's operations, and these operations are all the skilful workings of a Divine mind. When an inquisitive savage comes to see and inquire into some complicated work of art, he is like a philosopher who comes to inquire into the laws and mechanism of the universe. Both may perceive many contrivances, adaptations, relations, dependencies, connections, uses, &c., and be enchanted with their discoveries; but neither the one nor the other can claim the character of inventor; both are studying the plans and ideas which originated in another mind distinct from, and superior to, their own.

5. Astronomy is the science which unfolds the laws and revolutions of the heavenly bodies, so far as they are known by man. We speak of Isaac Newton as possessing prodigious intellect, because of the profound discoveries recorded in his "*Principia*;" but if all the elaborate calculations, and all the discoveries which astronomy involves in its present advanced state, had been made by Newton alone, how much more exalted the view we should have entertained respecting his intelligence!

Yet, in all this, he would only have touched the surface of the subject, and every truth he *had* discovered belonged to an immense system of truths, which had been conceived and perfected myriads of ages before the astronomer was born; and not only conceived, but in practical and harmonious operation. Can we, then, attribute intelligence to the scientific discoverer of the solar system, and deny it to the sole *Inventor* and *Fabricator* of the wondrous universe!

6. The science of chemistry reveals to us some of the laws and properties of matter, with the principles of its affinities, attractions, repulsions, combinations, &c.; and every fresh discovery therein entitles its author to our admiration, and often to our gratitude. Now, if all the discoveries which have been made in chemistry had been the result of one man's investigations, how should we have stood amazed at his skill and penetration! Yet he would have discovered only a few principles out of an almost infinite number which had previously existed in the mind of the great Author of Nature, and principles which ages ago he had brought into practical operation in the vast and ever active laboratory of Nature.

7. The science of anatomy unfolds the structure and organization of animal bodies, exhibiting the multifarious functions and adaptations of the animal system. Here, and especially in the human frame, is a most elaborate and complicated piece of mechanism; presenting an economy of means, adaptations, and uses, so curiously and yet so perfectly developed, that volumes would not exhaust the manifestations of contrivance and design. The admirable structure of the person, the symmetry and utility of its members, the gracefulness and dignity of its motions, the elastic and transparent cuticle which covers the whole, the beauty of the complexion, and the minute adaptation of all our vessels and organs to the various purposes of life, health, and activity, present a wonderful display of intelligence in the mind of the Creator. If, as the celebrated Howe supposes, for the sake of illustration, the external covering and muscular fibre of the human body were made of some very transparent substance, flexible, but clear as crystal, rendering visible all the internal

mechanism of the system, so that we could clearly perceive the situation, order, offices, and operations of all the vessels and organs; if we could see the circulation of the blood flowing from the heart as from a fountain, through the arteries and veins, spreading themselves like network over every part of the body; if we could see each little valve open and shut to let in and out the purple stream as it flows from one vessel to another, and the apparatus for converting the food into chyle, and the chyle into blood, and the blood itself to be replenished with oxygen to renew its vital power, and administer nourishment to the whole system; if we could discern the curious artifice of the brain, its elaborate organic structure, its mysterious connection with the organs of sensation, its modes of generating, filtering, and refining those spirituous fluids which are diffused through the nervous system; could we behold the complicated ramifications of the nerves, starting in pairs from the spinal marrow, and extending their delicate texture over the whole frame; could we, through the same transparent medium, perceive the admirable adjustment of the bony structure, with its four or five hundred parts, based on fulcra, and so nicely articulated by joints and hinges, that flexibility and strength, ease and variety of motion, are combined, and see the whole in action; could we thus have a clear and perfect view of the entire organism of the human frame, with all its diversified parts in operation, we should be filled with amazement, and exclaim, How fearfully and wonderfully am I made!

It was the study of the human system which converted the famous Galen from the Epicurean system in which he had been educated, and which induced him to write a book on the subject, with a view to convince others that man must be the work of an intelligent Creator. Geological discovery shows the recent origin of man, and natural history proves that his existence was derived from no inferior species, but immediately created. Anatomy as clearly proves that his Creator was an intelligent being. To the sculptor who chisels the rough block of marble into the human shape, we award talent and skill; though the most finished marble of Phidias is only a cold and

external resemblance to man, and without either motion, mechanism, or life. To the painter who makes the canvas blush with the human form divine, we award talent and skill, though his work "is but the shadow of a man's skin." On what principle, then, can we deny intelligence to that Being who has built up the human fabric, with all its internal mechanism, as well as its external beauty, and to these admirable contrivances added the mysterious attributes of life, sensation, thought, and voluntary action? If a man but imitate a work of art we call him ingenious; if he imitate a work of Nature we call him more ingenious; but as the works of Nature exhibit marks of contrivance and skill infinitely surpassing the most wonderful productions of art, so the skill of their Author must be incomparably greater. When some laborious student of Nature makes some fresh discovery in the use or adaptation of any vessel or organ in the human frame, we invariably regard it as an evidence of his sagacity. When Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood, mankind did homage to his intellect, and his fame is handed down to posterity. But if it required superior intellect to *discover* the existing phenomenon, what intellect was required to originate it? To accede intelligence to the discoverer and not to the originator, is to belie our own judgment. It is a piece of folly and perversion not equalled by the man who should extol the sagacity of a savage for finding out the mainspring of a chronometer, but deny the intelligence of the man who first invented that time-telling machine.

8. The science of optics reveals the laws and properties of light, and the adaptation of the eye to this element. At every step we take in this science, proofs of design crowd upon us. In this we have to consider the properties of light—the inconceivable minuteness of its particles, that while its impulses do not injure the delicate mechanism of the organ of sight, they may make every part of the surface of an object visible through so small an instrument—the action of light in straight lines, and its power of reflection, refraction, divergence, and convergence, all of which are determined strictly on mathematical principles. Then there is the wonderful structure of the little organ made

to be the instrument of vision. Perception arises from the image of an object being painted on the retina or expanded nerve at the back part of the eye, and the organization is formed to produce this effect by pencils of light. The humours of the eye, therefore, are a combination of lenses of different refracting powers, and the focal distance is mathematically adjusted to the convergency of the rays, on the spot where the image is to be formed. Is there not intelligence in the means and adaptations here employed? Is there not an object contemplated, a set of means adjusted to that object, and the object accomplished? Is there anything of human contrivance more artificial? The laws of physics, mechanics, and mathematics are made to operate conjointly in the organization of the eye, so that we have the most exquisite adaptation of the instrument to the element of vision; and had either the properties of light or the structure of the eye been different, the sense of vision could not have been enjoyed. Even a slight depression or a convexity of the cornea of the eye, beyond what the focal distance of the retina requires, would result in imperfect vision. The telescope is formed on the same principles as the human eye. As Paley observes, "The end is the same and the means are the same; the purpose in both is alike. The lenses of the telescope and the humours of the eye bear a complete resemblance to one another in their figure, their position, and in their power over the rays of light, namely, in bringing each pencil to a point at the right distance from the lens—that is, at the exact place where the membrane is spread out to receive it." If the construction of the telescope evince contrivance and design—the evidences of intelligence—we cannot withhold that attribute from the Author of light and the Maker of an eye.*

* Helmholtz arrays a long list of indictments against the eye, and is bold enough to say that "If any optician sent him an instrument so full of defects, he would feel justified in sending it back to him with the severest censure." We plainly see the *animus* of these bold words. Yet this irreverent and ungrateful man does not show his independence of his Maker by plucking out his own eyes, and making a better pair for himself! We regret to find that Dr. Tindall in his Lectures delivered in America on

Nor should it be forgotten, that the perfection of the telescope was accomplished by copying the art displayed in the mechanism of the eye. This is a fact of modern history. The refracting telescope, in the days of Newton, had the imperfection of presenting objects tinged with different colours, as if viewed through a prism—an effect arising from a diversity in the refractive properties of different coloured rays; and Newton despaired of the possibility of this imperfection being corrected in the refracting telescope. Now this exigency had been met from the beginning, in the construction of the eye, by the use of different humours of diversified refracting properties; and, in about two years after Newton's death, an individual of the name of Hall, while studying the mechanism of the human eye, was led to suppose that telescopes might be improved by a combination of lenses of different refractive powers, corresponding to the different humours composing the lenses of the eye. This he actually accomplished; and, subsequently, the discovery was brought to perfection by Dollond and other ingenious artisans. Every one will admit the intelligence which elicited the discovery that perfected the telescope; but it was borrowed from an original which a prior intelligence had conceived and constructed.

If any one wish for a more familiar illustration, let him take that of a glass window. He will not dispute that it was made to see *through*; how, then, can he deny that the eye was made to see *with*? If he allow design and intelligence to the maker of the window, how can he deny them to the Maker of an eye?

Proofs of contrivance, and of consequent intelligence, displayed in the diminutive organ of vision, are almost numberless. The exquisite mechanism for the dilatation and contraction of the pupil; the socket embedded in fat, and lubricated with

Light, and published also in his volume on Light, quotes these God-insulting words of Helmholtz, and that without a word of disapproval.* Darwin also quotes some of the indictments of Helmholtz without a word of disapproval.†

* Tindall on "Light," p. 9.

† "Origin of Species," p. 163.

moisture, to give ease to the globe which is placed therein ; the muscles, so admirably adapted for adjusting the position of the eye towards its object, and securing ease and rapidity of motion ; the eyelid, furnished with its lash to protect the delicate organ ; the position of the eyes, in an elevated part of the body, most convenient for sight, and giving beauty, vivacity, and expression to the countenance ; the symmetry, which renders both eyes alike in the length of their foci and the angle of vision, and gives simultaneous action to both, so that objects are not seen double or in different situations at the same moment—all these, and a multitude of other arrangements, contrivances, and adaptations, combine to excite our wonder. In the eyes of fishes there is an adjustment to correspond with the denser medium through which the light passes ; and, in the eyes of birds, there are arrangements adapted to their mode of life.

When, for a moment, we reflect upon the fact that, without that bright little organ, called the eye, man, and all other animals, would have lived in absolute pitchy darkness, can we doubt that the eye was formed with a purpose to secure the object of vision ? When we reflect, too, that without a strictly mathematical adaptation of the eye, in all its parts, to the properties of light, vision could not have been realized, can we doubt that an adaptation so perfectly realizing that purpose is the result of contrivance ? And when we thus see a complicated contrivance realizing a purpose, can we doubt the contriver to be an intelligent Being ?

9. The same argument applies to all the other senses. Without the organism of the ear, every animal must have been deaf ; no sound of harmony, no dulcet tones of Nature or friendship, could have been heard. Without the organs of hearing and seeing, universal silence would have been the associate of universal darkness. When we find an organ formed to convey sound, can we doubt that it was formed for a purpose ? and when we see an elaborate organization accomplishing that purpose, can we doubt a contriving mind ? When we remember that, without any of the senses, man could have had no communication with the external world, and when we see a

system of diversified apparatus formed to give him that communication, enabling him to see, hear, taste, smell, and feel, and thus become conversant with the existence and properties of the universe, we cannot doubt that this admirable adaptation sprang from a purpose, and that the contrivance which so perfectly adapted the organization to the purpose was, emphatically, an intelligent mind.

10. All the sciences are only so many systems, or classifications of truths, and which propose to expound the principles and laws of Nature ; and all the arts are so many imitations of the operations of Nature. It has taken the human family near six thousand years to bring science and art to their present state of perfection. We have here the collective result of the human intellect ; we have here the aggregate development of mind, after operating in millions of individuals, and through so many generations. If all this had been the result of *one* mind, how we should have revered his intellectual powers ! His penetration, his sagacity, his powers of analysis, of combination, of abstraction, and of invention—his profound knowledge of mathematics, and mechanics, and all the sciences, would have commanded universal applause and wonder. If any one said he had no intellect at all, it would be a certain proof that the calumniator was mad ; for everywhere his word would be an oracle, his name be mentioned with admiration, and statues be erected to his genius in every part of the world ; yet this prodigious mind, after all, would have been merely studying the designs and operations of another mind infinitely surpassing his own. He is not an original, but a copyist ; his knowledge is merely the knowledge of what another has done ; his arts and inventions are merely imperfect imitations of the works of another. If he hit upon an invention, which is not entirely copied from Nature, by a little further inquiry he will find that, however complicated his machine, it is vastly surpassed by contrivances around him in Nature. Skilful as he may be in chemistry, he is not able either to make one particle of matter, or to add one new property to matter already made, or force the particles into a chemical combination contrary to their original

affinities. Practised as he may be in mechanics, there are myriads of operations which he vainly tries to imitate. He sees the theory of continual motion exemplified in the solar system, and in a thousand organized structures, but *he* cannot produce it. If he understands many things in the universe, there are countless numbers he cannot understand. In every branch of science he is perpetually coming to ultimate facts, which circumscribe his knowledge and mock his inquiries. If he ask, what is life? he cannot tell; what is matter? he cannot answer; or what is spirit? he is perplexed. A blade of grass has mysteries he cannot explore, and an atom of dust is too profound a subject for him fully to explain. But why? Because the intellect which formed these objects, and gave them laws, so far surpasses his own. To deny intelligence, therefore, to the Creator, is to surpass the madness of one who should affirm that there is no intellect in all the sciences man ever knew, or in all the arts he ever practised.

SECTION II.—INSTINCT A PROOF OF DIVINE INTELLIGENCE.

THERE are three classes of actions essentially distinct from each other, and referrible to separate causes—mechanical, rational, and instinctive. *Mechanical* actions are those of the automaton, the clock, or the steam-engine, arising not from any spontaneous or self-determining impulse, but from mere mechanism. *Rational* actions are those proceeding from the combined exercise of the understanding, judgment, and will, in which the mind employs definite means to attain a given result. *Instinctive* actions are distinguished from the former by their proceeding from a propensity, which prompts to a course of action, prior to experience, and independent of instruction. Such, in the newborn infant, and indeed in the young of all mammalian animals, is the act of hunting out for its mother's milky food, and of sucking with a perfection which never can be acquired in subsequent life; such, among insects, is the formation of the exquisite decoy lines of the spider, and the nice masonry of the

bee and of the white ant; and such is the remarkable construction of habitations by the beavers.

Now, in the results of instinct, we have a multitude of effects exhibiting a presiding intelligence as resident somewhere, either in the animals themselves, or in some other being, distinct from the animals. Some of the evidences of intelligence may be specified.

1. All the operations of instinct are directed to specific results. We never witness these instinctive operations for any continued period, but we observe them tending towards an end, and we never persevere in our observations to the consummation of the animal's work, but we see the end successfully accomplished. No architect proceeds more systematically, and none ever succeeds more completely in his work, than the bee in the construction of its cell, the bird in the building of its nest, and the beaver in forming its habitation. Thus, there is somewhere a mind contemplating a given result, an intelligence which understands the relation between cause and effect, and the adaptation of things to produce the given result.

2. In the operations of instinct we have the manifestations of an intelligence comprising a complete and perfect knowledge of all things requisite to produce the effects contemplated, and combined with this intelligence we have skill for the execution of the object intended.

(a) There is clearly a knowledge of the physical properties of bodies. In the spider's web we see proof of a knowledge of the properties of that net-work to entangle prey. In the selection of strong materials for the outside of a bird's nest, and of wool, feathers, and moss for lining the inside, there is evinced a knowledge of the properties of one to strengthen, and of the other to give warmth. In the process of incubation there is a knowledge of the chemical properties of heat to evolve the principle of life in the egg. One insect deposits its eggs in the cabbage, and another in the willow, and these never change places. The willow caterpillar is never found in the cabbage, nor the cabbage caterpillar in the willow. Why? Because the food for the one is not adapted to the other. The parent insect

always selects the appropriate vegetable, and this selection involves a knowledge of the distinction between the properties of each, and of its adaptation for food to her progeny. The young of all mammalia hunt for their mother's teat as soon as they are born, which implies a knowledge somewhere of the properties of milk, and its adaptation to nourish the infant constitution. In the laying up of stores of food by the bee and the ant, in summer, there is a knowledge of approaching winter; and in making provision against its barrenness and cold, there is an anticipation of meteorological changes, and a knowledge of their effects upon Nature. Examples of this kind might be indefinitely multiplied, affording proofs of an unerring knowledge of the laws and properties of matter.

(b) In instinct there is evidently a knowledge of the dispositions and habits of other animals of a different nature and species. Thus the net of the spider implies a knowledge of the volatile and careless habits of the fly; and the location of the bird's nest in the most secret place, and its suspension on the most distant and inaccessible branches of a tree, are provisions against the predaceous habits of other animals.

(c) In the economy of some animals, if not in all, there is involved a knowledge not only of natural laws and their operation, but of mechanics and the higher branches of mathematics.

For the sake of illustration, we select the industrious bee, on which Dr. Reid has some pertinent remarks:—"Bees, it is well known, construct their combs with small cells on both sides, fit both for holding their store of honey and for rearing their young. There are only three possible figures of the cells, which can make them all equal and similar, without any useless interstices. These are the equilateral triangle, the square, and the regular hexagon.

"It is well known to mathematicians that there is not a fourth way possible in which a plane may be cut into little spaces that shall be equal, similar, and regular, without leaving any interstices. Of the three, the hexagon is the most proper, both for convenience and for strength. Bees, as if they knew

this, make their cells regular hexagons. Who taught them this principle in mathematics? As the combs have cells on both sides, the cells may either be exactly opposite, having partition against partition, or the bottom of each cell may rest upon the partition, between the cells on the other side, which will serve as a buttress to strengthen it. The last way is the best for strength; accordingly, the bottom of each cell rests against the point where three partitions meet on the other side, which gives it all the strength possible. Who taught the bee this principle in practical mechanics?

“The bottom of the cell may either be one plane, perpendicular to the side partitions, or it may be composed of several planes meeting in a solid angle in the middle point. It is only in one of these two ways that the cells can be similar, without losing room. And, for the same intention, the planes of which the bottom is composed—if there be more than one—must be three in number, and neither more nor fewer.

“It has been demonstrated that, by making the bottoms of the cells to consist of three planes meeting in a point, there is a saving of material and labour not very inconsiderable. The bees, as if acquainted with these principles of solid geometry, follow them most accurately; the bottom of each cell being composed of three planes, which make obtuse angles with the side partitions, and with one another, and meet in a point in the middle of the bottom; the three angles of this bottom being supported by three partitions on the other side of the comb, and the point of it by the common intersection of these three partitions. Whence did the bee learn this combined theorem of mathematical and mechanical truth?

“One instance more of the mathematical skill displayed in the structure of the honeycomb deserves to be mentioned. It is a curious mathematical problem, at what precise angle the three planes which compose the bottom of the cell ought to meet, in order to make the greatest possible saving of material and labour. This is one of those problems belonging to the higher parts of mathematics, which are called problems of *maxima* and *minima*. The celebrated Maclaurin resolved it by a

fluxionary calculation, which is to be found in the Transactions of the Royal Society of London, and determined precisely the angle required. Upon the most exact mensuration which the subject could admit, he afterwards found *that it is the very angle in which the three planes in the bottom of the cell of the honeycomb do actually meet.*" * This mathematical precision is uniform and universal. As Lord Brougham remarks in his admirable discourse, "The form of the cells is the same in every country, the proportions accurately alike, and the size the very same, to the fraction of a line, go where you will." Where did this little insect, the world over, learn to develop in practice these principles of mathematics ?

3. Conjoined with this intelligence of the materials of Nature, of its laws, and of abstruse mathematical and mechanical principles, we have the most consummate skill. Could any artisan construct a bird's nest with more neatness and perfection than the linnet—or build up a honeycomb with more order and regularity than the bee—or spin with more dexterity than the spider does his thread, or the silkworm its shining cocoon ? Whatever advantages man may have from the variety and perfection of his tools—from the line, the rule, the square, the plummet, and the wheel—he cannot excel the simple artificers of Nature in their mechanical operations.

COROLLARY.—The effects of intelligence are before us, and we require the cause ; or, in other words, we ask for the source of this intelligence and skill. By the establishment of our second axiom, we have shown "that every effect must have a cause, and that the cause must be *adequate* to the effect ;" and from the application of this principle we must now find a cause *adequate* to the effects produced before us. There are but two sources which can enter into our consideration, and these are to be found either in the animals themselves, or in their Creator. To suppose that this intelligence is possessed by the animals is absurd ; for this is to ascribe to them an intelligent nature far

* Reid "On the Intellectual Powers," vol. iii., essay iii., chap. ii., altered to suit this argument.

superior to man. It is to make birds, spiders, bees, and other insects, into profound philosophers, into mathematicians and mechanics of the highest and most perfect order; a notion which is contradicted by the most obvious proofs.

If the mathematics of the bee were understood by that diminutive creature, they must have been acquired; but this is contradicted by the fact that they are practised as perfectly by the young as by the old, and are practised without learning, without imitation, and without experience, and they are permanent in the species. If the intelligence displayed in instinctive operations resided in the animals themselves, the species would be able to give and receive instruction one from another; but this never takes place, even where their habits are similar in some respects. The bee borrows nothing from the ant, nor the ant from the bee; nor the younger progeny from their predecessors. Their whole economy is the same in all ages past, and simultaneously in all countries now; it is fixed and stereotyped in each species, from the first generation to the last. The bees of our day gather honey, and fabricate their cells, precisely in the same way as they did when Virgil celebrated their economy in his flowing numbers. If the required intelligence resided in the animals themselves, it would extend to a vast variety of other objects in Nature; for, as the sciences run one into another, it is impossible for any creature to be perfect in one without having some considerable acquaintance with others. But the inferior animals, however they excel in things which are instinctive, have not even that superficial knowledge of many other things with which children and savages are familiar, nor have they any capacity for acquiring it.

“Sir Joseph Banks had a tame beaver, which was allowed to range at liberty in a ditch about his grounds, and was, at all seasons, liberally supplied with food. One day, about the end of autumn, it was discovered in the ditch, very busily engaged in attempting to construct a dam, after the manner of its companions in a state of nature. This was evidently a blind impulse of its instinctive feelings; for a moment's exercise of the lowest degree of reflection must have shown it, that such labour,

under the circumstances in which it was placed, was altogether superfluous. A common quail was kept in a cage, and became quite tame and reconciled to its food. At the period of its natural migration it became exceedingly restless and sleepless; it beat its head against the cage in many vain efforts to escape; and, on examination, its skin was found several degrees above its usual temperature. A bee, which can fly homewards, one or two miles in a straight line, to its hive with extreme accuracy, if it happen to enter an open window in a room, will exhaust all its efforts in attempting to get out at the opposite window, which is closed down, but never pauses to think of retracing its flight a little way backwards, so as to fly out at the opening at which it had entered. We often observe a dog, when going to sleep on the floor, turns himself several times round before he lies down, and this is just one of the lingering instincts he has retained; while in his wild state he is accustomed thus to prepare his bed amid the tall grass or rushes. An acute observer of animal habits has remarked, that a jackdaw, which, for want of its usual place of abode, had, for a nest, made a choice of a rabbit-hole, was often sorely perplexed in what way to get the long sticks, of which its nest was to be formed, drawn within the narrow entrance. Again and again did it attempt to pull in the piece of stick, while it held it in the middle by its bill; and it was only after a series of vain efforts, that, by mere chance, it at last accomplished its object, by happening to seize it near one end instead of the centre. In this case, it appeared to the observer that the building instincts of this bird were complete and perfect within a certain range, but without the limits of this circle it had no deliberate foresight to guide its actions.* It is evident, therefore, that the intelligence exhibited in instinct is the intelligence of another, and not of the animals themselves.

This is the more obvious, from the fact, that in man—the creature endowed with a capacity for unlimited improvement—there is the least direction afforded by instinct. However

* "British Quarterly Review."

high the attainments of his ancestors, he is born without knowledge. No science is transmitted to him by nature. Left without tuition and cultivation, he neither knows nor practises mathematics, mechanics, nor physics. Instinct, which teaches even insects to act in accordance with the highest principles of geometry, architecture, and natural philosophy, leaves man a naked savage, without art, science, or the fitting mode of procuring them. Man has everything to learn, but the inferior animals are infallibly directed, and, therefore, guided by another Being of infinite intelligence.

It does not invalidate our argument to urge that, in many instances, the inferior tribes exhibit faint traces of *reason*; for the guidance of instinct does not necessarily transform them into mere machines. The conclusion for which we contend is this: that the intelligence, the foresight, the accurate knowledge of Nature, and of the sciences—the accomplished and infallible arts displayed in instinct—are not the creature's own, but belong to another; and this is too evident to be doubted by any rational mind.

Even in the economy of plants we behold a similar display of a presiding Intelligence. As examples: A strawberry offset, planted in a patch of sand, will send forth its runners in the direction in which the soil lies nearest. The cereal plants—wheat, oats, barley, and rye—are said to be transformable by certain modes of artificial treatment; but these are all grasses, existing under different forms; and no artificial effort of man, however strenuous and persevering, can carry them beyond their prescribed cycle as cereal grasses.* Here is variety, but limited within prescribed bounds, and the variety is ordained by an intelligence which provides for the welfare of man. A tree which requires much moisture, when planted in a dry soil, has been observed to send forth much the larger portion of its roots towards the nearest water. When a tree happens to grow from a seed on a wall, it has been noticed, on arriving at a certain size, to stop in its growth for a while, and send down a root to the

* "The First Man and his place in Creation," by Dr. Moore, pp. 304—6.

ground; and this being fixed in the soil, the tree resumes its growth in an upward direction. Darwin has bestowed much attention on the structure and economy of Insectivorous Plants, showing how these plants close their tentacula when an insect lights upon them, or when other substances touch that part of them. This information is curious, but not new; for Paley, in his *Natural Theology*, described the fact eighty years ago as the characteristic of the *Dionæa Muscipula*.* If this economy be for the defence of the plant, or partially for its sustenance, or for both, it evinces remarkable intelligence somewhere. But where does the intelligence reside? Not in the plant itself. It is not the author of its own organization, nor the inspirer of its own instincts; for that would imply that it devised and worked out a scheme for its own welfare before it existed! The intelligence that devised its wonderful structure and that directs its instincts is the attribute of that same wonderful Being who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. The grass called *phleum pratense*, or common cat's tail, when growing in pastures that are uniformly moist, has a *fibrous* root, for it is locally supplied with a sufficiency of water; but in dry situations its root acquires a bulbous form, and thus instinctively accommodates the plant with a natural reservoir.† It will not be pretended that these habits of accommodation in the plant result from intelligence or reasoning in the plant, neither can the instinctive economy of animals be referred to any reasoning process in themselves. There is in the economy of both a demonstration of intelligence, but it exists in another Being, distinct from, and infinitely superior to, both.

SUMMARY.—From the whole train of the foregoing reasoning it is obvious that all instinctive habits involve the existence somewhere of a most accurate knowledge of the laws and properties of matter—in some cases, a knowledge of the dispositions and habits of other animals of a different species; a knowledge,

* "Natural Theology," chap. xx.

† See "Transactions of Linn. Soc.," vol. ii., p. 268; Smith's "Botany," pp. 33, 93, 94; Mason Good's "Book of Nature," vol. iii., pp. 124—6.

too, anticipative of future events ; a knowledge of mathematics in some of its highest branches ; a knowledge, too, which is infallible, and never miscalculates or mistakes ; and as it is evident this knowledge cannot dwell in the minds of insects, reptiles, or plants, we have no alternative but to ascribe it to the Creator of all things. As Dr. Reid elegantly and forcibly observes:—"If a honeycomb were the work of art, every man of common sense would conclude, without hesitation, that he who invented the construction must have understood the principles on which it was constructed. We need not say the bee knows none of these things. They work most geometrically without any knowledge of geometry, something like a child, who, by turning the handle of an organ, makes good music. The art is not in the child, but in him who made the organ. In like manner, when a bee makes its comb so geometrically, the geometry is not in the bee, but in that great Geometrician who made the bee, and made all things in number, weight, and measure."*

There is no more certain nor satisfactory evidence of a truth than when we reach the same conclusion by taking either side of an alternative ; just as when a certain mathematical result is arrived at by different demonstrations. Thus it happens to the truth under consideration. For should any one be so foolish as to take the contrary side of the argument, and contend—as Darwin, Smellie, and others have done — that the instinctive operations of animals result from intelligence and reason in the mind of the animals themselves, he is inevitably carried to the same conclusion—namely, that the Creator of these animals must be an intelligent Being. For if, as we contend, the intelligence which guides animal instinct does *not* dwell in the animal itself, it must dwell in the mind of the Creator ; and if, as the objector contends, it *does* dwell in the mind of the animal itself, it must have dwelt first in the Creator, for he planted it there, and he could not give to another a property higher than what he himself possesses. The cause may be superior to the effect, but it can-

* Reid "On the Intellectual Powers," vol. iii., essay iii., chap. ii.

not be inferior. Whatever intelligence, therefore, is exhibited by the creature, whether by instinct or reason, it must previously have existed in the Creator.

4. The same conclusion flows from the consideration of human intelligence and reason. Those who are so bountiful to reptiles and insects as to contend for their intelligence, will perhaps not deny the same powers to man. We are therefore saved from the process of proof in this instance. But if man have intelligence, the Being who gave man his existence must be admitted to have intelligence also. "Shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not? or shall the thing framed say of him that framed it, He hath no understanding?" The answer is anticipated by the inquiry. The Maker of an intelligent being must himself be an intelligent Being.

CHAPTER X.

THE GREAT CAUSE OF ALL THINGS MUST BE A CONSCIOUS PERSONAL EXISTENCE, BECAUSE THE INTELLIGENCE DISPLAYED IS THE PROPERTY OF NONE BUT A CONSCIOUS PERSONAL EXISTENCE.

INTELLIGENCE implies consciousness, perception, thought; and the exercise of that intelligence for an object implies will, purpose, and choice of means; and these are the attributes and acts of mind. They can no more exist without a subject than the essential properties of matter can exist apart from matter. We cannot conceive them apart from a subject in which they inhere. Thus, every proof we have furnished of intelligence and purpose is a proof of the existence of mind. The existence of mind being established, the proper personal existence of the Creator is established, for an intelligent mind is a personal existence. Man is a conscious personal being, and so is that great Being who gave him existence.

The *personal* existence of the Creator is a truth which accumulates evidence, not only from the Creator's works already noticed, but also from every view we take of his character and attributes. Thus, as we proceed to discourse upon his benevolence, his justice, his holiness, and his other perfections, we speak of attributes which can belong to a person only, and every evidence of the existence of these attributes augments the proofs of his proper personal existence. We have thus arrived, step by step, to the corollary of our nine preceding propositions. **THERE IS A GOD—A CONSCIOUS, INTELLIGENT BEING—WHO IS THE CREATOR AND UPHOLDER OF ALL THINGS.**

At this stage of our argument we meet another error of Protean form and colossal dimensions, under the name of Pantheism; and no work on the existence of the Deity would be complete, in the present age, without a distinct notice of this monstrous delusion.

PANTHEISM.

The word Pantheism (from *πᾶν*, *all*, and *θεός*, *God*) is the name applied to that system which resolves all things into God, which denies the personality of his existence by confounding him with Nature—at one time affirming that there is nothing in existence but the material universe, which as a whole constitutes the Deity in his various modes of being; and at another time asserting that the universe itself is but ideal, and has no substantial existence; that the objects of sense are the phenomena of the ideal world, and the ideal world is nothing more than the mode of the existence of Deity.

Pantheism, in the various forms of its ideal and material character, is the oldest and the most widely extended speculative error which has marked the history of our world.

In the hoary systems of Brahminism and Buddhism, this doctrine forms a leading feature, and at an early period originated the theory of transmigration of souls, and their ultimate absorption into the Divine essence. In the "Veids" it is taught that "the whole universe is the Creator, proceeds from the Creator, and returns to him. The ignorant assert that the universe, in

the beginning, did not exist in its author, and that it was created out of nothing. O ye whose hearts are pure! how could something arise out of nothing? The first Being, alone, and without likeness, was the All in the beginning; he could multiply himself into different forms, so he created fire from his essence, which is light," &c. So in another passage in the "Yagur Veids:" "Thou art Brahma, thou art Vishnu, thou art Kodra, &c.; thou art air, thou art Andri, thou art the moon, thou art substance, thou art Djam; thou art the earth, thou art the world! O Lord of the world, to thee humble adoration! O Soul of the world, thou who superintendest the actions of the world, who destroyest the world, who createst the pleasures of the world! O Life of the world, the visible and invisible worlds are the sport of thy power; thou art the sovereign, O Universal Soul; to thee humble adoration!"*

Among the earliest records of Grecian literature this doctrine is found. Plutarch, in his "Defect of Oracles," says that the most ancient philosophers and poets resolved all things into God, and pronounced that "God is both the beginning and the middle, and that all things are out of God."† This doctrine was maintained by Pythagoras, descended from him to many philosophers, and became a tenet of the Academic and Eleatic Schools. It is breathed in poetic numbers by almost all the classic bards from Orpheus to Virgil.

In an ancient poem, ascribed to Orpheus, and entitled *De Mundo*, we have a passage remarkable for the direct and explicit manner in which this doctrine is enunciated:—

"Jove first exists, whose thunders roll above;
 Jove last, Jove midmost, all proceeds from Jove.
 Female is Jove, immortal Jove is male;
 Jove the broad earth—the heaven's irradiate pale.

* From M. Anquetil du Perron's translation of "The Abridgment of the Veids," tom. i., Paris, 1802. See also Sir William Jones's Works, vol. iv., 4to edition.

† Ζεὺς ἀρχὴ, Ζεὺς μέσσα, Διὸς δ' ἐκ πάντα τιλοῦται. See numerous other examples in Cudworth's "Intellectual System," pp. 504—507.

Jove is the boundless spirit, Jove the fire
 That warms the world with feeling and desire.
 The sea is Jove, the sun, the lunar ball;
 Jove king supreme, the sovereign source of all.
 All power is his; to him all glory give,
 For his vast form embraces all that live." *

The poet Æschylus is equally strong in expressing this dogma:—

“Jupiter is the air,
 Jupiter is the earth,
 Jupiter is the heavens;
 All is Jupiter.” †

Among the various philosophic dogmas which the Romans adopted from the Greeks, the pantheistic notion is conspicuous. Thus Lucan says, “Whatsoever thou seest is Jupiter.” ‡ Seneca asks, “What is God?” and answers, “He is all that you see, and all that you do not see.” § And “he alone is all things, containing his own work, not only without, but also within.” In another passage he has the following pantheistic sentiments:—“We are all members of one great body. The whole world is

* The English versification is by Dr. Mason Good, and the following is the original:—

Ζεὺς πρῶτος γίνετο, Ζεὺς ὕστατος ἀρχίκεραυνός·
 Ζεὺς κεφαλὴ, Ζεὺς μίσσα· Διὸς δ' ἰκ παντα τέτυκται·
 Ζεὺς ἄρσην γίνετο, Ζεὺς ἄμβροτος ἴπλετο νόμφη·
 Ζεὺς πυθμὴν γαίης τὰ καὶ οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος·
 Ζεὺς προιὴ παντῶν· Ζεὺς ἀκάματα πυρὸς ὀρμή·
 Ζεὺς πόντου ρίζα· Ζεὺς ἥλιος ἠδὲ σελήνη·
 Ζεὺς βασιλεὺς· Ζεὺς αὐτὸς ἀπαντῶν ἀρχιγένηθλος·
 Ἐν κράτος εἰς Δαίμων γίνετο μέγας ἀρχος ἀπαντῶν·
 Πάντα γὰρ ἐν μεγάλῳ Ζηνὸς τὰδε σώματι κίεται. Ex. Apul.

† Ζεὺς ἴστιν αἰθήρ,
 Ζεὺς τε γῆ·
 Ζεὺς οἱ οὐρανός,
 Ζεὺς τὰ πάντα.

‡ “Jupiter est quodcunque vides.”—Lib. ix., v. 580.

§ “Natural. Quæst.,” lib. i., p. 485.

God, and we are not only his members, but also his fellows, or companions." *

From ancient times this doctrine has descended to our own age. It was elaborately set forth and advocated in the seventeenth century by Spinoza, and runs through the writings of the English sophists of the last century. It appears prominent in Pope's "Essay on Man;" though, probably, as Dr. Johnson intimates, its writer spoke more rhetorically than philosophically. The following lines, if understood literally, express the very quintessence of pantheism:—

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body Nature is, and God the soul."

The writings of Neckar are charged with this doctrine; and Isnard, on the "Immortality of the Soul," labours to give it support and plausibility. Some of the sayings of Malebranche appear to favour this theory; for he says, that "we see all things in God," and that he is our "intelligible world."

In Germany a variable pantheism prevails to a great extent, which, though greatly differing in some of its elements from the materialism of its heathen predecessors, yet presents characteristics equally absurd, and equally repugnant to all just conceptions of the Deity. Professor Kant has the reputation, if not of originating, yet of elaborating and diffusing, principles, under the designation of "transcendental philosophy," which his successors have ripened into various mystic theories, the most repellant to reason, and the most inimical to religion. He teaches that "the conception of a God, though acknowledged, yet cannot be regarded, scientifically, as anything else than the generalizing power of our own reason personified." † Fichte

* "Quid est Deus? Quod vides totum, et non vides, totum."—*Nat. Quæst.*, lib. i. "Sic solus est omnia; opus suum et extra et intra tenet."—*De Benefic.*, lib. iv., c. viii. "Membra sumus corporis magni."—*Epist.* xcv. "Totum hoc Deus est, socii ejus et membra sumus."—*Epist.* xcii. See Cudworth's "Intellectual System," book i., chap. iv.; and Mason Good's "Book of Nature," lecture i.

† Morell's "Historical and Critical Views of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the Nineteenth Century," vol. ii., pp. 85—171.

identifies object and subject, or being and thought, as one—the finite and infinite are one. “*Ego* (I) is an absolute principle, and the whole universe but as its dream; there is no reality beyond consciousness.” With him, “all that we experience within ourselves, and whatever we see without, are both alike the manifestations of the one and the same absolute mind—that is, the Deity himself: not merely creations of his power, but actual modifications of his essence.” Schelling regards “the objects of sense as the phenomena of the ideal world; and the ideal world nothing more than the mode of the existence of the Deity.” With him “the infinite eternal mind is the absolute element from which all is evolved; while thought is essentially identified with being.” “Nature is the development of an eternal essence or substratum, which comes to realize in man alone its self-consciousness.”

According to Hegel, creation is an eternal momentum; it is the Deity, by a negation of himself, passing into a world, and becoming a second self. The creation is a world which is never made, but always being created. With him “thought is the only real being, thoughts are the only concrete realities.” He teaches that “the evolution of ideas in the human mind is the process of all existence—the absolute—God.” He says, “There is neither subject nor object separately considered, but that they both owe their existence and reality to each other. God only realizes himself, in fact, in the progress of the human consciousness; and the process by which this realization is effected is absolutely synonymous with himself.”* Such is the acme of the transcendental philosophy, so called.

From the Continent of Europe the pantheistic system has passed over to our own island; and, propagated by certain popular writers, from translations of French and German literature, and dealt out in homœopathic doses by itinerant lecturers, it is eagerly imbibed by great numbers of our youth, and has extended its virus through society.

In looking into the views held by ancient and modern pan-

* Morell's "Speculative Philosophy," vol. ii., pp. 88—117.

theists, we find them so heterogeneous that it is difficult to give them a general classification; and so contradictory, that they are as much opposed to each other as they are to the personality of the Divine existence. If such opinions had been started by men of ordinary mind and status, they would have been deemed by the literate as scarcely worth denouncing—as too preposterous and suicidal to merit a serious refutation. They are important only as they are sanctioned by men of great reputation for learning, and of potent influence in moulding public opinion. Thus patronized and defended by acknowledged talent, we can scarcely avoid the inquiry, Has truth itself changed its characteristics?—have its primitive landmarks disappeared, or has man's mental constitution undergone some strange revolution? If, for a moment, it were possible to doubt on these questions, these authors themselves furnish an immediate answer. For, on all other topics, they reason and act like other men; they admit the same fundamental principles, they arrive at conclusions by the same mental process, and they act in conformity therewith on all ordinary subjects. Hence their strange, paradoxical, and upside-down kind of reasoning on the Deity can only be ascribed to some mental disease, some extraordinary hallucination, in which they see truth and error change places, or become transmuted one into the other. We have folly gravely attired in the costume of philosophy; metaphysics set in battle array against common sense, and the veriest dreams and vagaries propounded to overturn the first principles of eternal truth, and the most obvious dictates of reason. The ravings of Johanna Southcote, and of the prophet of Mormonism, do not furnish a greater outrage upon the first principles of reason than these philosophic reveries.

In our category of principles it has been laid down as an axiom, that one criterion of truth is, that it shall harmonize with all other truths; and, as another criterion, that it be supported by some direct evidence. But the remarkable characteristics of this theory are, that it is neither sustained by evidence nor in harmony with any truth, but in direct antagonism with all truth.

1. As a system of materialism, in which form it was held by the ancients, it is contradicted by the non-eternity of matter; for if, as already shown, matter be not eternal, it is impossible it can be identical with Deity, or that Deity can be identical with it, for God is eternal.

2. It is contradicted by the argument that matter, if eternal, is not adequate to the production of the universe. This has been established in Chapter V.; for if the originator of the universe be distinct from matter and superior to it, that originator cannot be identical with it.

3. It is contradicted by our consciousness. By consciousness I recognize my personal identity. While I am conscious of my existence, I am also conscious that I am myself, and not another; that I am, in an absolute sense, distinct from every other person, and from every other object, and that they are absolutely distinct from me. My personality is absolutely, exclusively, and unchangeably *my own*. My thoughts, affections, and actions are all *my own*, and constitute the history of my personal being. The same consciousness of personal identity which separates me from all other persons and all other things, equally separates me from the Deity. I can no more confound my existence and personality with the Deity, than I can with any other person or thing. The distinction here is absolute and unchangeable. Every man knows this, and no authority or evidence is required to sustain it. By the same consciousness that I know that I exist, I know that I am not an eagle, a lion, or a whale; by the same evidence I know that I am not God; and I know nothing more certainly than that the theory which denies this is insane folly. The evidence is inseparable from man's being. All human laws recognize this distinct personal existence, and consequent individual responsibility; and all human relations and habits exemplify its truth. Our speculators themselves feel this consciousness of distinct personal identity, and recognize it in others. They cannot theorize themselves out of this consciousness. Their own feelings witness to their own minds the falsehood and absurdity of their theory, and their actions exhibit the same testimony to the

observation of others. They cannot escape from themselves wherever they may flee, and they cannot confound their identity with that of another creature, much less with their Creator. We never heard of any one *acting* on such an absurd hypothesis, except the hypochondriac or the maniac; and for the amusement of such alone is the philosophical reverie adapted.

4. It is contradicted by the evidence of sense. The fact attested by consciousness is reiterated by sense. My sight, my hearing, my touch, my taste, and my smell, all bear witness of a world without me, and distinct from me. I can no more doubt this than I can doubt my own existence. And the evidence I have that these external objects are distinct from me assures me that both they and I are distinct from God. The theory which confounds this distinction is as evidently false as the united testimony of consciousness and sense is true.

5. This theory contradicts the fundamental principle on which all reasoning is built—namely, the principle that essential difference constitutes individuality, or distinct identical existence. In all classes, orders, genera, species, and individuals, there is an essential difference, by which one thing or person is distinguished from another, and has its individual identity. It matters not whether the beings be organized or unorganized, animate or inanimate, material or immaterial, atoms or worlds, persons or things—there is in each a distinct individuality. As a tree is not a man, and a man is not an ox, and an ocean is not a continent, so an idea is not the object it represents. Now, the theory that identifies the creature with the Creator, the finite with the Infinite, the Deity with the universe, contradicts this obvious principle. It has the absurdity of making the workman and his work, the potter and his clay, the same identical being. It matters not how the theory be disguised, nor how metaphysically, learnedly, and elaborately it may be presented; whatever be its costume, this is the theory itself, apart from all disguise.

6. While this theory is contradicted by the common sense of mankind, and by the first principles of knowledge, it is

equally contradicted by its authors themselves; they are every moment contradicting their own theory, both in their speculations and their practice. Are they mathematicians? they distinguish a square from a triangle, and they distinguish both from a circle. They cannot state a single theorem, nor even commence the process, without contradicting their own theory. Are they logicians? they distinguish one proposition from another, and the premises from the conclusion. If they made these identical, they could never construct a single syllogism, even though they should live to the end of time. In fact, every effort they make to build up their own theory assumes the very principle which destroys it. In the very act to support it, they undermine its foundations. In every sentence they pen they assume an essential difference in their own ideas, one from another; in every word, every syllable, and every letter, by which they seek to express their ideas, they assume this essential difference; and in their controversies amongst themselves, or against their common opponents, they assume an essential difference in their systems one from another; and this difference constitutes an individuality for each; and this individuality destroys the identity which lies at the foundation of their theory. There may be a *resemblance* between two beings of the same species, but there is still an essential difference, which gives to each a distinct individuality. Two atoms of matter may be so near alike, that we can see no difference in shape, size, colour, or weight; but still they are not identical; there is such an essential difference between them, that each has its own identity and individuality.

If, then, there be distinct individuality, even in objects thus intimately resembling each other, how palpably absurd to contend against this distinction, with respect to objects between which there is the greatest disparity and contrariety! The universe is finite, God is infinite; the creature is of yesterday, God is eternal; the creature is helpless and dependent, God is independent and almighty; the creature is changeable, God is unchangeable; the creature dies, the Creator is essentially and

eternally living; and yet these sage philosophers are writing books to persuade mankind that they are one and the same being!

7. This theory springs from a partial discarding of the faculties which God has given to man for ascertaining truth. The faculties God has given to man for this noble purpose are consciousness, sense, and reason. Not any one of these is sufficient of itself. Consciousness alone, without sense and reason, would barely distinguish man from a vegetable. Consciousness and sense, without reason, would at most only place us on a level with the brute creation. It is the combination of the three faculties which constitutes us men—rational as well as sentient beings, qualified for ascertaining truth. Each of these faculties, being given for this exalted purpose, is adequate within its own sphere to fulfil its purpose—is a faithful witness of what comes within its cognizance, and ought therefore to receive proportionate confidence from its possessor.

Now, the two great divisions of the pantheistic error, the *material* and the *ideal*, have sprung from a discarding or disparaging of some of these faculties. Whether it is that truth is too obvious when its evidence is poured upon the mind through the ordinary media, and is therefore despised because it is popular; or whether it is that some men, from an overweening opinion of their superior powers, imagine they can dispense with one half of their faculties and demonstrate truth by the other, we need not determine; but certain it is that the doctrines of these sceptical speculatists, both in ancient and modern times, involve a discarding, or at least a disparaging, of the evidence furnished by one class of their faculties. The materialist, or the pantheist who denies all spiritual existence, and resolves Deity and Nature into one identical material substance, pretends to rely on the evidence of sense, which assures him of the reality of the material world, but he rejects the evidence which consciousness and his mental faculties give of the reality of a spiritual existence. On the other hand, the idealist, or transcendental pantheist who denies the existence of the material world, and contends that there is no real being but mind, denies in

fact the evidence of his senses. He can see the evidence of spirit in the exercise of consciousness and reason; but the testimony of his senses which proclaim the reality of an external world, he rejects as delusive.

Nothing is more obvious than that men in attempting to reason under the government of such principles must greatly err. Error may be *incidental* to other minds, but *essential* to theirs, and we need not wonder at any absurdity, however monstrous, which they may advocate. If a man deny the evidence of consciousness, he cannot believe in his own existence. If he confide in consciousness, but deny the evidence of his senses, he may believe in his own existence, but he cannot believe in the existence of the material world. Nor can he reason, for reason derives her materials from both consciousness and sense, and, apart from revelation or inspiration, he can have them from no other source. "Sense is God's organ, his means of manifestation, and God cannot lie." When reason degrades sense—charges her with deception—discards her informations, reason becomes transformed from truth into *nonsense*. When, therefore, these men deride those who inquire for truth by using *all* their faculties—consciousness, sense, and reason—and charge them with being empirical; when they scornfully describe them as "timidly lingering on the threshold of science," it may be justly replied, that *we* seek for truth in the only way in which it can be found, and that the renunciation of any one faculty is voluntarily to impose deception on all the rest. When men disbelieve their senses, they may dream and rave, but cannot reason, and their very dreams are composed of images drawn from the sources they discard. They may flatter themselves with the idea of soaring to the heights and penetrating into the deep abysses of truth, but their career is that of floundering from absurdity to absurdity at every step, and having abandoned the sources and first principles of truth, their denial of God's personal existence, or their confounding of his identity with the universe, is only one out of a multitude of errors, which necessarily spring from their folly. Though the truth of God's personal existence lies at their right hand, they cannot find it;

though it shines with effulgent splendour, they cannot see it. The anatomist might as well attempt to find a spirit by dissection, and a limner might as well attempt to sketch a beautiful landscape from Nature in the dark recesses of a coal mine, as for either the materialist or the transcendental pantheist to attempt to find the truth while discarding the faculties which God has given for its perception and discovery.

When Arcesilaus and Pyrrho disbelieved their senses they disbelieved the existence of the material world; their reason reeled, it had become blind. So with a modern sect of sophists in India. Dr. Judson records in his journal the following notable example:—"May 20, 1821. Encountered another new character, one Moung Long, from the neighbourhood of Shuay-doung, a disciple of the great Tong-dwan teacher, the acknowledged head of all the semi-atheists in the country. Like the rest of the sect, he is in reality a complete sceptic, scarcely believing his own existence. They say he is always quarrelling with his wife on some metaphysical point. For instance, if she says, 'The rice is ready,' he will reply, 'Rice! what is rice? Is it matter or spirit? Is it an idea or is it a nonentity?' Perhaps she will say it is matter, and he will reply, 'Well, wife, and what is matter? Are you sure there is any such thing in existence, or are you merely subject to a delusion of the senses?'" Bishop Berkeley was a firm believer in the existence of Deity, but it was the same mental disease which led him to doubt the existence of the material universe; and which disease, in a more developed state, induced Hume to reason against his own existence, and resolve all things into mere ideas and impressions. Thus, men of the most opposite theological sentiments find themselves carried to similar absurdities when they proceed to reason by denying the evidence of their faculties.

8. The two classes of pantheists, the material and the ideal, demonstrate the falsehood of their respective theories by seeking the same conclusion from contradictory premises. It is remarkable how error furnishes its own antidote. The opposite speculations of the material and the spiritual pantheist separately serve to confute each other, and combine to establish

both the validity of our faculties as the media of our knowledge, and the great doctrine of Jehovah's personal existence. Though the materialist disbelieves in all spiritual existence, he confides implicitly in his *senses*, and his confidence in them does homage to the truth; it admits that their testimony is faithful and not deceptive, and that the existence of the material world is real, not ideal. The idealist, though denying the evidence of his senses, confides in the testimony which *consciousness* and *reason* bear to the existence of the spiritual world, and his confidence does homage to the verdict of reason. The affirmative side of each theory confutes the negative side of the other. One maintains the existence of body, and the other the existence of spirit, and thus they correct each other's errors, and supply a testimony that the existence of both body and spirit is sustained by the clearest evidence; for it is certain that men of such sceptical sentiments would believe in nothing except the conviction was extorted by evidence. It thus appears too obvious to be denied that each class of speculators missed the truth they were respectively seeking, by disparaging the faculties which were adapted to perceive it: the one, by denying his senses, lost the material world; the other, by denying the evidence of his rational nature, lost the spiritual world. Thus each maintained the opposite pole of the same truth. Each was right just so far as he used his faculties aright, and error began just at the point where the testimony of either sense or reason was discarded. Now, had both honoured the faculties God has given them, by an appropriate confidence and a due exercise of them, it is quite clear that both would have maintained the truths they now separately deny. Men may as well try to explore metaphysics with a lantern, as attempt to find the whole truth by their senses alone; and they might as well attempt to build a temple with oxygen gas, as to find the whole truth by reason, to the exclusion of their senses. Employ both reason and sense, and while they obtain a cure for their insanity they will find that the material and spiritual world have each a real existence, and that God is the Author of both. Even as it is, their attempt to arrive at the same conclusion from contradictory

premises presents of itself the clearest evidence of the folly and falsehood of their respective speculations.

9. Contradictory as these systems are to each other, they each proclaim a Deity. Though each theorist starts from an opposite point and pursues an opposite track, both reach the same conclusion—*there is a God*. Though the materialist believes in nothing but matter, he believes that matter to be God; though the transcendentalist believes in nothing but spirit, he believes that spirit to be God. Though each believes but in one being, that being is God. Though sceptical on all other points, on this they profess no doubt; with them the evidence of his existence is so clear and decisive, that it extorts their unequivocal assent. It is thus that error itself yields homage to the truth. The existence of the Deity is legible throughout the universe, and the truth, though obscured and distorted, is too brilliant to be wholly lost, even amid the dark and eccentric wanderings and the most extravagant speculations which have marked the history of the human mind. In asserting the existence of God they bow to the commanding evidence of a great and fundamental truth, but in confounding his existence with the universe they greatly err.

10. Pantheism presents the strange paradox of being at once productive of atheism and of the grossest idolatry. In denying the personal existence of the Deity, it substantially denies his very being. For, divest a being of individual consciousness and personality, and what is it? Is it a substance? If it is, it is no more like God than a tree or a stone is like God. Is it, as Fichte, Schelling, and others maintain, a mental abstraction? A mental abstraction has no real existence except in the imagination; and, indeed, the pantheistic sentiment, in any form, is either so mystical, beclouded, unsubstantial, abstract, and contradictory to itself and to self-evident truth, that its retention as a belief must be extremely difficult, and its change into absolute atheism one of the most natural and easy transitions of the human mind. Facts abundantly demonstrate this, for wherever pantheism prevails atheism abounds.

On the other hand, if the pantheistic sentiment retains its

hold on the human mind, it engenders the grossest idolatry. Nature itself being God, Nature must be worshipped as God, and the true and proper Deity is disregarded, because his personality is denied. By lowering the Deity to the creature, the system robs him of his distinguishing and essential glories; and by exalting the creature to the Creator, transfers his glory to another. Is adoration offered to matter? It is offered not to God, for he is not material. Is adoration offered to a created spirit? It is offered not to God, for he is not created. Personal in his existence, independent in his attributes, infinite in all his perfections, and conscious of his prerogatives, there is an infinite disparity between him and his creatures: and whether homage be offered to a molten statue, or to the universe; whether to Nature as an abstract impersonality, or to Nature as a supposed conscious existence, it is idolatry; and its votaries, however refined and intellectual, are as much idolaters as the Indian who prostrates himself before the hideous Juggernaut, or the degraded South Sea Islander, who bows before the shapeless forms of his Maræ: more repugnant, indeed, in some respects than the simple superstition of the savage, for the refined pantheist may worship *himself*, under the sanction of a theory which regards his nature as an emanation from the essence of God, or identical with his being.

11. While pantheism is contradictory to consciousness, to sense, to intuitive truths, to reason, and is fraught with atheism and idolatry, it is also licentious and blasphemous. We mean not to charge its literary advocates with practical licentiousness, but we do contend that such is the natural tendency of the system. It strikes at the foundation of morals and moral responsibility. Thus, in Pope's pantheistic "Essay on Man," we find the doctrine associated with this licentious principle:—

"In spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right." *

* There is reason to believe that Lord Bolingbroke supplied the *principles* and Pope the *poetry* of the "Essay on Man," and that thus Pope unwittingly gave currency to sentiments he did not hold.

Revolting as is the principle expressed in this distich, it is the genuine morality of pantheistic philosophy; for, if all Nature be God, then human actions are as much the actions of God, as the operations of gravitation, chemical forces, or any other natural law. On such a principle there can be nothing wrong. As there is only one being in existence, there can be no standard of right but what exists in his mind, and, therefore, all actions must be equally good when they are the products of that mind. Injustice, lying, treachery, oppression, intemperance, lust, and murder, are only names which conventional usage has given to certain actions; but the actions themselves are as good as probity, chastity, benevolence, and any other of those designated virtues. Some of the literati who advocate pantheistic theories may live virtuously, but they live above their own principles; they may indignantly repudiate the licentious doctrine now stated, but it logically results from their speculations. Although the cloistered professor may indulge in his reveries for the sake of mere intellectual gratification, and subject his conduct to the government of an opposite class of principles, the masses will act otherwise. They will reduce the licentious theory to practice, so far as it may comport with self-interest and depraved appetite; they will give it exemplification in their character and habits. They are doing so at the present day, and hence the disregard for all authority, human and Divine—the open contempt of sacred things—the rude and unblushing blasphemy—the licentious indulgence of the passions—the perverse and extravagant notions of human rights—the concentration of all concern upon things present and momentary—the light estimate of human life—the suicide of individuals, and the horrid murders, which characterize the history of continental nations where pantheistic and atheistic principles almost equally obtain at the present day!

By vast numbers throughout Germany and various parts of the continent, these principles are not only avowed with unblushing hardihood, but propagated with the most indefatigable diligence and perseverance.

“I maintain,” says Marr, an apostle of atheism and commun-

ism, "THAT THE BELIEF IN A PERSONAL LIVING GOD IS THE CHIEF FOUNDATION AND ORIGIN OF OUR PRESENT WORM-EATEN SOCIAL STATE; and further, that so long as mankind shall hang by a single hair to the idea of HEAVEN, there is no happiness to be looked for on earth. Man himself is the religion of futurity. GOD STANDS IN NEED OF MAN, BUT MAN HAS NO NEED OF GOD."

In Hamburg, one of the songs which, some years ago, resounded with applause in the convivial meetings of a certain trade ran thus:—

"Curse on the Godhead, the blind and the deaf,
To which, heretofore, we have pledged our faith;
On whom we have hoped, and have waited in vain,
He hath tricked us, and mocked us, and laughed at our pain."

If these sentiments are revolting, they are only the genuine fruits of the pantheistic theory as it operates on the popular mind. The dogmas of pantheism and atheism, associated with those of communism, are become the household words of myriads on the continent of Europe, in America, and in our own country. These revolting sentiments, alike destructive of social order and personal virtue, in their germ are propagated in some of the public institutions, professedly originated for the intellectual cultivation of our youth and the working population of this land. Sometimes a discourse on science is made the occasion of insinuating doubts, and administering scepticism in homœopathic doses to our youthful population; and sometimes the poison is offered in large and intoxicating draughts. Not very long since, a popular lecturer in Manchester openly advocated scepticism as a mental excellency; and, in discoursing on human destiny, he is reported to have averred, that "wherever we see man, whether on the ale-bench, in the brothel, on the treadmill, or the gallows, we see him on the high road to dignity, to excellence, and happiness!" Such is the genuine character and tendency of pantheistic philosophy.

Whether we contemplate the system theoretically or practically, it is the most outrageous monstrosity which the human mind has ever yet fabricated or can fabricate. It is the ulti-

matum of absurdity and immorality. It was generated by conceit, fostered by pride, and matured by the most consummate depravity. Viewed by the eye of philosophy, it is arrant nonsense; by the eye of morality, it is disgustingly obscene; and, by the eye of religion, it is horrid blasphemy. It is repugnant to our reason, and revolting to our moral sense; it is a foul disgrace to the intellect and character of man, which it is both humiliating and loathsome to contemplate; and the disgrace is deepened when we think of the men, the country, and the age with which the system has sprung up in modern times. A maniac could not equal its folly, nor a demon exceed its wickedness. The Prince of Darkness himself (if, in this argument, we were allowed to assume his existence) could not desire a more complete abasement of the human intellect, a more entire wreck of the human character and happiness, a more perfect subversion of the authority and designs of Almighty God. Its universal prevalence would consummate the wishes of that apostate and malignant spirit, in dissolving all the bonds of society, uprooting the foundations of social order and happiness, and in filling the earth with lust, violence, and blood. We wonder not at the spread of socialism, communism, libertinism, anarchy, and hatred to religion; we wonder not that vices are open, crimes unblushing, and the vilest of men are held in reputation. There is a cause! Learning and talent have prostituted their powers in advocating an atheistic lie, and have sent it abroad through society; and the lie, thus sanctioned, and ministering to the vilest passions of human nature, has produced the effects we deplore.

CHAPTER XI.

WHILE THE EXISTENCE OF A CONSCIOUS AND INTELLIGENT CREATOR IS SUPPORTED BY DIRECT EVIDENCE, IT IS IN HARMONY WITH ALL TRUTH.

Statement of the Argument.—In our category of principles, it is laid down that every particular truth must harmonize with universal truth. Hence harmony becomes one criterion of truth. We apply this test to the existence of God, and the subject is one which, from its nature, admits the application of this test to its fullest extent. There is no proposition of which the mind has a more clear and definite conception, and there is none which has such numerous, extensive, and intimate relations to general truth; for, if there be a God, he is the cause of *all* things that exist, and he, consequently, stands in the most intimate relation to all things that exist. All scientific facts and principles stand related to him as effects stand related to their cause. He is their origin and fountain. They emanate from him, and reflect what is in his nature. The existence of a God is the grand central truth of all other truths; and from that centre lines of relationship radiate to the utmost verge of universal Nature. The most stupendous aggregations of matter, and the minutest atoms; the most protracted cycles of stellar revolutions and dynamic forces, as well as the momentary vibrations of the smallest molecule; the most comprehensive generalization of Nature's laws, and every isolated fact in her operations: in a word, *all* Nature's laws and principles, which are truths in their abstract form; and all Nature's facts, which are truths in their concrete form; must have an essential and inseparable relation to this primary and original truth—the existence of an intelligent Creator.

If, then, it be a logical axiom that every particular truth must harmonize with universal truth, and *especially* with those

with which it stands in immediate relation, how full and ample are the opportunities afforded for testing the proposition before us—the existence of God, seeing it has an essential and immediate relation to *all* the truths comprehended within the vast circle of physical and mental science. Nature, in her widest domain of matter and of mind, has to do with this great proposition, either to sustain or deny its truth. If there be a God, his own works will not contradict his being; and if there be no God, the voice of Nature will not bear witness to a lie. The atheist tells us that, while despising the dogmas of theology, he believes in Nature, and makes her his guide. We, too, believe in Nature; we hold that her utterances are true, absolutely and unchangeably true, and can harmonize with truth alone; and we do not hesitate to affirm that all the truths in Nature fully harmonize with the idea of a God.

The simplest conception of the Deity is that of an intelligent Creator. The idea of a Creator implies dependence and origin in the creature; and, therefore, whatever in Nature quadrates with the ideas of dependence and origin must agree with the idea of a Creator. Intelligence also accords with design and contrivance; and design and contrivance accord with arrangement and order, with the connection and adjustment of parts to a whole as a given result. Therefore, whatever in Nature indicates arrangement and order must be in harmony with the idea of an intelligent Author. Do the facts and principles unfolded in the volume of Nature harmonize with these ideas of origin and dependence, order and arrangement, or do they not? It is from Nature we have already adduced an array of *positive* evidence which commands our assent to the existence of a God, and we have now to show that this evidence is unbroken, uninterrupted by a single discordant note in all Nature's wide domain. The testimony for a God so harmonizes with truth, that no fact in Nature can be tortured into a denial of the Creator.

SECTION I.—THE PROPOSITION HARMONIZES WITH ALL THE FACTS OF PHYSICAL SCIENCE.

1. *Astronomy*.—Is there a sentence of atheism written on the skies? Not one. Do the nocturnal wonders, whether revealed to the vulgar eye, or viewed through the piercing tube of Lord Rosse's telescope by the searching and scientific gaze of a Herschel, contradict the existence of a Creator? Never. We have seen that order and harmony universally prevail in the stupendous architecture of the heavens, and that even the nebular hypothesis itself necessitates a Creator. That mighty genius, Newton, who demonstrated the laws, the harmony, and the grandeur of the heavens, closes his immortal work, the "*Principia*," with a most eloquent testimony to the existence and glorious attributes of God as the architect of the universe.*

2. *Geology*.—Do the monuments of departed ages contain one inscription which denies the being of a Creator? We have seen the reverse in every gradation of our planet's geological history. There is order even in the great catastrophes of Nature, as well as in the structure of all fossilized remains, and there is dependence upon a creating power seen in the existence of every tribe of organized being. It is from the utterances of the greatest geologists that we have the most unequivocal declarations of the wisdom and power of the Deity as unfolded in the vast ages of his wondrous works. To those already adduced we may add the testimony of Dr. Wright, the president of the last meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (1876), who in his splendid opening address—after repudiating the doctrine of evolution—said, "In a word, palæontology brings us face to face with the Creator"—"the Great Designing Mind"—"the Great Author of all things, who is the same yesterday, and for ever."

3. *Physiology*.—In the structure and economy of animal and vegetable existence, is there one fact in which Nature disowns

* "*Principia*," p. 482.

an intelligent Cause? Not one. Indeed, the science of physiology is made up of facts which proclaim a creating Cause and a wise Contriver. Even the spontaneous production of microscopic animalcules and plants, if it were true, would not invalidate the testimony which Nature bears to a Creator, but only present before us an ultimate fact in which God puts forth his creating energy by the operation of law. Dr. Carpenter, in his copious and elaborate work on Physiology, extending to more than eleven hundred pages, after treating on the numerous and complicated laws of that science, says, that "All the phenomena of Nature must be considered as the immediate exponents of the Will of the Creator; and their so-called Laws as but man's expression of the conditions under which the Divine Power appears continually operating in producing them." *

4. *Chemistry*.—Do the marvellous laws which regulate the attraction and repulsion of atoms—the affinities, combinations, and separation of infinitesimal molecules, in fixed ratios and definite proportions—contradict the existence and operation of an intelligent Creator? Do any of the allotropic conditions of matter repudiate the agency of God? The only answer is—Atoms, as well as worlds, proclaim a Deity. Professor Fownes, F.R.S., at the close of his admirable work on the Laws of Chemistry, says, "It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that these exquisitely beautiful laws and relations have been framed and adjusted to each other by an Intelligent Mind." † Why? Because they so obviously display that Intelligent Mind.

5. If we extend our observation to optics, acoustics, pneumatics, or any other science which unfolds the laws and operations of Nature, we find everywhere the prevalence of order, adaptation, and dependence—facts which harmonize with an intelligent creating energy. Indeed, there is no branch of science which reveals a fact, or evolves a principle, which will not cohere and harmonize with the being of a God. It is not

* *Principles of Human Physiology*, "Introduct.," p. 5.

† "Chemistry," Actonian Prize Essay, p. 158.

possible to make Nature utter one discordant note to the proclamation of an intelligent Creator.

If it should be said that in the existence of suffering and death we have facts which do not harmonize with the being of God, we reply, These facts present no contradiction to, or discrepancy with, the *existence* of a Creator. If they have any force at all, they apply not to the existence of God, but to his character. As the gifted Dr. Chalmers has justly observed:—“The machinery of a serpent's tooth, for the obvious infliction of pain and death upon its victims, may speak as distinctly for the power and intelligence of its Maker, as the machinery of those teeth which, formed and inserted for simple mastication, subserve the purpose of a bland and beneficent economy.” Whether or not the existence of suffering and death impugns the *benevolence* of God, we shall hereafter consider in its proper place, when we come to discourse on the attributes of Deity; but it is certain that it presents no contradiction or opposition to his *being*.

The philosopher never finds the conception of an intelligent Cause an impediment to scientific research and discovery. Never, in any part of Nature's vast domain, does it come into collision either with *data* assumed or principles demonstrated. On the contrary, it contains within itself the very principles which guide the philosopher in all his scientific pursuits; for he assumes that everything has a cause by which it exists, and an end to serve in its particular nature and construction. The principle of an originating cause on the one hand, and of a final cause on the other, pervades his mind in the study of all objects and leads him, by the shortest and the surest path, to multiply discoveries and augment the treasures of science. Apart from all theological bias, his mind instinctively and constantly admits derivation and adaptation as the universal properties of Nature; and Nature, true to herself, rewards and honours her disciples by unfolding her mysteries to their inquiring and enamoured minds. It is this universal adaptation which proclaims a supreme Intelligence, and this universal derivation which bespeaks an efficient origin; and it is the universal prevalence of both

that makes all Nature, and all true science which seeks to interpret Nature, harmonize with the idea of a God.

6. We have previously laid down the obvious principle, that, as one criterion of truth, advancing knowledge will brighten its evidence and expose the absurdities of error. In harmony with this, we find that just in proportion as science has advanced, it has rendered the voice of Nature still more distinct, euphonious, and decisive in her testimony to the existence of God. As scientific discovery invades the dominion of ignorance, it dispels the phantoms of error, and elicits the truths which had lain concealed. But, amid the progress of knowledge, how marvelously does the sublime philosophy of a Creating Cause contrast with the history of human theories and speculations! Look back on the stream of time: it is literally covered with the wrecks of human theories; and many an imposing system of philosophy, venerable for its antiquity, and once all-commanding for its prestige and fame, now lies mouldering on the strand. Where is the theory of atomic motion propounded by Epicurus? It has long since vanished before the ascertained law of gravitation. Where is the complicated theory of the Ptolemaic astronomy, with its cumbrous machinery of concentric spheres, and its epicycloidal maze of spiral loops? Though received for ages, and defended by the most illustrious names, it has disappeared before the discoveries and demonstrations of Newton. Where is the Cartesian theory of ethereal vortices, framed to account for celestial phenomena? It has vanished before the true philosophy of celestial dynamics. Where is the Mohammedan institute, which commands entire fasting each day, from sunrise to sunset, during the entire month of Ramadan? Geographical facts have proved it to be an ignorant imposture. Where is the Brahminical code which forbids the destruction of every species of animal life for food? It stands forth an exposed forgery before the discoveries of the microscope. Time would fail to enumerate the wrecks of plausible opinions and hoary theories which the advancing tide of science has torn from their foundations. But no such catastrophe has happened to the philosophy which asserts an intelligent Creator. And why not? Has there

not been time enough to detect the error, if it be one? It is one of the most ancient forms of human belief. It existed ages before the system of Mahomet, or the Epicurean philosophy, or the Ptolemaic astronomy, or the Brahminical theogony, or any other exploded system: why, then, has it not shared their fate? We may trace back its existence to the earliest records of man, and during those ages it has been subjected to the most scrutinizing ordeal of scientific research and philosophic acumen; yet it survives, and sustains, not a languishing, but a more vigorous existence. Had it been a figment of the imagination, it must, long ere this, have been entombed among the obsolete opinions of an ignorant and credulous antiquity. Had it been discordant with truth, the amazing accessions which have been made to science would have revealed its falsehood; had it been contradictory to Nature, the researches which have been so successfully effected in Nature's wide domain would have evinced its antagonism. But, so far from being found inimical to or inconsistent with the truths of physical science, every year affords some new tribute to its authority; every new discovery augments and brightens its evidence, and reveals the strength and solidity of its foundations. Amid the ruins of deserted theories and obsolete opinions, it stands erect in undecaying grandeur, deriving freshness from age, and increasing splendour from the light of truth. There can be but one reason for this, and it is obvious: the existence of God is in harmony with Nature and science, because it is true; and because Nature herself is true, she cannot bear witness to a lie.

SECTION II.—THE EXISTENCE OF GOD HARMONIZES WITH ALL THE TRUTHS OF MAN'S OWN NATURE.

1. *It is in harmony with man's intellectual nature.*

As the organic structure of the eye is adapted to the laws and properties of light, and the mechanism of the ear is adapted to the laws of sound, so is the mind adapted to the perception of truth. Its faculties, and the fundamental laws of their

operation, must harmonize with the eternal principles of truth. Now, if the existence of God contradicted any intuitive truth or fundamental axiom, it must be rejected; but it is only when we do violence to the laws of thought, it is only when we set aside intuitive principles and self-evident axioms, that we can resist the evidence of a God. We need not, indeed, contend with Descartes and his followers, that the idea of a God involves his existence; nor with Kant, that it is intuitive and self-evident; but the fact of the proposition being thus placed by some in the category of innate or intuitive truths, attests its perfect harmony with our mental constitution—so harmonious, indeed, that, when once proposed, and its evidence adduced, the mind perceives its agreement with known truth, and rests in it, as an established and fundamental axiom. The history of the human mind affords abundant evidence of this.

2. *The existence of a God harmonizes with our moral nature.*

There is a law inscribed on the human heart more comprehensive, more special in its details, and more complete in its character, than all human codes; and more authoritative and powerful than all human tribunals. In conformity with this law, there is a faculty in the human mind which takes cognizance of the moral character of our actions, desires, and emotions; which approves of the good, and condemns the evil; and which brings man to account for his conduct, inflicting a pungent, caustic, and tormenting pain when we do wrong, and imparting a cordial, complacent approval, when we do well. We do not attempt to prove this, for proof is superfluous. Its existence is self-evident, it is an element in our constitution, a kind of moral instinct, and every man knows it by experience: It comes not at our bidding, and departs not at our command. It will not succumb to wealth, and it pays no respect to station. It awaits not the detection of the public eye, nor suspends its verdict on the decision of the magistrate. It extends its impartial survey over the most secret deeds, and scrutinizes the inward motives which lie concealed in the human breast. It lashes the empurpled tyrant before whom crouching sycophants fawn. It makes the murderer quail and tremble, though his

deeds be wrapped in impenetrable secrecy; and it sustains the virtuous martyr under scorn, derision, and death. Whence comes this moral sentiment? Is it the product of chemical affinities, or of the promiscuous aggregation of atoms? Is this a cause adequate to the effect? Do we feel this a conclusion to which reason can easily yield her assent? Nay, we instinctively feel the conclusion abhorrent to our reason. Does not the moral sentiment, the existence of conscience, point to a superior origin? Does it not speak as the vicegerent of another Being superior to ourselves and to all Nature, and proclaim our responsibility to a tribunal which takes cognizance of the emotions of the heart as well as the overt actions of the life? With the existence of a Supreme Being, the maker and governor of men, the faculty of conscience—the prevalence of moral sentiment—has a perfect harmony; but with the system of materialism and atheism, it is full of anomalies and contradictions.

SECTION III.—THE EXISTENCE OF GOD IS IN HARMONY WITH THE WELL-BEING AND HAPPINESS OF MANKIND.

We speak not here of man's eternal happiness, for that comes not within the scope of our present argument; we speak of his welfare and happiness on earth. What, then, is promotive of his happiness? Is vice, or virtue? Are temperance, chastity, rectitude, purity of conscience, and benevolence? or gross sensuality, injustice, violence, and cruelty? Human laws and human history decisively give the answer. Another question: Is atheism, or a belief in the existence of a God, promotive of virtue? Will the denial of a God restrain the malign passions, make the heart soft and tender, and stimulate to virtue and benevolence? or will a belief in his existence and presence encourage the villain's fraud, sanction the secret plot of the assassin, and nerve his arm for the bloody deed? Atheism! what is there in it to refine the intellect, or elevate and purify the character? It has neither a moral code nor creed, but it is

a cold and heartless negation of both. It saps the foundation of morals, and divests virtue of its highest authority, its most potent motives, its most effectual guard. With no God, there is no lawgiver, no governor, no superior judge, no tribunal higher than human, no future state, no responsibility, no reward to enkindle the hopes of the virtuous, no retribution to excite the apprehensions of the wicked, beyond the present transient life. In fact, atheism, according to the standard of its advocates, converts man into nothing more than a material machine, impelled by a stern necessity. Morality and virtue are words without meaning, moral obligation gives place to a selfish instinct, and fluctuating views of expediency become the only law and motive of man's conduct. Passion and appetite are thus unbridled; avarice and lust, ambition and self-interest, are left without control to work out their dire results, producing crime, disease, and misery in the individual, and disorganization and woe in society.

It is well for human nature that an entire community of atheists never existed in our world; but the near approach to such a state at one time in France produced the "Reign of Terror," and left on the page of history a dark and awful memorial of the inherent tendency of infidelity. The licentiousness and crime, the deeds of oppression, violence, and blood, which prevailed during the transient dominion of atheism, threatened soon to dissolve the entire fabric of society; and myriads, filled with dismay and terror at the grim spectre they had invoked, hastily sought a refuge from its exterminating woes by a return to a profession of belief in the being of a God. Hypocrisy itself was deemed a guard against the carnage and miseries of "the creed of despair."

On the other hand, the existence of God cordially believed, operates as a cogent restraint upon vice in every form, and as an incentive to every virtue. It places morality on its right foundation, clothes it with just authority, and enforces it by appropriate motives. It surrounds man with the presence of an all-seeing and heart-searching God, and invests the desires

and emotions of the heart, as well as the actions of the life, with responsibility. It tells man that though darkness and secrecy may shroud his crimes from open disgrace and public justice, he is amenable to another and a higher tribunal, from which there is no appeal. While the belief of a God thus frowns upon vice, it operates as a constant, ever-present, and powerful incentive to the cultivation and development of every virtue. The man who lives fully under its benign influence will make his instincts subordinate to reason; and his conduct will be characterized by integrity, humanity, temperance, justice, and benevolence. He will live as in the sight of a holy God, whose known will he is anxious to perform, and whose protection and favour he endeavours to secure. God will be an object of trust and hope, as well as of reverence and awe; and towards him the affections of his heart may ascend, and find satisfaction and delight.

As to the objection that mankind are not all virtuous and happy, even where the existence of a God is believed, we reply: All men do not properly live under the influence of this belief. But were this belief banished from the world, mankind would be immeasurably worse than they are—sunk in the deepest pollution, crime, and misery; for there is not a single vice which this belief does not restrain; there is not a virtue which it does not tend to promote and develop; and just in proportion as men live under its influence is vice subdued, and virtue and happiness enhanced. Myriads of individuals are living witnesses of its tendency to elevate, ennoble, and bless human nature; and if its prevalence were allowed to operate with equal power universally, it would elevate, ennoble, and bless the whole world.

Let us here pause to ask, What is the corollary of this argument? If the existence of God harmonizes with virtue, as well as with abstract truth, what is its character? Is this harmony an index of truth or of falsehood? Can we believe that truth is the ally of vice, and a lie the chief patron and support of virtue, and the grand promoter of human happiness? That were to contradict a fundamental axiom. With Dr. Reid, we may confidently affirm that “the interests of truth and of virtue can

never be found in opposition;" a sentiment which Mirabaud himself maintains.*

Thus, atheism is false, and the existence of God is a truth, and as such it harmonizes with all the truths of physical science, with man's intellectual and moral nature, and with the welfare and happiness of his being.

CHAPTER XII.

WHILE THE EXISTENCE OF GOD IS SUSTAINED BY DIRECT EVIDENCE, AND IN HARMONY WITH ALL TRUTH, IT IS CONFIRMED BY THE GENERAL ASSENT OF MANKIND.

IF the human mind is adapted for the acquisition of truth, it must be admitted that that which commands a rational assent in all ages, and among all people, both in the infancy of society and in the highest development of the human mind, must be true; unless, indeed, the attainment of truth be impossible, and the human mind be more adapted to believe a lie than to perceive a truth. A proposition universally believed, whenever its terms and evidence are understood, must be admitted to be a true proposition. Cicero affirms, that the consent of all nations to a proposition is the *vox Naturæ, et argumentum veritatis*—the voice of Nature, and an evidence of truth. Aristotle observes: "What seems true to some wise men is somewhat probable; what seems true to most or all wise men is very probable; what most men, both wise and unwise, assent unto, still more resembles truth; but what men generally consent in has the highest probability, and approaches so near to demonstrated truth, that it may pass for ridiculous arrogance and self-conceitedness, or for intolerable obstinacy and perverseness, to deny it."

What, then, is the fact in question? Has the belief of a

* "Système de la Nature," vol. ii., part. ii., chap. xiii.

Supreme Being obtained among men with anything like universal assent? We appeal to the testimony of history, ancient and modern. Mirabaud himself admits that mankind in all ages have had some idea of a superior power. He remarks: "It has been frequently asked if ever there was a nation that had no idea of the Divinity, and if a people uniformly composed of atheists would be able to subsist? Whatever some speculators may say, it does not appear likely that there ever has been upon our globe a numerous people who have not had an idea of some invisible power, to whom they have shown marks of respect and submission."* In another place he speaks of the idea of a God as being so deeply engraven on the mind, that it cannot be eradicated. Here, if the admission of an antagonist were enough, we need no further testimony, as all we contend for is granted; and if evidence of the fact were not incontestable, it would not be so readily admitted.

1. *The Voice of Antiquity.*

Every age has borne testimony to its truth. Aristotle affirms that according to an ancient tradition, which has been transmitted to every tribe of the human race, all things have proceeded from God, and are every moment dependent upon him for their continuance and mode of existence.† Plato, referring to God as pervading all things, and as the punisher of those who transgress the Divine law, represents this as the doctrine asserted by ancient tradition.‡ Plutarch, speaking of God as the upholder and governor of the universe, declares that this is an opinion of the utmost antiquity, which had not its original from any known author, and was generally spread among the Greeks and barbarians.§ He further affirms that "if you search the world you may find cities without walls, without letters, without kings, without money, but no one ever saw a city without a deity, without a temple, or without prayers." Cicero says: "There is no nation so rude and

* "Système de la Nature," vol. ii., part. ii., chap. xiii.

† Aristotle's "Opera," vol. i., p. 610.

‡ "Plat. de Leg.," lib. iv., Oper. 600, edit. Lugd. 1590.

§ De Isid. et Osir.

barbarous as not to know that there is a God, although they may be ignorant of his nature."* Maximus Tyrius asserts: "In the midst of this great contention, strife, and diversity of opinions, you will nevertheless find the laws and opinions of men, in every part of the world, agreeing in this one point, that there is one God, the King and Father of all . . . This is the opinion of the Greek and the barbarian, of the inhabitant of the continent and the islander, of the wise man and of the fool."†

The men who bore these testimonies to the antiquity and universality of man's belief in the existence of a God, it will be admitted, were men of extensive knowledge, of careful observation, and close thinking, and every way competent to speak as to the fact in question.

If we examine the monuments exhumed from the ruins of Assyrian cities, emblems of a Deity and temples dedicated to his worship are found, of an age reaching back to nineteen or twenty centuries before the Christian era. If we search among the antiquities of Egypt, the ruins of temples are conspicuous among the relics of its departed glory; and according to Plutarch and Proclus, there was on the temple of Neith in Sais the remarkable inscription, "I am that which is, was, and shall be. No mortal hath lifted up my veil. The offspring of my power is the sun."

Among the poets and the best philosophers of Greece and Rome the existence of a superior Being is constantly acknowledged. The argument of Socrates with Aristodemus affords a specimen of the most cogent and convincing reasoning for the existence of an intelligent Cause.‡

Among much that is obscure, contradictory, and bewildering in the sentiments of the Chinese, the idea of a Supreme Being may be observed in their writings. Amid the speculative vagaries of India, the existence of God is the pervading element, although it often merges into the pantheistic absurdity.

* "Cicero de Legibus," lib. i., cap. viii.

† Diss. xvii., sect. 5.

‡ Xenophon's "Memorabilia," book i., chap. iv.

Zoroaster taught the existence of one supreme God, independent and eternal, the author of light and the creator of all good : darkness and evil he ascribed to a malignant principle. Herodotus tells us that the ancient Persians worshipped the Divinity on the summits of the highest mountains, and regarded the whole circle of the heavens as the residence of God. The mythologies of the ancient Goths, of the Scandinavian nations, of the Franks and Celts, of the Gauls and Druids, amid all their errors and superstitions, indicate one great truth as the groundwork of their religious opinions—the existence of a supreme Creator.

2. *Modern Testimony.*

We have information on this subject much more abundant in modern times, and it agrees with the voice of antiquity. Since the times of Plato, Aristotle, Socrates, and Cicero, two thousand years or more have been added to the sum of human history, and science and art, and facilities for human intercourse, have spread before us the opinions and customs of man, from the earliest antiquity, and the remotest regions of the earth. The result is, that a belief in the existence of a God has obtained amongst men with almost absolute universality.

In modern times the sentiments of all nations are so well known as to preclude the necessity of adducing a formal array of evidence respecting the general acknowledgment of a God. The Christian worships him under the refined and elevated sentiments embodied in the volume of revelation ; the Jew and the Mohammedan worship him as the God of Abraham, the Creator of all worlds, and the universal Judge ; and the Pagan bows before him with a dim apprehension of his nature, and with various superstitious rites. Even the American Indians, the savages of the South Sea Islands, the barbarous tribes of Africa, and the inhabitants of almost every part of the earth, whether visited by the navigator or explored by the intrepid traveller, present in their sentiments some vestiges, more or less explicit, of a belief in the existence of a superior power.

Lord Kaimes and some others contended for the absolute universality of the idea of a Supreme Being ; but the well-

attested instances adduced by Robertson, Moffat, and other writers, as to the existence of some savage tribes who had neither a name for nor a conception of a superior power, furnish exceptions which we cannot but admit.* But the instances are so rare, and the numbers so few, as to form but a small exception among the masses of mankind in all ages. And it must be remembered, at the same time, that the savages in question were so deeply debased by ignorance, as to be devoid of almost all other knowledge, as well as the knowledge of God. It must also be observed that ignorance of a truth is widely different from its rejection when known. Even the mind of the savage, when informed of God's existence, and referred to the evidence of his being, at once assents to its truth; thus showing its harmony with his mental constitution, and with the first principles of reason. If, then, universality can be urged for any rational proposition, it may for the existence of a Supreme Being; and if universal assent furnish an evidence of truth, the history of our race in all ages affords that evidence in a remarkable degree.

Nor is this conclusion invalidated by the fact that belief in the existence of God is often connected with the errors and absurdities of polytheism, for where is there a truth unconnected with some form of error? Where is there a rational proposition which the fertile mind of man has not garnished with some adscititious notion? The errors of polytheism, when rightly considered, furnish rather a collateral evidence of the great monotheistic truth, just as a counterfeit coin implies the existence of the sterling currency. Besides, the fact that the existence of a Deity has retained its hold of the human mind amid the monstrous errors and absurdities of paganism, presents an additional evidence of its intrinsic power to command man's assent, and take root in his mental constitution under circumstances the most adverse to its existence and development. Had it not

* See Robertson's "America," book iv.; Moffat's "Missionary Labours in South Africa;" and Locke's "Essay on the Human Understanding," book i, chap. iv.

possessed the most clear and commanding evidence, had it not been in harmony with our mental constitution, it is probable the last vestige of belief in its truth would long since have vanished from our world. It is because it is true, and because its evidence is so palpable, and because its truth lies so obviously on the surface of rational inquiry, that it retains its hold of the human mind; that it is found existing in spite of all the aberrations of intellect and the perversions of reason.

3. *The concessions of avowed atheists themselves, in their lucid intervals, swell the testimony of general assent to the existence of God.*

It is a fact which cannot be concealed, that while the abettors of atheism in general evince but a feeble and fluctuating confidence in their own theory, some of its most distinguished champions have frequently uttered concessions which yield homage to truth, and show the compelling power of that evidence which demonstrates the existence of God. Take a few examples.

The French Convention, during the iron dominance of Robespierre, in one of its most popular, authentic papers, makes the following admission: "Provided the idea of a Supreme Being be nothing more than a philosophical abstraction or guide to the imagination in the pursuit of causes and effects, a resting-place for the curiosity of inquiring minds, a notion merely speculative, and from which no practical consequences are to be applied to human life, there can be no great danger in such an idea."* Now this language touched the core of the infidelity of that day; it was a *practical* objection, not a rational and philosophical deduction. The logical necessity of a creating Cause is here felt, and tacitly admitted as a *guide* to the human mind.

Mr. Holyoake, the apostle and popular defender of atheism in the present day, whose life was devoted to the diffusion of infidelity, could not help, at times, betraying significant doubts as to the soundness of his principles, and paying involuntary homage to the truth. Throughout his discussion with Mr.

* "The Folly of Atheism," by the Rev. T. Allin. A profound work.

Townley, there is no indication of confidence in the truth of atheism. He speaks with tremulous hesitation and doubt, and, indeed, admits that, on leaving this world at death, it may be, he shall have to face the Eternal One! In his so-called "Refutation of Paley," he says: "That design implies a designer I am disposed to allow." Again he remarks, "We shall find that organization proves contrivance. There is no organization which does not manifest contrivance;" and afterwards we have an admission which clearly shows that the application of the principle here laid down rationally conducts him, as well as ourselves, to a creating Cause. He says, "If natural theologians were content to stop where they prove a superior something to exist, atheists might be content to stop there too, and allow theologians to dream in quiet over their barren bantling." * How plainly does this confession reveal the true cause of the atheistic objection! A "*superior something*" is reluctantly admitted to be proved; and hence it is not the want of evidence of a creating Cause that is felt as an objection, but the consequences it involves. Atheism, therefore, is not the dictate of the understanding, but proceeds from the enmity of the heart.

In Mirabaud's "System of Nature," an elaborate work written avowedly to overturn our belief in God, there are many concessions which plainly show that the author had no confidence in the atheistic system he pretends to defend; and there are some passages which openly admit the existence of a God. Of this Being he speaks as the "Divinity," the "Great Parent," the "Being of Beings," the "Creator," and the "Deity." He says, "The existence of the great Cause of causes, the Parent of parents, does not, I think, admit of any doubt in the mind of any one who has reasoned." † Strange language for an avowed atheist! Again he remarks, "The great Cause of causes must have produced everything; but is it not lessening the true dignity of the Divinity to introduce him as interfering in every

* "Paley's Natural Theology Refuted in his Own Words," by G. J. Holyoake, pp. 19, 26, 37.

† "Système de la Nature," tom. ii., part. ii., chap. iv.

operation of Nature, nay, in every action of so insignificant a creature as man—as a mere agent, executing his own eternal, immutable laws, when experience, when reflection, when the evidence of all we contemplate, warrant the idea that this ineffable Being has rendered Nature competent to every effect, by giving her those irrevocable laws, that eternal, unchangeable system, according to which all the beings she sustains must eternally act? Is it not more worthy the exalted mind of the great Parent of parents, the *Ens entium*, more consistent with truth, to suppose that his wisdom, in giving these immutable, these eternal laws to the microcosm, foresaw everything that could possibly be requisite for the beings contained in it; that, therefore, he left it to the invariable operation of a system, which never can produce any effect that is not the best possible that circumstances, however viewed, will admit?" In this marvellous extract we have both the existence and the personality of the Deity plainly acknowledged, as the great Cause of all things, and that, too, in a voluminous and elaborate production written avowedly with a design to establish atheism on a philosophical foundation. Can we have a clearer proof that the system is not cordially believed even by its most competent advocates? Must not that evidence be overpowering which extorts such a confession as this?

We furnish only one other example, and we select it from Hume, one of the most subtle defenders of atheism, a man who laboured with both hands to undermine Christianity and the being of a God. This writer remarks: "Though the stupidity of men, barbarous, uninstructed, be so great that they may not see a Sovereign Author in the more obvious works of Nature, to which they are so much familiarized, yet it scarcely seems possible that any one of good understanding should reject that idea when once it is suggested to him. A purpose, an intention, a design, is evident in everything, and when our comprehension is so far enlarged as to contemplate the first rise of this visible system, we must adopt with the strongest conviction the idea of some intelligent cause or author." "The universal propensity to believe in an invisible intelligent power, if not an original instinct,

being at least a general attendant of human nature, may be considered as a kind of mark or stamp which the Divine workman has set upon his work, and nothing surely can more dignify mankind than to be thus selected from all the other parts of creation, and to bear the image or impression of the universal Creator." Again he remarks: "What a noble privilege is it of human reason to attain the knowledge of the Supreme Being, and from the visible works of Nature be enabled to infer so sublime a principle as its supreme Creator!"* In another place this writer affirms: "The whole frame of Nature bespeaks an intelligent author, and no rational inquirer can, after serious reflection, suspend his belief for a moment with regard to the principles of genuine theism and religion."

Such, then, are the testimonies of avowed atheists themselves—atheists, too, of no common order, but its boldest champions, its most athletic defenders and eloquent promoters; of men who have done more than all others, by their writings, labours, and public influence, to overthrow our belief in the existence of God. The same hand that compounds the poison administers the antidote. The high priests of error do homage to the noblest truth. While offering incense to atheism, they turn round and pronounce it to be a lie!

The proposition that there is a God is evidently unique in its claims to our belief. As a rational proposition, it stands alone and unrivalled in its commanding ascendancy and compelling evidence. We have seen that by men in all ages it has been received with all but unanimous consent; that in the remotest periods to which history can trace the existence of man this belief has prevailed, and among nations the most diverse in their manners, customs, and habits, the most sequestered in their locality, and alien from others^o in their dispositions, this belief has prevailed; that by men of the highest intellectual endowments, and by men of the most antagonistic theories of philosophy, it has been held; and, finally, that even the most formidable champions of infidelity, in their

* Hume's "Natural History of Religion," section xiv.

lucid intervals of reason and common sense, have confessed it to be true, yea, irresistibly true, and that it is not possible to eradicate its truth from the human mind.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD IS CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

THE Bible, in its earliest records, is unquestionably the most ancient document in the world. It may be viewed in a twofold aspect — as a Divine revelation, or simply as a record of facts, traditions, and human beliefs. In the former character it has credentials which challenge the severest scrutiny. If those credentials are valid, this volume is inspired; and, being inspired, its teachings, like the teachings of Nature, are the voice of God, and are to be regarded as having, at least, equal authority and equal claims to our consideration. But if the Bible be viewed simply as a record of historical facts, traditions, and human beliefs, it is interesting to know what they are, and what is their bearing on the great question before us. Moreover, if the teachings of the Bible are found to harmonize with the teachings of Nature, they are important as well as interesting. But if the teachings of the Bible furnish us with ideas which, while harmonizing with Nature, carry us beyond the deductions of reason, shedding light on what is obscure, and solving what is difficult and perplexing, their interest and importance become greatly augmented. That such is, indeed, the character of the sacred writings, is the conviction of many millions of men, including the most logical, philosophical, and deep-thinking minds of the age. Therefore, whether or not the reader regard the Bible as an inspired volume, it would be unphilosophical to ignore or disregard its testimony on the great question before us.

The Holy Scriptures, which notice the prevalent sentiments

of mankind for a period of four thousand years, speak of God in every page, and assume his existence as a truth almost universally admitted. The earliest records of man present him in a state of intercourse with his Maker, and the whole history of the Bible is a record of communications from God to man. In the early ages of the world, indeed, there is no positive evidence that speculative atheism had any advocate; and if, at a subsequent period, "the fool said in his heart, There is no God," the sentiment appears more prominent in his dispositions than in his judgment, and withal had so feeble an influence over the minds of men that the sacred writers never deemed it necessary to combat the error, either by formal proofs of the existence of God, or by an appeal to miraculous operations. *Polytheism*, not atheism, was the prevailing sin, and therefore the aim of inspired men was not so much to assert the existence of one God, as the non-existence of others—to maintain his authority and enforce his laws, to the exclusion of all rival pretenders. Yet passages are not wanting in which his existence is asserted, and these are generally combined with admonitions against some form of polytheistic error. Thus it is declared to ancient Israel—"I am Jehovah thy God" (Exodus xx. 2). "Unto thee it was showed, that thou mightest know that Jehovah is God; there is none else beside him" (Deut. iv. 35). "Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that Jehovah he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else" (Deut. iv. 39). "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah" (Deut. vi. 4). "Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Isaiah xliii. 10). "Thus saith Jehovah the King of Israel, and his Redeemer Jehovah of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God" (Isaiah xliv. 6). "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God" (John xvii. 3). "We know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one" (1 Cor. viii. 4). "There is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and

one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him" (1 Cor. viii. 6). "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all" (Eph. iv. 6).

These declarations of his existence and his sole claim to the homage of mankind are sustained by appeals to the visible universe as his own work, as a permanent evidence of his being, and a manifestation of his glory. In the first sentence of the sacred book it is declared—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The same truth pervades the entire volume, and is expressed in every variety of phraseology. Nehemiah says, "Thou, even thou, art Jehovah alone; thou hast made the heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee" (ix. 6). "By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth" (Psalm xxxiii. 6). "Thus saith Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel: I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded" (Isa. xlv. 11, 12). "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy work" (Psalm xix. 1). "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). To every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, the command is promulgated—"Fear God; and give glory to him . . . and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. xiv. 7).

It was the guilt and condemnation of the heathen world that the manifestations of God so plainly set forth in the wonders of creation were disregarded, and the Divine truths originally deposited amongst them had been obscured and corrupted by false philosophy and degrading superstitions. "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that, when

they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen" (Romans i. 19—25).

These declarations of Jehovah's existence, and his sole claim to the homage of his creatures, are frequently combined with the most eloquent exhibitions of his majesty and glory. He clothes himself with light as with a garment. He stretcheth out the heavens like a curtain. He layeth the beams of his chamber in the waters. He maketh the clouds his chariot, and he walketh upon the wings of the wind. He maketh the heavens his throne and the earth his footstool, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers before him. He measureth the ocean in the hollow of his hand, and meteth out heaven with a span, and comprehendeth the dust of the earth in a measure. He weigheth the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. Behold, all nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; and he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. He bringeth the universe into being with a word. He said, Let there be light, and there was light. He telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names. He looketh on the earth and it trembleth: he toucheth the hills and they smoke. The thunders are his voice, the lightnings are his arrows. At his rebuke the sea retires as affrighted, and the sun standeth still. His throne is unapproachable for its brightness: a rainbow spans the terrible crystal firmament, and round about the throne are cherubim, seraphim, human spirits, angels, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, who, countless in their number, refulgent with bright-

ness, and blissful in their estate, pour forth before him their ceaseless anthems of joy and hallelujahs of praise.

The richest imagination of uninspired man—the sublimest creations of the poet's fancy, have never equalled the description of the Divine majesty set forth in the Sacred Scriptures. The most admired odes of heathen antiquity or of modern genius are not to be compared with these representations of the Almighty Jehovah; and yet, it must be confessed, that inspiration itself, conveyed through the imperfect medium of earthly symbols, and apprehended by the narrow and feeble grasp of human intellect, falls short, yea, infinitely short, of fully setting forth the Deity to our view.

Ere we close this chapter it ought to be observed, that whilst the Sacred Records proclaim the existence of God, they clearly sustain the leading facts by which we have conducted our argument. Thus the non-eternity of matter argued in Chapter II. is supported by the explicit assertion that the Deity created it—brought it into actual existence. It is declared, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." That the word *ברא* in this passage signifies to *create*, or to cause that to exist which before had no existence, there can be no doubt in any candid mind; and the necessity of elaborate criticism to establish this meaning is superseded by the explicit statement of Paul, who affirms, "that the worlds were framed by the word of God;" and framed in such a sense, that "the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." "The things which do appear" are those material objects which are cognizable by our senses. Thus the testimony of the Apostle determines the sense of *ברא* in Genesis i. 1, and shows that the creation of the universe is to be understood in an *absolute* sense. It was not a mere modification of matter from pre-existent elements, but a bringing into actual existence the elements themselves, of which the great fabric of the universe is composed. Thus the teachings of Holy Scripture, and the testimony of reason and fact, are in perfect harmony on this most interesting and important subject.

The destiny of the present constitution of Nature to change, and finally to perish, maintained in Chapter III. of this work, is also sustained by the explicit declaration that the heavens and the earth shall be destroyed. "They shall perish; but thou remainest: and they shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed" (Heb. i. 11, 12). If the Scriptures be the Word of God, they must harmonize with his works—one in their author, they must agree in their testimony, and it is a fact worthy of observation, that the discoveries of science are daily confirming and illustrating the teachings of Holy Scripture.

CONCLUSION.

WE have now completed our argument on the existence of God; not that the subject is exhausted, for many volumes might be written thereon, replete with convincing evidence. We conceive that almost any one of the arguments adduced is of itself sufficient to satisfy a candid inquirer after truth. Thus, the evidence that matter is not eternal, but derived and dependent, does of itself necessitate a Creator, whose power must have brought it into being. Again, the facts of natural history and geology excluding, as they do, the possibility of either an eternal series or the transmutation of species, necessitate a creating agency; and if we could proceed with no further evidence the proofs thus adduced are complete in themselves. Astronomy and chemistry proving that motion and the orderly arrangement of matter into its present forms, are physically impossible to have resulted from any spontaneous energy in Nature, present another proof of a Creator; and this evidence, irrespective of all other, is sufficient to carry the conviction of God's existence to any mind accessible to the power of truth. Again, the manifestations of intelligence and design in all the operations of Nature, involve a demonstration both of the existence and personality of the Deity. This latter was, indeed, the only

evidence furnished in bygone days; and yet it was deemed abundantly sufficient to satisfy the mind of any candid lover of truth. But when we add the other arguments comprised in the category of our propositions, it may be affirmed that unitedly they furnish a demonstration of the existence and personality of God, which it is madness to resist. Modern science has revealed facts which set infidel sophistry at defiance. To deny God, men must now not only resist their reason, but refuse to behold the most obvious facts.

The existence of the Deity is the grand central truth, around which all others revolve; so resplendent with light, that its beams are diffused through the universe; and from whatever part the open eye of candour turns, the Divine rays fall upon it, and depict the image of the Creator.

Seeing that there is a God, it follows that he is our father, our benefactor, and sovereign, and as such we owe him our homage and obedience. We are dependent upon him for our existence, and every blessing we enjoy. We are bound to revere his authority, to submit to his known will, to conform to his commands, to love him with sincere affection, with supreme ardour, and to make his glory the great end of our being.

BOOK II.

ON THE NATURE AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

IN contemplating the attributes of Deity, we perceive a correspondence with certain properties which characterize our own mental and moral faculties, infinitely contrasting, indeed, in their degree and perfection, but sustaining a marked resemblance in their nature.

This view, however, has been disputed by some. It has been maintained that the attributes of Deity are of a nature altogether different from the mental and moral faculties of the human mind; and that the analogy, if there be any, is very remote, and has in it no more of real resemblance "than the map of China has to China itself." Archbishop King remarks: "Because we do not know what His faculties are in themselves, we give them the names of those powers that we find would be necessary to us in order to produce such effects, and call them wisdom, understanding, and foreknowledge; yet at the same time we cannot but be sensible that they are of a nature altogether different from ours, and that we have no direct and proper notion or conception of them." *

We demur to this representation, as being inaccurate, and calculated to obscure our conceptions of the Divine Being. We grant, indeed, that all our conceptions of the Deity are inadequate, and that human language is but an imperfect medium,

* Sermon on "Divine Predestination and Foreknowledge."

even when employed by inspiration itself, to represent the nature of God; but we cannot, on this account, allow that all the exhibitions of the Divine character and attributes are to be resolved into such distant analogies as exist between a map and the country depicted. We cannot admit the notion that the attributes of Deity "are of a nature *altogether* different from those of the human mind, and that we have no proper conception of them." Dark and enigmatical indeed must be the Scriptures, and *erroneous* as well as inadequate must be the views we gather from them, if such were the case. We think, that with regard to faculties and properties, there is a true and real resemblance; that, in reference to both mental and moral attributes, there is an actual representation as to their nature, however vast the disparity in measure and degree.

What, in fact, is the difference in *duration* as it applies to God and man, but that in man it is finite, while in God it is infinite? The *nature* of duration in both is the same. What is the difference in knowledge or wisdom, as it applies to Deity and to man? We conceive it is the same in both as to its nature, though infinitely different as to its perfection and degree. What is volition, but the self-determining act of a free mind, whether in the creature or in the Creator? What is the difference in love, in truth, in faithfulness, in justice, in holiness, as they exist in the mind of God and in the mind of man? Is not love an affection of complacency and delight in an object? Is not truth the conformity of our perceptions to things? Is not faithfulness the conformity of our purposes, dispositions, and actions to truth? Is not justice the regulation of all our dispositions and conduct by the principles of truth and faithfulness towards others? Is not holiness freedom from and aversion to moral evil, and love to all that is good? Are not these principles essentially the same in all ages, in all minds, and in all worlds? Do they part with their essence, or become changed in their nature, by existing in minds of different order and capacity? We conceive they do not. Whether they exist in the mind of man, angel, or God, they are essentially the same in their nature. Here is the only difference: in the creature,

they are limited ; in the Creator they are infinite ;—in man they are mixed with infirmity, and often with qualities of an opposite kind ; but in Jehovah their lustre is untarnished by any alloy —they exist in absolute perfection, in unchanging harmony and beauty ; they are united to a mind of infinite capacity, and unchanging rectitude. Gold is gold, whether in the rude, heterogeneous mass of native ore, or in the pure and refined ingot ; whether in the diminutive quantity of a grain, or a ponderous, massive globe. So with regard to those faculties and properties of mind indicative of excellence, there is a real resemblance between the creature and the Creator.

In confirmation of this view, the direct testimony of the Sacred Scriptures may be adduced, which not only represents the Deity under the designation of *spirit*—the same word as that applied to the human soul—but in setting forth the creation of man, expressly declares him to have been created in the *image* and *likeness* of God. “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.” In this repetition of the affirmation, expressed in the same terms, there is an emphasis intended, calling our attention to the meaning of the phraseology and the importance of the fact set forth. Here, then, we have a resemblance definitely affirmed, and that resemblance expressed by the terms “likeness” and “image.” We know not what words could have been employed more definitely expressive of a real and proper resemblance. It will not be pretended that the resemblance applies to man’s corporeal nature, for God is declared to be a Spirit, and there must be a total dissimilarity in his essence and properties and our corporeal substance. It is to the human spirit, then, and the Divine Spirit, the Creator, we are authorized to look for the resemblance intended. The soul of man, in its spiritual essence, in its natural attributes, and in its moral qualities, too, prior to its depravity by sin, and after its renovation by grace, has a real resemblance to God. Originally, it was created in his image and likeness, and when purified and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, it is said to be renewed “after the image of him who

created it." On this passage, Matthew Henry observes "that the two words, *image* and *likeness*, express the same thing, and make each other the more expressive. Image and likeness denote the *likeliest* image, the *nearest* resemblance of any of the visible creatures. Man was not made in the likeness of any creature that went before him, but in the likeness of his Creator." Then this judicious divine goes on to state the particular points of resemblance between the soul of man and God, which were—1. Its nature and constitution; 2. Its authority and dominion; 3. Its purity and rectitude. Dr. Adam Clarke also remarks on the same important passage:—"The image and likeness must necessarily be intellectual; his mind, his soul, must have been formed after the nature and perfections of God." Similar views are expressed by other eminent writers. Dr. Chalmers remarks:—"The mind of man is a creation, and therefore indicates by its characteristics the character of Him to the fiat and the forthcoming of whose will it owes its existence."* R. Watson observes:—"When it is said God is a spirit, we have no reason to conclude that a distant analogy, such a one as springs out of mere relation, is intended. The nature of God and the nature of man are not the same, but they are similar, because they bear many attributes in common, though, on the part of the Divine nature, in a degree of perfection infinitely exceeding."† Howe says:—"The Godhead is of a nature nearly resembling our own souls, and the higher excellencies of the best of his creatures, although eminently containing in himself also all the real perfections, virtues, and powers of all the rest."‡ Robert Hall remarks:—"The body has a tendency to separate us from God by the dissimilarity of its nature; the soul, on the contrary, unites us again to him, by means of those principles and faculties which, though infinitely inferior, are of a character congenial to his own. The body is the production of God; the soul is his

* "Natural Theology," vol. i., p. 306.

† "Institutes," chap. iv.

‡ Howe's "Living Temple," part ii., chap. iii.

image."* Theodorus Mopsuestius quaintly observes:—"When God created man, his last and best work, this was as if a king having built a great city, and adorned it with many and various works, after he had perfected all, should command a very great and beautiful image of himself to be set up in the midst of the city, to show who was the builder of it." †

We grant there are qualities and properties in man indicative of the weakness and dependence of his nature; these cannot be ascribed to God. Again, there are some attributes in the Deity which cannot be ascribed to man. But all the mental and moral properties of a human soul, expressive of the excellence and perfection of its nature, are characteristic of similar attributes in the Deity, in whom, from the self-existence and infinitude of his nature, they reside in boundless plenitude and unchanging glory. The consideration of this important truth will aid us as we proceed further in our contemplations of the Divine character.

We propose to establish the following propositions:—

PROPOSITION I.

That the Deity is a spiritual Being.

PROPOSITION II.

That he is eternal in his existence, or that his being has neither beginning nor end, but is absolutely unlimited in its duration.

PROPOSITION. III.

That he is absolutely perfect, and therefore independent and self-sufficient.

PROPOSITION IV.

That, being absolutely perfect, he is immutable in his nature.

PROPOSITION V.

That he is omnipresent, or fills immensity with his presence.

* Sermon on the "Spirituality of the Divine Nature."

† "Ap. Petav.," t. iii., lib. ii.

PROPOSITION VI.

That he is omnipotent, or unlimited in power.

PROPOSITION VII.

That he is omniscient, or has a perfect knowledge of all things that have been, or are, or ever shall be; of all that is actual, and all that is possible.

PROPOSITION VIII.

That he is infinite in wisdom as well as in knowledge.

PROPOSITION IX.

That he is a Being of boundless benevolence.

PROPOSITION X.

That he is a Being of perfect holiness and justice.

PROPOSITION XI.

That a disposition for communion is an essential perfection of his nature.

CHAPTER II.

THE DEITY IS A SPIRITUAL BEING.

IN maintaining the spirituality of the Divine nature, it is not pretended that we have a positive conception of the nature of spirit. Nor is this conception essential to the validity of our argument. We may be certain as to the actual existence of a substance, though, from the imperfection of our faculties, we may have but a dim conception of its nature. Such is the case before us.

The existence of the Deity is established by evidence, and we believe it because that evidence commands our assent. If God exists, he must exist either as a material or a spiritual being, and whether the one or the other we can decide only by evidence.

If evidence disprove his materiality, it involves the fact of his spirituality; and this, we think, may be rendered apparent to every candid mind. The process of argumentation pursued on proving the existence of God affords evidence as conclusive respecting the spirituality of his nature as it does of the certainty of his existence. Indeed, in proving the truth of this proposition, we have little more to do than to apply the principles and facts previously laid down and established.

1. *The eternity of God's existence involves the spirituality of his nature.*

The absolute necessity for an eternal something was demonstrated in our first proposition, and the non-eternity of matter was argued in our second. All the arguments adduced to prove that matter is not eternal, apply with equal force to prove the spirituality of the Divine nature. For if matter be not eternal, God cannot be material, because he is eternal; and if the Eternal Being be not material, he must be spiritual in his nature.

2. *God is not material, because he is totally distinct from the universe.*

If God were material, he would be identical with Nature or the visible universe; but we have already proved that God and the universe are not identical, because, while the universe is an effect, the Creator is unoriginated. God and the universe, therefore, are as distinct from each other as it is possible for any cause and effect to be distinct from one another. Nature is not God, for it is an effect; God is not Nature, for he is its Cause. Distinguished from Nature as to his identity, he is equally distinguished by his essence. The universe is material; God is not material, for the same reason that he is not Nature. He is not identical with matter, because he is not identical with Nature, or the universe. Therefore, as it is not pretended that there are more than two substances in existence—matter and spirit—it necessarily follows that God is a Spirit.

3. *God is not material, because he is infinite.*

Whatever is material is limited, and the co-existence of two material substances—one of which is infinite—is a physical im-

possibility. That matter is finite is evident from the fact that it exists in various degrees of density and solidity, from the compact diamond to the most diffuse gases; and that God is infinite is a truth necessarily resulting from his eternity and absolute perfection, which will be proved at large hereafter. Now, if God were material, there would then be materiality existing to an infinite extent; and as it is an axiomatic truth that two material substances cannot both occupy the same place at the same moment of time, it would follow that the existence of an *infinite* material substance would exclude and prevent the existence of any *finite* material substance, and thus have prevented the existence of the material universe. If God were an infinite material substance, he would fill immensity with his own substance; and, therefore, not a world, nor an atom of any other material substance, would have space for existence. The actual existence, therefore, of the material world presents a double proof of the spirituality of the Divine nature. *First*, in that it was created by an intelligent Being totally distinct from it, and who existed eternally prior to its existence; and, *secondly*, in that its existence—as a finite and limited creature—involves the certainty that no infinite Being of the same nature can co-exist with it. The existence, therefore, of God is that of an immaterial, or spiritual substance.

4. *God is not material, because matter is a subject of constant change.*

This is evident to our observation. It is never permanent in its condition, but subject to incessant mutation;—the solid becomes liquid, and the liquid gaseous, and both liquids and gases again become solid. The processes of putrefaction, decay, analysis, combination, assimilation, &c., are constantly going on. We ask, Are these mutations in harmony with the nature of God? If eternity involves immutability, the Deity must be immutable; and if immutable, his nature cannot be material, for matter is the subject of incessant change.

5. *God cannot be material, because he is independent.*

Matter is passive, and subject to the will of another. This has already been shown at large in Chapter II., Part I. There-

fore, if eternity involve independence, God cannot be material, because matter is passive, and subject to the control and pleasure of another.

6. God is not material, because he is a conscious and intelligent Being.

This latter was established in Chapter IX., Book I.; but matter is destitute of these properties. If we consider it in its diffused elementary state, it is unorganized and chaotic, and destitute not only of consciousness and intelligence, but also of life. But whether we consider matter in atoms or in aggregate masses united by chemical attraction and affinity, it is equally destitute of consciousness, of intelligence, and even of life. In such unorganized masses as are cognizable by our senses, it is inert, passive, and without life or sensation; and when analyzed by a chemical process, and separated into ultimate and invisible particles, it must be the same. Neither combination nor analysis can produce the least change in this respect. A diamond is as devoid of life, sensation, and thought, as a piece of charcoal; and carbon, in its gaseous form, is as devoid of these properties as in its solid aggregations. Indeed, no chemical nor mechanical changes can alter the essential properties of matter, neither obliterating those already existing, nor adding others to it. How, then, can they produce consciousness and thought, voluntary determination, intelligence, and moral sentiment? These are not the properties of matter, and the Being possessing them must possess a nature that is not material, but spiritual.

7. God is not material, because matter is not one thing, but many.

As matter presents itself to the senses, it consists of an indefinite number of particles; and when subject to chemical analysis, these particles are further reduced to atoms inconceivably small, and are multiplied to an extent so as to elude the power of numbers to express, as they do of sight to recognize them. Yet every atom, however small, has a separate individual existence; and if the properties of mind belong to matter, they must belong to each atom. Each atom in this case must have distinct consciousness, intelligence, volition, and every

other attribute of mind, as certainly as it has a separate individual existence. Thus the materialist, to evade the truth of *one* spiritual Intelligence, plunges into the extreme absurdity of supposing an infinite number of intelligent atoms. To escape the absurdity, we have no alternative but to admit that intelligence is not a property of matter, and therefore the intelligent Creator is not a material, but a spiritual existence. If the materialist, pressed by the facts and arguments adduced, should admit that consciousness and intelligence do not reside either in atoms or unorganized masses, but as a dernier resort, contend that these are properties of organized matter associated with life, we reply, This objection is irrelevant, if urged against the spirituality of the Divine nature, for how can any material organization be associated with the nature of Deity, seeing he existed prior to all organization, and prior to all life but his own? If consciousness and intelligence do not reside in each of the particles of matter in its original state, then it is impossible to contend for the materiality of God. Again, the objection is *absurd* as well as irrelevant, for it supposes an effect to exist before its cause. The primordial state of matter was that of elementary particles, as destitute of organization as of vitality and consciousness. This was proved under Propositions IV. and V., Book I. The subsequent organization of matter was an effect produced, not by any inherent power in matter itself, but by the operation of a Being distinct from and infinitely superior to it.

This has been established by an appeal to a multitude of the most obvious facts in philosophy. Thus we have positive proof of the operations of an intelligent Being, who exercised this intelligence prior to the organization of a single thing. Moreover, the Being who exercised this intelligence has been proved to be unoriginated and self-existent; and therefore we have proof of the existence of an intelligent Being for an *eternity* of duration prior to the existence of either animal, plant, or world. Hence it is evident that intelligence existed for infinite ages prior to and independent of any material organization; and, therefore, instead of intelligence resulting from organization,

organization resulted from intelligence. Organization is an effect of which a distinct, an eternal, and independent Intelligence is the cause. If, then, the intelligence of God is neither a property of matter in its primordial state, nor the effect of any organization, it follows that it is totally distinct from matter; and, therefore, the Creator of the universe cannot be a material, but a spiritual existence.

If the materialist should allege that the intelligence of man and of the inferior tribes springs from their organization, we reply, If the allegation were true, it would be of no service against the argument for the spirituality of the Divine nature, for the reasons already stated. But we deny the assertion, and in vain do we ask for proofs. Certainly in man we see a material organization connected with mental attributes; and in lower animals too, we see some of the inferior attributes of mind; but these mental properties are not the results or products of mere organization. The facts before us neither identify mind with matter as essentially one and the same substance, nor imply that mental attributes spring from material organization. In the Deity we see life and intelligence unconnected with organization, and in plants we see life and organization *unconnected* with intelligence or any mental attribute. These facts prove that there is no *necessary* connection between intelligence and organization; and consequently the intelligence of man is not to be resolved into the mere product of organization, but is the attribute of a distinct and immaterial principle which at present acts through the medium of a material organization.

If it be said that this doctrine invests the inferior animals with a similar principle, we reply, that we shrink not from the logical results of our argument. It is true the most sagacious of the brute creation exhibit no faculty for combining and analyzing their ideas, of forming abstract and general conceptions; they have no conscience or moral faculties; and instinct, as we have seen, is essentially different from reason; still we are far from considering the inferior tribes of creation to be mere machines. We do see some manifestation of the *inferior*

attributes of mind, and wherever there are the attributes of mind there is mind of some sort; and wherever there is mind, there is a principle distinct from matter. In this admission we see nothing repugnant to either philosophy or religion. As Watson observes, "It strengthens and does not weaken the argument, and it is perfectly in accordance with Scripture, which speaks of the soul of a beast, as well as the soul of a man." * We cannot aver that man has the highest order of mind; why should we suppose he has the lowest? Why not allow gradation in this respect *below*, as well as *above*, the human species? It does not, however, follow that the souls of inferior animals are immortal. The truth is, that God alone hath independent immortality, because he alone is self-existent; and neither human nor brute souls are, of necessity, immortal. The immortality of the human soul is a gift from God, which he has withheld from brutes, as he hath withheld also moral consciousness, and the higher faculties of reason and speech. "The spirit of man goeth upward, but the spirit of a beast goeth downward to the earth." As Matthew Henry observes, "The soul of a beast is at death like a candle blown out, there is an end of it: whereas the soul of a man is like a candle taken out of a dark lantern, which leaves the lantern useless indeed, but does itself shine brighter." Though the certainty of our soul's immortality lies not in its *immateriality*, it is abundantly sustained by irrefragable evidence of another kind; but as this enters not into our present argument, we must refer the reader for its consideration to another volume. †

From the preceding observations it will be seen, that any objection taken from the connection of mind with a material organization among created beings, has no force, either against the philosophy of our argument, or against the spirituality of the Eternal and Uncreated mind. Indeed, no metaphysical question can invalidate the great fact previously demonstrated, that the Infinite, Intelligent, and Almighty Being existed and

* "Institutes," vol. i. *Vide* Watson's Works, vol. viii., pp. 446—9.

† See "Christian Theology," by the author, p. 485.

acted prior to all organization, and prior to all life but his own ; and, therefore, he cannot be material.

8. *The spirituality of God is expressly asserted in the sacred Scriptures.*

“God is a spirit,” says the Redeemer ; “and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John iv. 24). If God is a spiritual being, he can have no type in any material object or organization. Figure and shape are not properties of his nature, and the chisel and the pencil have no power to depict him to the eye or the imagination. Hence images and pictorial representations of the Deity are expressly forbidden in worship. They are the offspring of ignorance and folly, and invariably lead to idolatry—to gross, degenerate, and unworthy ideas of the Divine Being. God himself, therefore, has given the command, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth : thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.” “Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves ; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire : lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image” (Exodus xx. 4, 5 ; Deut. iv. 15, 16).

CHAPTER III.

SECTION I.—THE ETERNITY OF GOD.

God is eternal. His existence, being unoriginated, could have had no beginning ; and, being independent and essential, can have no end. This conclusion necessarily flows from the preceding arguments. In our *first* proposition, page 32, it was shown that the present existence of the universe involves the existence of an eternal something ; and the subsequent chain of reasoning has proved that that eternal something must be a conscious, intelligent, personal Being, who is the Great Author

of all things, and whom we denominate God. The eternity of God, therefore, is as evident as his existence; it follows as a necessary truth.

The process of reasoning which proves that He *now* exists, proves that he has *always* existed; and, being self-existent, he must *continue* to exist for ever. He lives, but has had no commencement, and will have no end. There was nothing to originate him; there can be nothing to destroy him. He is before, above, and independent of all that he has made.

This boundless existence—this essential life, without beginning and without end—defies all computation and comprehension. A moment's thought reveals our feebleness. We cannot grasp, even in conception, that duration he possesses and enjoys. We cannot comprehend eternity; we have no definite or adequate idea of it. All our positive ideas fall infinitely short thereof. After wearying ourselves with numbers, multiplying millions by millions, and bringing all the aid which imagination can supply to swell the aggregate, we feel compelled at length to fall back upon a mere negation, as the best conception we can form of this sublime and overwhelming subject, and can only say his existence is without beginning and without end.

Mysterious and incomprehensible as eternity is, it is not the less so when contemplated purely as a mental abstraction, than when applied to the existence of Deity; and however mysterious to contemplate something as really eternal, it is impossible to avoid admitting it as a truth. To deny it, is an attempt to escape from a mystery by plunging into an absurdity. The difficulty and mysteriousness in relation to eternity is not theological, but metaphysical; and a similar difficulty is felt in relation to all mathematical infinities. While the great truth of God's eternal existence defies our comprehension, it equally defies our contradiction, and irresistibly commands our assent.

The first attribute, then, which the mind ascribes to Jehovah fills us with humility and awe. While its bright evidence induces our assent as an intellectual necessity, it transcends our powers even as infinity surpasses unity; and its overpowering

grandeur lays us prostrate before the Most High. We feel, indeed, the ground beneath us is a rock of adamant, which nothing can remove; but the awful and interminable line of duration, stretching into the past and the future, bewilders our imagination, and makes us shrink into insignificance. Through all the ages past Jehovah lived; through those vast periods of time, during the slow formation of the prodigious strata which build up the earth's foundations, he lived; ere the primitive atoms of matter had coalesced into globular masses, he lived: all the cycles through which they have run are as nothing compared with his eternal duration. Nay, if we recede still farther into the awful abyss of his duration, until we pass beyond the first moment of creation—when the universe was unborn—when there was neither a crawling worm nor a radiant seraph—when there was neither a revolving world nor a solitary atom—when the throne of the Eternal One was not surrounded by cherub, seraph, or the firstborn of spirits—when universal Nature was a universal blank—when the holy place itself was occupied only by the resplendent Shekinah, and Jehovah dwelt in loneliness, without a purpose unfolded by any objective manifestation—even then we are only on the frontiers of his eternity; and the ages through which imagination has pierced, or may yet pierce, compared with his existence, are only as a unit to the infinite. During those infinite ages Jehovah was what he is now; his perfections, like his essence, are all eternal; and during those infinite ages which are yet to come, he will remain the same, without addition or diminution, in the essential attributes of his nature.

It is almost superfluous to observe respecting a truth so palpably obvious, that the sacred Scriptures uniformly represent God as eternal. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Ps. xc. 2). He is "the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity" (Isa. lvii. 15).

SECTION II.—THE SCHOLASTIC NOTION EXAMINED.

THE schoolmen, and after them many modern writers, have greatly mystified and perplexed this sublime doctrine by a notion which, to us, seems equally unsupported by reason and Scripture.

The eternity of God is described as *duratio tota simul*—duration without succession, or one eternal now. We are told that “the infinite perfection excludeth from God successive thoughts, as well as successive duration, which seem inconsistent both with eternity and with infinite perfection.” Charnock says:—“There is no succession in God.” “God hath his whole being in one or the same moment of eternity.” “As nothing is past or future with him, in regard of knowledge, but all things are present, so nothing is past or future of his essence.” “Of a creature it may be said, he was, or he is, or he shall be; of God it cannot be said, but only he is.”* Dwight says:—“His duration is a mere and eternal now. In our own existence, the clearest resemblance to the duration of God is found in the contemplation of a single present moment of our being, without taking at all into our view the succession even of that which immediately follows.” “He fills eternity at once, and does not come from the past, go by the present, and enter the future.” †

However great the names by which such a notion is maintained, we can no more assent to it, than we can assent to two contradictory propositions. To us it appears a jargon of unintelligible words; darkening the understanding, and mystifying one of the simplest, yet most important, truths of the Christian religion.

1. It is certainly repugnant to the representation which the sacred Scriptures give of God's eternity. The inspired writers freely speak of Jehovah's existence in ages *past*, at the *present* moment, and in ages to *come*, without any intimation that their language is not to be understood in its customary sense.

* Charnock on the “Eternity of God.”

† Dwight's “Sermons,” V.

Jehovah, speaking of himself, says, "I am the first and I am the last; and beside me there is no God." "I am Alpha and Omega, saith the Lord God, who is, who was, and who is to come" (Isaiah xlv. 6; Revelation i. 8). In accordance with this representation, the Scriptures speak of some of his purposes which *have been* fulfilled, of others *now* fulfilling, and of others to be fulfilled in ages to *come*; and the existence of purposes, which are not yet accomplished, refers to the Divine contemplation a succession both of time and events, like that which engages our own minds.

In opposition, however, to this view, we are referred to a few passages which are supposed to favour the scholastic representation of the *nunc semper stans—the eternal now*. It is alleged that God is said to "inhabit eternity." But this passage is conformable to the popular view of the subject, and says nothing which confounds past with present and future duration. Indeed, if his existence be absolutely without beginning or end, he must inhabit eternity. Again, we are referred to the declaration of Peter, that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." But this passage merely asserts the obvious truth that as all finite duration bears no proportion to the infinite, so apparent length of time indicates neither forgetfulness nor indifference with God, as to the ultimate fulfilment of his purposes, nor the want of means to accomplish his will. Moreover, the mentioning of "years" and "days" in this passage, confirms the popular view of this subject; it admits their reality even in reference to the Divine existence, though it asserts their insignificance contrasted with his eternity. This is more expressly obvious in the corresponding passage in the Old Testament:—"For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is passed, and as a watch in the night." The declaration that he is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," is an affirmation of the unchangeable nature of Christ and his office; and if applied to his eternity, the terms employed clearly admit, because they express, the past, the present, and the future. If it be alleged that the representation of this

subject in the sacred volume is given in popular phraseology, in condescension to our capacities, we reply:—

2. The scholastic representation is as repugnant to philosophy, as it is to the phraseology of the sacred records. It contradicts our consciousness and our experience. If time be contemplated apart from the actual existence of any being, it is merely simple duration; and if applied to the existence of any being, it denotes its actual duration or continuance in being. This continuance certainly consists of such a flow or succession that the past is distinct from the present, and both are distinct from the future; and this distinction is as real and essential as that between any two things, however diverse in their properties. Therefore, to demand from us to conceive of past and future ages as co-existent with the present moment, is to require an impossibility. Those who require it from us cannot do it themselves; and if this cannot be done with regard to time in the abstract or the duration of any created object, neither can it be done in reference to God. We may as well try to conceive every particle of matter to occupy the same point, as to attempt to conceive the past, present, and future being of Deity to be co-existent with the present instant. In fact, this notion is as repugnant to God's eternity, as it is contradictory to our consciousness and experience.

3. The advocates of the scholastic notion were, indeed, influenced by motives the very opposite to the logical results of their argument—they having conceived and defended the dogma as necessary to the absolute perfection of the Creator. Thus Cudworth and others contend, that an existence through successive duration is the characteristic of an *imperfect* nature—a nature “expecting something of itself, which is not yet in being, but to come;” whereas the infinitely perfect Creator, it is said, “hath a permanent duration, never losing anything of itself once present, as sliding away from it, nor yet running forward to meet something of itself before, which is not yet in being.”*

* Cudworth's “Intellectual System,” p. 645.

This succession is also declared to be incompatible with God's perfection in knowledge; and, therefore, it is contended "that infinite perfection excludeth from the idea of God successive thoughts as well successive duration;" successive thoughts it is contended, "are, plainly, an imperfection, and argue a progress in knowledge."*

The fallacy of the objections here stated lies in the erroneous supposition that successive duration necessarily implies a change in nature—which it certainly does not. Whether a being change or not, depends not upon his duration, but upon the *nature* of the being—whether perfect and independent, or dependent and imperfect. Duration is simply continuance of being, and though this duration implies succession or flow of time, it detracts nothing from the excellent nature of the being. What diminution of the glorious attributes of the Deity can we suppose to be effected by the mere continuance of his existence? What had he a year since, or a thousand years since, which he has not at this moment? Does continuance in being deprive him of happiness? Does it detract from his knowledge, or power, or self-sufficiency? Impossible; for the source of these perfections is in himself, and mere time can no more diminish these than it can diminish his essence. Nor does the flow of time or continuance in being involve, as the schoolmen suppose, an expectation of receiving something or adding to the amount of his knowledge and happiness. As an absolutely perfect being, his knowledge and enjoyment are infinite, not progressive. From eternity he knew all things, whether actual or possible, and his enjoyment flowed from his own exalted and absolutely perfect nature; consequently, he has nothing to expect to constitute the fulness of his felicity. If it be said that a succession of time or duration implies a portion of duration lost and an expectation of future existence—we reply, There can be nothing lost to a being whose existence is eternal. His existence and perfections are unimpaired, and the consciousness of present existence—conjoined with the knowledge that his

* *Vide* Brocklesby's "Theism," p. 365.

existence can never terminate—is no imperfection, but an infinite excellence; and, indeed, the foundation of every other excellence.

The consciousness which human beings have of successive duration, does not detract from *their* nature or happiness; nor can we conceive they would have realized a more exalted state, or a greater degree of enjoyment, if their mental constitution had been so formed as to render them unconscious of this succession. On the contrary, our knowledge and expectation of immortality contribute greatly to our happiness, and evince our superiority of nature; and what thus marks the excellence of our nature cannot be an imperfection in the Deity. We do indeed change; we lose both knowledge and happiness, and again we receive accessions to both; but all our changes arise, not from a consciousness of succession in our duration, but from the imperfection of our nature. We lose what we have, because of our feebleness; and we receive accessions, because we have not sufficiency in ourselves. Defect, limitation, and dependence characterize our nature—and hence we change; fulness, infinitude, and all-sufficiency characterize the Deity—and hence, during the flow of ages, he remains the same.

4. The scholastic notion which denies to the Deity any consciousness of the succession of thoughts and events, so far from being necessary to a correct view of the Divine perfections, is positively derogatory to them—for it involves ignorance and delusion; it makes God conceive of things contrary to what they actually are. There is, in reality, a succession of events and of duration; this cannot be denied. Therefore, to deny that God's thoughts coincide with facts, is to suppose him ignorant; and to deny that they coincide with truth, is to suppose him deceived. We must, therefore, reject this notion as unworthy of God, and unworthy of the great names by which it has been put forth. It removes not the absurdity to maintain that, to the mind of a Being of infinite knowledge, all things must be present at one and the same instant. We grant that "known unto God are all his works from the beginning," but he knows them as they actually are, and not as they really

are not; he does not know that to exist which does not yet exist, nor that which is past or future to be actually present now. His knowledge is according to truth. Things may be contemplated as actual or possible, as intended or accomplished. Prior to creation, the ideas or archetypes of the universe were in the Creator's mind, and their creation must have been contemplated by him as a *future* event; but when the things were created, his mind beheld the various objects in *actual* existence, and was conscious of the difference between the *ideal* and the *actual*—the *purpose* and the *accomplishment*: and here we have a succession of thought. So with regard to each generation of human beings; the rise and fall of empires; the fulfilment of his own predictions; the accomplishment of his purposes; and all other events: there must be a distinction between the *ideal* and the *actual*; and, consequently, between the present, the past, and the future. This distinction involves such a succession of thought as excludes all ignorance and deception, and corresponds with truth and reality. We therefore dismiss the scholastic figment, and wonder that a notion so contradictory and absurd should have found so many abettors among the wise and the good. We adhere to the Scriptural representation of God's existence, as being strictly conformable to common sense and sound philosophy. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

CHAPTER IV.

SECTION I.—GOD IS ABSOLUTELY PERFECT.

By absolute perfection we mean that the Divine nature is absolutely without defect, and possesses intrinsically every possible excellence, in infinite measure and degree. Such perfection of nature is necessarily involved in his self-existence and eternity. Limitation implies defect, and defect and limit-

ation result from dependence. Thus, every creature is limited, because it is dependent and subject to the will of the Creator, who has given to each only a finite capacity, and a finite measure of any good which it may possess. The capacity may be filled, but it is limited. No such cause of limitation, however, is applicable to the Divine nature, for he is uncaused. He receives neither his existence nor his capacity from another, but, as already proved, is self-existent and eternal. It is, therefore, irrational to ascribe limitation to him, for it is to suppose an effect without a cause—an effect where it is impossible there could be any effect. Existing from all eternity, there was no extraneous cause to limit or fix bounds to any of his glorious perfections, nor could there be any intrinsic cause to produce that result, for every nature delights in its own perfection. Eternity of existence is itself an infinite perfection, and implies, in an intelligent nature, the actual and eternal possession of every other perfection. In such a being it is impossible to conceive the existence of defect, and this impossibility involves an intellectual necessity of supposing, on the contrary, the actual existence of every element of perfection, and that in boundless measure and degree. A conscious, intelligent, personal being, who is self-existent and eternal, must possess absolute perfection.

SECTION II.—INDEPENDENCE.

ABSOLUTE perfection involves independence. All God's attributes and perfections being eternal, as well as his essence, they depend on nothing exterior to himself. There never was a period when they were not in him, in the same infinite measure and degree as they are at this moment; and there never will be a period when they will be either augmented or diminished. Had no creature as yet existed, he would possess the same glorious perfections; and if no creature ever were to exist throughout eternity, he would be the same. Creation adds nothing to him; it can only present objective manifestations of

what is in him, and always was in him from eternity; and if there had been no objective manifestation at all, God would still have been essentially and absolutely perfect.

The great truth thus established, is calculated to inspire intelligent beings with admiration of the Divine character, and excite unceasing thirst to know more of God. Infinity and perfection being impressed upon every attribute, they invest him with unfading and eternal glory, and establish in sanctified minds an assurance that there are in God treasures of knowledge and enjoyment never to be exhausted, and beauties in the Divine character to be unfolded to their astonishment and delight world without end.

SECTION III.—ALL-SUFFICIENCY.

ABSOLUTE perfection involves all-sufficiency. A created mind has capacities without intrinsic and independent resources to replenish and satisfy them. The knowledge and enjoyment of all creatures are *derived*—and derived from sources extrinsic to themselves. As Robert Hall remarks, “Whoever retires into his own mind for happiness, will soon find himself miserable; he will feel imprisoned until he is permitted to go forth and unite himself in affection and confidence to something out of himself.” This is a necessary result of our imperfect and dependent nature, and it characterizes the highest created intelligence in the universe, as well as ourselves. All finite natures are dependent upon sources extrinsic to themselves, for the knowledge and enjoyment requisite to fill their capacities. On the contrary, God is all-sufficient, in and of himself. Both his capacities and resources are infinite, and his resources are all in himself. The boundless ocean of his own nature affords scope for all his infinite faculties, and replenishes his mind with infinite enjoyment. Thus it was before the fiat of creation went forth; thus it was from all eternity; and thus it would have been if the stupendous operations of creative energy had been postponed myriads of ages; and, indeed, thus it would

have been had he continued to exist in absolute solitude for all eternity to come. But though he is dependent upon no creature, all creatures are necessarily dependent upon him; and all intellectual and moral natures must derive their supreme happiness from him. Whatever rivulets of enjoyment may flow from the creature, our capacities can never be filled except from the ocean of bliss which essentially dwells in the Creator. Such being the law under which all finite natures are placed, how exhilarating the assurance that God is all-sufficient—that the fountain is perennial and inexhaustible! That which has filled the capacities of the Deity through all eternity past can never be expended by the claims and desires of the creature through all eternity to come. The capacities and wants of the finite are as nothing to the treasures of the Infinite—"the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."

The absolute perfection and consequent independence and self-sufficiency of the Deity are always implied, and often expressed in the teachings of inspiration. The sacred name which God has appropriated to himself—**JEHOVAH**—is expressive of his self-existence, his eternity, and absolute perfection. The periphrasis of this name, "*I am that I am*" (Exodus iii. 14), denotes the same essentially independent and self-sufficient nature. It simply means, "I exist of myself, and am the only unoriginated, all-sufficient, and absolutely perfect Being; deriving nothing, but communicating all things." With varied phraseology, but with substantially the same import, he is declared to be the Supreme, "over all, God blessed for ever." "The blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality." "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever" (Rom. ix. 5; 1 Tim. vi. 15; Rom. xi. 36).

CHAPTER V.

GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE.

I. *Eternity, self-existence, independence, and all-sufficiency, involve an unchangeable nature.*

Change is the property of a dependent and imperfect nature, but an absolutely perfect being must be immutable. He cannot change by augmentation or improvement, for infinite and absolute perfection admits not of increase or progression. He cannot change by diminution or decay, for his whole nature and attributes—being self-existent—are not contingent, but *necessary*. He cannot change by deterioration; for, on the one hand, as a perfect being, he cannot but delight in the continuance of his own perfection; and, on the other hand, being independent, he is superior to all incidents and to the operation of all second causes. Unoriginated, eternal, and supreme, there is none to control him, or to interfere with his purposes, or to affect the mode of his being; absolutely perfect, there is neither limitation nor defect in his nature; infinitely blessed, as well as infinitely excellent and glorious, he has nothing to attain which his nature does not already possess. All change, therefore, is impossible. His attributes being equally perfect, and equally eternal and necessary with his essence, they can no more change than his essence. He is, therefore, immutable.

II. *The sacred Scriptures correspond with the decisions of reason.*

They constantly assert the immutability of the Divine Being. He is declared to be the "Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas. i. 17). He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever" (Heb. xiii. 8). Jehovah himself proclaims, "I am the Lord, I change not" (Malachi iii. 6). The immutability of the Divine nature is placed in sublime and striking contrast with the transient and evanescent character of even the most durable parts of the

material universe. "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the works of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end" (Psalm cii. 25—27).

Change is the law of all created existence. Nothing is absolutely stable and unvarying but the Deity. The material universe is running through a course of gradual but certain change. "One generation cometh and another goeth." The ocean shifts its place, the mountains are crumbling into ruin; science tells us that chemical activities are seeking repose, the earth is narrowing her orbit, and is destined to destruction. Similar changes seem to be transpiring in other orbs, and analogy points to universal dissolution as the destiny of the countless myriads of systems which faintly shed their light upon our planet. The universe of mind, too, is changing. From the testimony of that volume whose Divine authority we hope hereafter to establish, we learn that some intelligent beings, once holy and happy, have fallen and lost their blest estate; others are in a process of merciful recovery, and others passing from a life transient and trying to one of immortality and glory. The most blessed in heaven are changing by accessions of knowledge and enjoyment; and a greater exaltation awaits them at the resurrection, to be succeeded by growing honours and accumulating blessedness for ever. The law of progression seems to belong to all minds, and all the various orders of angelic beings seem destined to advance with us, both in their faculties and attainments, through eternity. The scale of being on our planet, too, has advanced through successive ages, and, after another catastrophe, earth may be the abode of beings of a higher nature than any which have yet trod its surface. But, amid all this change and progression in the universe of matter and of mind, there is One who remaineth unchangeable—the everlasting God.

III. *Yet the immutability of God does not exclude the exercise of dispositions and affections, nor involve a stoical indifference to*

the welfare of his creatures generally, nor to the character which may be assumed by intelligent and moral agents.

Such an apathetic Deity, however conformable to the notions of heathen philosophers, is totally repugnant to the dictates of sound reason and the teachings of inspiration. All intelligent beings have dispositions and affections; and though some of these—such as fear, sorrow, sadness, and the like—are evidences of an inferior and dependent nature, and cannot exist in God, yet others—such as love, complacency, delight, &c.—are evidences of a superior nature, and do dwell in the mind of Deity. It is quite evident that to abstract these latter qualities from mankind, would be to deteriorate human nature. It is, indeed, within the scope of these affections that all the moral excellencies of our nature are evolved; and without them, however intellectual a man might become, he could exhibit no moral excellencies. In fact, in a state of total apathy, we do not see how he could be a moral agent. It is, therefore, irrational to suppose the *Deity* destitute of affections. The qualities which constitute either intellectual or moral excellencies in man must exist in the Creator, and exist, too, in infinite plenitude and perfection. Possessing these affections, Jehovah does not look with indifference upon the conduct of men; for apathetic indifference, as to moral actions, would argue an imperfection in his *rectoral* character as the Governor of the universe. just as the absence of all affections would involve a defect in his *nature*. From his exalted throne he beholds the conduct of all men; and while he approves the righteous, and regards them with affection, he condemns the conduct of the wicked, and regards it with abhorrence.

IV. *Neither does immutability involve absolute uniformity of action and relation.*

God creates, and he destroys; he kills, and he makes alive; he raises up, and he casts down; he exalts to glory, and he consigns to endless ruin. Yet in all this there is no change in God. He foresaw the end from the beginning, so that he is never disappointed or taken by surprise by any result—has never to alter his plan to meet any unexpected contingency or emergency.

All that the creature does, he foreknew; and all that he does himself, he had pre-determined. His purposes are stable, for they were laid by unerring wisdom; and his nature and character are unchangeable, though his operations are diversified. If a righteous man fall from the Divine favour, it is because the man himself has changed in his character by sin; and if a wicked man rise into the Divine love, it is because he becomes changed by repentance. God may deal with nations as he does with individuals. The Jews may be cut off from the olive, and the Gentiles be grafted in; the light of truth may expire in Eastern Churches, and Western nations, which sat in darkness, may emerge into the day-spring of Gospel privileges. But, in all these events, the change is in man, not in God: the one has rejected privileges, and they are withdrawn; the other has improved them, and they are increased. The fact that when men change in their character they change also in their relation to God, is a further proof of God's immutability. It is because his law, his love of holiness, and the principles of his moral government are unchangeable, that the repentant are accepted and the impenitent rejected—that the righteous are approved, and the wicked are cast out. As the sun shines at midnight with equal brightness, though we are then involved in darkness; and as his beams are diffused with the same genial and vivifying power in winter, though we shiver with cold, and our hemisphere is covered with barrenness and desolation, so God is the same in his nature, perfections, and laws, though our conduct may change our condition from happiness to misery, from favour to condemnation.

The only uniformity necessary in the operations of God, is this—that the works of his hand should always accord with the perfections of his nature; that the principles of his government should harmonize with the attributes of his character; and that his relation to his creatures should be in accordance with those principles. "Were it at all possible that the product of any act of his power should be out of harmony with any attribute of his character, it would cease to be possible for his creatures to read Nature's lesson with any clearness, or to arrive at truth

with any certainty. The fault, in that case, would not be in the reader, but in the book. The oracle being ambiguous, no blame could be attached to those who understand it in different ways. These things are sufficiently plain. . . . In all his procedure, we must, without doubt, conceive of him as acting in the strictest agreement with the immutable principles of his character. By these principles, therefore, essentially and eternally inherent in his nature, he was guided in the formation of the universe—in fixing the constitutions, allotting the circumstances, and adjusting the mutual relations of all his creatures;”* and by these principles he is guided still. The sum of this is, that as God cannot contradict himself, his works must agree with his nature. This agreement flows from his absolute perfection, and is everywhere seen in his works. His wisdom, power, goodness, truth, justice, and holiness, harmoniously beam forth in creation, in providence, and in his moral administration, especially as contemplated in the light of revelation, and with due reference to the future state of moral agents. Thus, his works are a running comment upon his unchanging character from age to age. The acts of power are directed by wisdom; and both wisdom and power accomplish the purposes of goodness; and the purposes of goodness harmonize with the dictates of truth and justice. However multiplied and diversified the operations of Deity, no attribute of his nature is ever infringed by his works; they are subject to no collision, no compromise, no change; and, however varying the character and condition of the creature, God is eternally the same.

V. *Again, the immutability of God does not involve fatalism, or imply the existence and control of any absolute necessity in his operations.*

The Scriptures everywhere describe the Deity as acting with perfect freedom of choice and will—a voluntary, self-determining power, directed by intelligence and goodness. He doeth all things “according to the good pleasure of his will.” This doctrine is abundantly sustained by reason. The notion

* Wardlaw's "Christian Ethics," p. 216.

of necessity, or fatalism, is contradicted both by the nature and the works of God.

1. *His nature contradicts the doctrine of necessity.*

(a) He is eternal and self-existent, and cannot be under any physical necessity, because, as he existed *before* all things, there could be nothing originally to induce that necessity; and *since* creation, there could be no such physical necessity, because nothing exists but what he himself has freely brought into being; and every creature is subject to him, while he is subordinate to nothing, but superior to all things.

(b) His intelligence refutes the notion of necessity. Absolute necessity is blind, and acts without knowledge or choice; but we have often before proved that his intelligence contemplated a purpose in multitudes of instances, and elected means for their accomplishment. Every proof of such intelligence and choice expresses the freedom of the Deity, and totally disproves the notion of necessity.

(c) His absolute perfection refutes this doctrine. A being which acts from necessity acts subordinately to a superior power; but the Deity is absolutely perfect, and can have neither superior nor equal; on the contrary all things are infinitely inferior to him, and absolutely dependent upon him. A being acting from necessity is of the *lowest* species of existence; for all things rise in dignity in proportion to their freedom. Thus, inanimate matter has no choice, but is necessarily and absolutely subject to the government or control of the laws imposed upon it. The lowest animal which has voluntary motion is higher than the most elaborate modification of matter, and than the highest form of vegetable existence; but man, whose actions are voluntary and free, who is conscious of an elective and self-determining principle, is the highest creature upon earth. If, then, the Creator be of a higher nature than the creature, he must be perfectly free. Indeed, he could not have given freedom to man, had he not been absolutely free himself: he could not have made man a moral agent, had he not himself been an intelligent and a voluntary being.

2. *All the works of God evince his freedom, and contradict the notion of necessity.*

(a) An absolute necessity must have acted eternally, as well as at present ; but we have evidence that there was a time when the universe had no existence.

(b) Necessity must act with absolute uniformity ; but in the works of God there is a boundless variety, and a succession of changes therein from age to age.

(c) Necessity must not only have acted uniformly from all eternity *past*, but continue to act through all eternity *to come*, producing nothing but the same results for ever ; but there is evidence, both that creation has had a beginning, and that it must have an end. The idea, therefore, of God being influenced by necessity, is a mere figment of the imagination, alike contradicted by his nature, his word, and his works.

The only necessity conceivable is that of fitness :—that, as a God of truth, he cannot lie ; as a God of benevolence, he cannot be unkind ; as a God of absolute rectitude, he cannot be unjust ; and, as a Being wise, holy, and good, he cannot but do what is best. This, however, is not a physical, but a *moral*, necessity—a necessity of fitness, and is as agreeable with his perfect freedom as it is with his unchangeable nature.

SUMMARY.—We have thus shown that the immutability of God is perfectly consistent with the exercise of dispositions and affections, with a boundless variety of operations in the works of creation and providence, and with absolute freedom of choice and self-determination ; from which it follows that a correct view of Jehovah's immutability is this :—There is no change in his essence by decay ; no change in his attributes by augmentation or diminution ; no change in his views or purposes by ignorance, inadvertence, or mistake ; no change in his dispositions and affections by fickleness or caprice ; no change in his character by deterioration or improvement. What he is, he always was, and always will be—a Being infinitely and absolutely perfect. He has now not an attribute, disposition, or affection but what he ever had ; and through all eternity no new property or

affection can arise. He is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

With what glory does immutability invest the Creator, and in what sublime and awe-inspiring contrast does he stand with respect to the most durable existence and the most exalted nature among his creatures! Compared with his eternity, the universe is young; and compared with his immutability, it is unstable and evanescent. From his exalted throne he beholds the longest series of events, which the heavens have chronicled, come on, and depart, and their duration is "but as a watch in the night." The most protracted dynasties rise and fall, and their existence is but as an hour. Suns are lighted up, systems are formed, and he sees them wane and expire—he beholds their vast cycles run out, as we see the changing phases of the moon. He has seen the ethereal spirits nearest his eternal throne—pure and refulgent with the reflection of his own image—rise from the dawn of infantine intelligence and excellence, and, through countless ages, advance, in intellectual vigour and moral elevation, to their present dignified estate. He envies not, but rejoices in their attainments, satisfied and pleased that they answer the end of their being; yet he changes not. He shifts not his throne higher, because of their exaltation; he expands not his powers, because of their progression; he brightens not his perfections, because of their augmenting glory. The excellencies of his intellectual and moral nature will for ever leave the most exalted seraph at an infinite distance from himself.

Such being the nature of Jehovah, his immutability can have no proper emblem or representation in Nature; for how can that which is essentially and eternally unchangeable be fitly represented by that which is in a state of constant flux and mutation? It is only because rocks and hills *seem* not to change, during the brief moment of our mortal history, that such are employed as faint images and shadows of God's unchanging nature. Strictly speaking, they are no more fit to represent the immutability of Jehovah than the transient meteor or the *ignis fatuus* is fit to represent the stability of the solar system. "To

whom, then, will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him? Have ye not known? have ye not heard? hath it not been told you from the beginning? have ye not understood from the foundations of the earth? It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in; that bringeth the princes to nothing; he maketh the judges of the earth as vanity. Yea, they shall not be planted! yea, they shall not be sown; yea, their stock shall not take root in the earth; and he shall also blow upon them and they shall wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble. To whom, then, will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." Blessed God! thou art beyond all compare; "Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old as a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end."

The immutability of Jehovah gives stability to his purposes and certainty to his promises. His word cannot fail, because his nature cannot change. His covenant rests on this sure foundation, therefore "the counsel of the Lord shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure." "He is not a man, that he should lie, nor the son of man, that he should repent." Though "all flesh is grass, and the goodness thereof as the flower of the field," "the word of the Lord endureth for ever." Those who trust in him shall never be disappointed. Those who confide in his protection shall never be endangered. Those who seek their consolation and happiness in his favour shall never be repulsed. They tread upon a rock of adamant; they drink from an exhaustless fountain; and they are secure though Nature sink in ruin. Though living in a world of vicissitude and change, inhabiting a body of clay destined soon to perish, surrounded by friends who fluctuate and die, and subject to events which oscillate and toss mankind like a frail bark on a troubled ocean, they shall find strength and security in God. Our frail and

changing nature, when united to him, inherits a lot which partakes of his changeless character; and not only amid the mutations of this life, but amid the awful scenes of the last day, when "the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the elements melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works therein shall be burned up," we shall rejoice in his changeless name.

To the wicked this attribute presents another aspect. Like the cloudy pillar, it sheds effulgence upon the path of the just, but darkness and dismay upon the wicked. Because God is unchangeable, iniquity shall not go unpunished; the impenitent rejecter of offered mercy shall not, cannot escape the threatened vengeance. The stability of the Divine will secures the fulfilment of every threatening, as it secures the accomplishment of every gracious promise. "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself;" and therefore the despiser of his authority, and the transgressor of his law, must finally perish. To such "there remaineth nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."

CHAPTER VI.

GOD IS OMNIPRESENT.

WE will not obscure this subject by detailing the speculations with which metaphysicians have bewildered themselves as to the *mode* of God's universal presence. Apart from the bootless jargon of scholastic controversy and metaphysical subtleties, we simply maintain that such is the omnipresence of God, that his personal consciousness, intelligence, and power, and every other perfection, are everywhere; that within and beyond the bounds of the universe there is not a point or space respecting which it may be said, God is not there. The notion that God is the soul of the world, though false and detestable in the Pantheistic sense, is true so far as it expresses the pervading presence and

presiding and directing agency of the Deity through the entire universe. The Infinite Spirit is present with every part of his creation, as intimately as the soul of man is present throughout all the parts of that corporeal substance which it animates and sustains. He fills all space, penetrates all substances, and pervades all minds. He is as intimately present with his creatures as they are to themselves, and unites himself with the very constitution of their nature. They exist within the boundless ocean of his presence, the grasp of his omnipotence, the sphere of his energy, and the light of his countenance. "In him they live, and move, and have their being." Robert Hall observes,* "We frequently speak of God dwelling in the world by the manifestations of his power and providence; but it may with equal truth be said, that the world dwells in God—all creatures being surrounded by his presence and inclosed in his essence."

1. *The evidence that God is everywhere present through the universe, lies in the fact, that the universe is his work.*

The vastness of creation will hereafter be considered; we have now only to observe that whatever may be the extent of the universe, he must be everywhere present therein. The workman must be present with his work—at least, during the time of his actual operation. On the same principle, wherever the creature exists, there must the Creator be; wherever his agency and operations can be traced, *there* may be traced indubitable evidences of his presence. If one creating act reveals his presence, so must *all* his creating acts; and if he is present with *one*, he is equally present with *all*. Wherever his power and wisdom, or any other attributes are exerted, there he is in his essence and personal presence. It will not be conceived by any sensible mind—by any mind admitting the existence of a Creator—that, as this glorious Being formed new systems in different regions of space, he was under the necessity of withdrawing his presence from others, where he had previously operated, and had to change his locality on each occasion of putting forth his creating energy. Yet, if such an absurdity were entertained, it would

* Hall's "Discourse on the Spirituality of the Divine Nature."

be refuted by the fact, that God is continually and simultaneously working in every part of the universe. Active and powerful agencies are everywhere in unceasing operation. Light is every moment passing from orb to orb; emitted from some, and reflected from others. Every planet and every sun is moving with prodigious velocity through space, and if the projectile motion shows a forming God, does not the centripetal force—acting incessantly—prove a preserving God? and does not his preserving agency evince his perpetual presence where that agency is displayed? Gravitation pervades *all* bodies, the most minute atoms as well as the largest globes that roll through immensity. Electricity, magnetism, and chemical affinity are acting every moment upon all material substances. There is no space between the largest globes, and no interstices between the smallest atoms, in reference to which we can say, those various agencies are not continually acting. Can we exclude the presence of the Deity from any part of the universe he has formed? No. Where, then, shall we suppose him not to be? If we suppose him to be present with *one* part of his operations, on what principle can we exclude him from the other? Seeing the operations of his agency are apparent everywhere, how can we suppose him to be absent from any place? and seeing they prevail, incessantly and simultaneously, how can we conceive it possible that his presence can be dispensed with for a moment of time?

The atheistic advocate of the development hypothesis may, if he pleases, endeavour to generalize these agencies into the laws of Nature. On the same principle that he labours to exclude the Divine hand from their origin, so he may labour to exclude the Divine presence from their continued activity. But, having proved the Divine hand in the *origin* of Nature, we contend for the Divine presence and agency in its preservation and continuance. It is vague and unsatisfactory to ascribe the effects around us to the laws of Nature. "A law cannot execute itself;" it always refers us to an agency; it is, in fact, only the rule according to which an agency acts, and that agency we have shown to be God himself. It was *his* almighty agency

which created, and it is his almighty agency which still operates through all creation; and, wherever we see traces of that agency, we see the tokens of his presence. Those tokens are universal, and, therefore, God is everywhere present.

2. *This argument is as applicable to the world of mind as it is to the world of matter.*

It would be beyond the province of our argument to adduce the operations of God upon the soul of the Christian—enlightening, comforting, and sanctifying his nature—in evidence of the omnipresence of Jehovah; but the direct agency of the Creator in the operations of instinct belongs, undoubtedly, to the class of facts which are legitimately at our disposal. The phenomena of instinct evince a high degree of intelligence somewhere; and that intelligence, we have proved, does not reside in the animals themselves, but in God, their Creator. In the operations of instinct, therefore, we see innumerable animals acting out the thoughts and purposes of God—acting under the suggestions and influences of an infinite Mind, ever present, and ever operating. It is not for us to explain the mysterious connection between the mind of Deity and the various forms of animal existence, but we are certain there is a connection of some sort: it is not for us to dogmatize on the mode in which the Deity imparts the influence which suggests and directs the operations of animal instinct, but we are certain that there is such an influence. The facts prove the agency of God, and the agency proves his presence.

The preceding argument carries our conclusion, as to the Divine presence, as far as the utmost verge of creation; but other considerations extend this conclusion to infinity.

3. *The ubiquity of Jehovah may be argued from his nature.*

He is self-existent, and absolutely perfect; therefore, infinite in all his perfections. But limitation and infinity are contradictory ideas. If, therefore, we admit him to be infinite in *all* his perfections, we cannot rationally suppose him to be limited in his presence. Besides, to suppose limitation is to suppose an effect without a cause. The limitation cannot be *essential*, for he is absolutely infinite in all his attributes; and to con-

template it as an effect is absurd, for, seeing he is self-existent and eternal, he is before and above all second causes; and there could be nothing to cause any limitation. Besides, he is immutable, as well as infinite, and, therefore, it is impossible to conceive of any limitation, or any restraint being superinduced upon any of his perfections. As he was eternally infinite, such must he still remain, and such must he continue to be for ever.

From this it follows that there is no point, either within or *beyond* the bounds of the universe, where he is not. Wherever there is a created being, whether matter or mind, there he is; and in those vast regions of solitude and silence, where no creature exists, so immeasurably distant that no stray star-beam has ever reached, even there is God. His being can have no limits.

4. *It is impossible, even in thought, to limit the presence of the Deity.*

We can conceive the universe to be limited; indeed, as a creature, it must be finite. This truth we feel to be an intellectual necessity; and, as the universe is made up of materials of diverse degrees of density, we have ocular and tangible demonstration that matter is not infinite in *quantum*, but we cannot conceive the presence of God as bounded.

Locke observes, "It is true we can easily, in our thoughts, come to an end of solid extension—the extremity and bounds of all body we have no difficulty to arrive at; but when the mind is there, it finds nothing to hinder its progress into endless expansion; of that it can neither find nor conceive any end. Nor let any one say that beyond the bounds of body there is nothing at all, unless he will confine God within the limits of matter. Solomon, whose understanding was filled and enlarged with wisdom, seems to have other thoughts when he says, 'Heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee;' and he, I think, very much magnifies to himself the capacity of his own understanding who persuades himself that he can extend his thoughts farther than God exists, or imagine any expansion where he is not."* The universe, however vast, is a creature,

*He then
can't
limit*

* "Essay on Human Understanding," book ii., chap. xv.

limited in time and extent; but God, who is self-existent and independent, has no beginning of his existence, and can have no bounds to his presence.

5. *To suppose a limitation of Jehovah's presence is to suppose a limitation to his power.*

The universe, we have seen, is finite; there is, consequently, an immeasurable amplitude beyond the utmost bounds of creation. Now, let us suppose that the Deity contemplated the progressive extension of creation, by adding thereto worlds upon worlds, and systems upon systems, beyond the confines of the present universe, and to continue this progressive extension of his empire for ever. The supposition is rational; it comports with the power, wisdom, and all-sufficiency of Jehovah; but such an enlargement of creation could not be effected if the presence of Jehovah were limited, because, in the lapse of ages, that extension would reach the limits of his presence. To limit his presence, therefore, is to limit his power; to deny his ubiquity is to deny his omnipotence, and to attempt to limit and circumscribe that Being whose nature is absolutely perfect, independent, and all-sufficient; is, in fact, to deny "that all things are possible with God." Such a contradiction cannot be admitted, and, therefore, we must conclude, on this ground, that his presence is unbounded.

6. *The evidence from reason as to the ubiquity of the Divine Being is abundantly sustained by the voice of revelation.*

Thus, in the following sublime passages, this attribute of God is clearly asserted:—"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." "Am I a God at hand, saith Jehovah, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith Jehovah. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith Jehovah." "But will God indeed

dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee." He "filleteth all in all."*

7. *The vastness of the universe.*

The omnipresence of Jehovah is thus established by the clearest evidence; but, while it commands our assent, it overpowers our imagination. In contemplating the immensity, as well as the eternity of God, we feel we have a truth which irresistibly forces itself upon the mind, but yet surpasses all our powers of comprehension. Whatever numbers and symbols we call to our aid, they fall infinitely short of the reality. Science has, indeed, greatly enlarged our conceptions of the vastness of the universe, and yet the whole dwindles into a point, contrasted with the ubiquity of the Divine Being. To gauge the extent of the universe, miles and leagues are too short; and even the velocity of light estimated by time, and that time stretched to millions of years, affords but a faint idea of its magnitude. Light, the swiftest body in existence, travels at the rate of nearly 185,000 miles in a second. Compared with other bodies, the sun is near to us, yet it takes eight minutes for a beam of light to pass from that sun to that planet, a distance of 93,000,000 of miles. The planet Neptune, though belonging to our system, is said to be distant 2,900,000,000 of miles, and it takes a period of four hours for a ray of light to pass from the sun to that planet. The great comet of 1680, at its aphelion, wanders to a distance about twenty-five times more remote than the planet Neptune, and it would take light above four days to travel from that distance to our world. Yet that comet belongs to our system; it is one of the group belonging to the solar family. But vast as must be the circumference of a sphere whose radius stretches so far into the fields of space, it is only a diminutive point, compared with the distance of the nearest body unconnected with this family group—a point so diminutive, indeed, as scarcely to form a parallax to some of the fixed stars.† The time

* Psalm cxxxix. 7—10; Jer. xxiii. 23, 24; 1 Kings viii. 27; Eph. i. 23.

† Whether we adhere to the Newtonian theory of the emanation of light,

required for light to travel from the centre to the circumference of our system, we reckon by the narrow measures of minutes, hours, and days; but the moment we emerge from hence to the nearest star, the journey of light, rapid as it is, has to be computed by years.

The star α Centauri is computed to be two hundred thousand times farther from us than we are from the sun; the star 61 Cygni is three times the distance of α Centauri; and the star α Lyrae is nearly three times more remote than 61 Cygni. Thus, the remotest of these three stars is so distant, that a ray of light would be thirty years in passing from it to our world.* We cannot realize these enormous distances, and yet they are "but our first mile-stones among the trackless space." For, if we extend our observations to those stars whose distance renders them only just visible to the naked eye, we behold objects so remote, that their light does not reach us until one hundred and twenty years after it has left the twinkling orbs. It is in vain to give this distance in miles; we have to heap billions upon millions until the imagination becomes confused by the enormous multitude. Yet here, in these remote regions, we are only on the frontiers of creation. Beyond the visible stars, we come to that faint light called the Milky Way, whose belt infolds a space far beyond the smallest stars visible to the naked eye. This luminous zone consists of myriads of stars, which, from their distance, are invisible to the eye; but they are resolved by

or adopt the modern theory of an undulating ether, the velocity of light is the same; though it is only just to say that "the undulatory theory" was rejected by such scientific minds as Lord Brougham, John Stuart Mill, and many others. Sir David Brewster, indeed, viewed this theory as so improbable that he said, "He could not think the Creator guilty of so clumsy a contrivance." Mr. A. Walker more than eighty years ago proved that light had a mechanical momentum power. And more recently, Dr. W. Crookes has done much towards restoring the Newtonian theory, by a number of experiments which demonstrate the momentum, or mechanical power, of light. See "Journal of Science" for 1875, p. 350.

* Professor Airy, the Astronomer Royal, regards this star as too remote to afford a sensible parallax.

Herschel's telescope, and in one quarter of an hour, one hundred and sixteen thousand of these stars were observed to pass through the field of vision of that powerful instrument. These stars are estimated, on satisfactory data, to be four hundred and ninety-seven times more remote from us than some of the fixed stars; and it would require one thousand six hundred and forty years for a ray of light to pass from thence to our world; or a cannon ball flying at the rate of five hundred miles an hour, would occupy more than two thousand two hundred and sixty-seven millions, eight hundred thousand years in passing through the same space! How prodigious the distance, then, of those orbs whose light constitutes the Milky Way! and yet we have made but little progress through the vast systems of created being; for the Milky Way is, with good reason, supposed to be but the outer bounds of that great stellar congregation to which our sun, and his planets, and all visible stars belong. In depths of space immeasurably beyond the Milky Way, there lie other congregated systems, and groups of congregated systems, each as large, or perhaps larger, than the entire field of creation we have hitherto explored. Our own galaxy, sufficient itself for a universe, and made up of millions upon millions of suns so remote that light itself cannot pass from one star to another under hundreds or thousands of years, is yet but a unit among myriads. Beyond it are other galaxies which hang as wreaths or folded curtains of light; and beyond these, again, are others, appearing as filmy flakes, of faint and dubious aspect; and again, beyond these are others which the telescope alone reveals to our vision, the succession appearing in every part of the heavens, so long as instruments can be found capable of extending the view deeper into space. The nebula of Orion, though visible to the naked eye, "lies a deep so far away, that its light cannot reach us in less than sixty thousand years after its departure;" yet even this is near, compared with others, for Herschel states that "the rays of light from some remoter nebulae must have been two millions of years on their way."* And

* Sir W. Herschel in the "Transactions" for 1802, p. 408.

since the power of Lord Rosse's six feet mirror has pierced yet deeper and deeper into space, it has brought some nebulæ into view, which may be so distant, that their light does not reach us in less than thirty millions of years.*

Let us only reflect for a moment upon the fact that light travels at the rate of nearly eleven millions of miles in a minute, and yet objects are so distant that light itself cannot pass from them to our eye in less than a period of thirty millions of years. It must be remembered, too, that as these nebulæ are seen in all parts of the heavens, this amazing distance is only the radius of the known universe. We must double it to find the diameter, and we must three times double it to find the circumference; yet even this is only a sphere of the *known* congregated systems. But who can tell how far the beams of light, issuing from them on every side, pierce into the depths of space? How many times shall we have to double the circumference of the whole, to reach the utmost limit to which the flooding star-beams dart? What aids shall imagination call up to stretch its view to the most distant rays, shot forth with the velocity of nearly eleven millions of miles each minute of time, since the first moment of creation? But hitherto, lost as we are in immensity, we have been contemplating merely those objects which are *visible* through the telescope; yet, shall we suppose that our little tubes and mirrors, in this corner of the universe, are capable of sounding the depths of God's creation? Rather let us suppose, as reason and analogy require, that all we have explored and all we can explore, compared with what remains unexplored, are as the sands of an hour-glass compared with the stupendous Andes, or the still more stupendous globe itself. This vast universe Jehovah fills with his presence. He resides in every part. His being and consciousness pervade the whole; his intelligence guides, his power preserves, and his presence fills and replenishes the whole. But beyond creation, magnify it as we may—let imagination roam till it is weary with squaring and multiplying all we have yet contemplated—beyond all this

* Professor Nichol.

there is an infinite amplitude where no planet rolls, no nebula looms, no stray star-beam has pierced, no seraph's wing has swept, and no created fiat has yet reached—an infinite amplitude to which all imaginable creation bears no proportion; yet Jehovah fills the whole—his presence and attributes absolutely fill immensity. “The heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him.”

8. *Reflections.*

In the contemplation of such overpowering majesty, what wonderful condescension does the Deity exhibit in making man an object of his tender regard! Well might the Psalmist, when casting his eye on the vast and glittering expanse above and around him, exclaim, “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” Yet he is mindful of him, and numbers the very hairs of his head!

How consoling to the believer to remember that wherever he is, and however diversified his condition, God is with him. How awful to the sinner to reflect that all his crimes and offences are committed in the immediate presence of the Eternal Jehovah, his maker and his judge. Men may shun the presence of their fellows, but they cannot escape from the presence of Him “who filleth all in all.”

While the presence of God is everywhere, it is not manifested everywhere alike. In those boundless regions of immensity where no created being is, there can be as yet no objective manifestation of the Deity—but in every part of creation there is a display of the Divine presence and perfections; and wherever intelligent beings reside, this display is recognized. Yet this recognition is diversified, according to the capacities and condition of the various orders of intelligent beings. Some mentally behold the traces of his presence by the objective display of his attributes, but have no sense of his favour—while others have both a mental perception of his presence and a consciousness of his favour; for he manifests himself to his people as he does not unto the world. As there

is thus a diversity as to the manifestation of the Deity's presence in different regions of the universe, and as perceived by intelligent beings of different states and capacities, it is only reasonable to suppose that there is a distinct region where God, in a manner far more glorious, unfolds his natural and moral attributes, and reveals the tokens of his favour to upright and holy intelligences. This rational supposition is conformable to the revealed doctrine of the spiritual world, where angels and glorified human spirits are congregated to enjoy the beatific vision of God. As in the Jewish temple there was the outer court, the holy place, and the most holy; so in the created universe there are inner and outer circles, if we may so speak, where the presence of the Deity is realized with various degrees of intimacy. The mere philosopher sees him with his mental eye, but the view, however imposing and grand, is cold and speculative. The believer feels him by consciousness as well as sees him by reason, and he rejoices in his relation to him as his father and friend; but the glorified in heaven—freed from those earthly impediments which both obscure the vision and blunt the moral sense—have a far clearer perception of his glorious perfections, and a far more intense and blissful consciousness of his presence and favour. Here, we see God, but it is through a glass—darkly; there, face to face. In his presence is fulness of joy; at his right hand are pleasures for evermore.

CHAPTER VII.

SECTION I.—GOD IS OMNIPOTENT.

PERHAPS the most simple definition of power is the ability to do something, especially to produce some effect; and the idea of Almighty power is the idea of ability to do all things. Thus the proper conception of power always includes agency, and agency is an attribute of mind, and the mind that possesses

this agency originally and without limit must be God himself. The evidence, therefore, of power, like that of intelligence, carries us to the Deity, as the only being who is its original source and fountain.

It was a sentiment taught by the ancient philosophers that all motion originates with mind, and though transmitted and continued through various means, it never commenced except in a volition either of the Supreme Mind, or of created minds. The facts elicited by modern philosophy have removed this sentiment from the region of speculation to that of established certainty. It now takes its place in the category of established truths. We feel persuaded that this truth has been established in our argument on the creation of the universe by the Supreme, Uncreated, and Eternal Mind. Thus, all existence, as well as all motion, resulting from the volition of Deity, it follows that in the most emphatic and exclusive sense "all power belongeth unto God."

Throughout the universe of matter and of mind we see evidences of power in boundless variety; but as the universe itself was created, whatever evidences of power it presents, they must be so many proofs of the power of God.

In the creature we see two distinct kinds of power exerted; the one arbitrary and voluntary; the other fixed and mechanical. The diversified motions of inanimate matter are fixed, determinate, and uniform. Chemical, electrical, and mechanical forces operate according to fixed laws—the same physical causes producing the same effects invariably—except when interrupted by some miraculous interposition. But the source of the power thus exerted does not reside in matter itself. As matter is not eternal, nor motion self-originated, but both derived from God, it follows that all the power involved in the multifarious motions of matter must be referred to the Creator. The Eternal Mind, which originated their existence, supplied the power which gives them impulse and activity.

In the various species of living creatures, we see an immense amount of power exerted spontaneously and voluntarily. With man there is a power still more freely exerted than that exerted

by the inferior tribes. It is less under the influence of instinct, and more completely under the dominion of reason and a self-determining faculty. Every human being knows by consciousness that he has a capability of voluntary activity, of producing a variety of effects. By a simple volition of my mind I can produce an immediate action of the several parts of my body. I can produce muscular contraction and motion; I can lift my arm, change my position and locality. Here the effect is immediate and instantaneous. We perceive nothing to intervene between the volition of the mind and the obedient act of the body. Here there is the immediate contact of mind with matter; here an instantaneous effect is produced upon a material object by simple volition, and thus the supremacy of mind over matter is clearly manifested. "The mind, indeed, to a certain extent and within its own sphere, possesses absolute power, and whatever motion it wills, instantly takes place."

There is, therefore, as clear a distinction, and as wide a difference, between the action of the chemical and mechanical forces in inanimate matter, and the voluntary motions of rational beings, as can be conceived; and yet the power exerted in both is solely the power of God. The evidence of this is as clear in the one case as in the other; for as the voluntary agent derived his being from God, he derived all the attributes of his being from God. His power to act, as well as his power to digest and assimilate food, came equally from God. The power under the dominion of his will, as well as that which operates mechanically and unconsciously in his material system, is derived from the Almighty Creator.

If Jehovah be the source of power, he must be essentially omnipotent. Supreme and independent, there can be nothing extrinsic to restrain or circumscribe his potency; and eternal and underived in his essence, there can be no natural cause of limitation or defect. His power, therefore, like his other attributes, must be without limit, or absolutely infinite.

If a truth so manifestly evident as the omnipotence of Deity required the confirmation of Holy Scripture, we have that testimony abundantly afforded. To the Patriarch Abra-

ham, Jehovah said, "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect" (Gen. xvii. 1). With profound reverence and awe, Job exclaimed, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee" (Job xlii. 2). The Great Teacher and Saviour of men declared, "With God all things are possible" (Mark x. 27). Angelic voices, in the regions of the blessed, praise Jehovah with a loud voice, exclaiming, "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

In conformity with these general ascriptions of omnipotence to Jehovah, the works of creation, of providence, and the marvellous operations of miraculous agency, are uniformly ascribed to God, as demonstrations of his being and of his almighty power. To his wondrous works, then, we turn, to behold the manifestations of this glorious attribute.

SECTION II.—THE POWER OF GOD IN CREATION.

1. *The creation of matter.*

The act of creation involves omnipotence. Whatever energies man may possess, he cannot create a single particle of matter, nor can he annihilate one. He cannot add a new property to any elementary particle of matter, nor can he abstract one. He cannot originate or repeal, suspend or alter, a single law of Nature. He can dart his scrutinizing eye into the various modifications under which matter presents itself to his observation; he can subject it to the power of his alembic, his battery, and his searching menstruum; he can analyze and combine; but he has no power to create or to annihilate an atom of dust, nor any power to destroy one essential property of matter. So far is the smallest atom above the action of the most formidable powers which man can employ; so distinct and impassable is the boundary which marks the operations of the Creator from those of the creature. Creation is the work of God alone; and the bringing of the smallest atom into existence involves of itself an act of omnipotence.

How exalted, then, must be our conceptions of the Divine

power when we contemplate the immensity of creation! "Lift up your eyes on high," says the prophet, "and see who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by name; through the greatness of his strength, and the mightiness of his power, not one of them faileth to appear." Thus summoned by the voice of inspiration to survey the manifestations of Jehovah's power, let us for a moment gaze upon the magnificent spectacle.

We have before descanted on the vastness of the visible universe, as revealed by the space-penetrating power of Lord Rosse's telescope, and stated that a line extending from two extreme nebulae, in opposite parts of the heavens, stretches over a space through which a ray of light cannot travel in less than sixty millions of years. Through the immense sphere of which this is the diameter, it is estimated that millions upon millions, not only of orbs, but of congregations of orbs, are scattered with gorgeous profusion; and how far beyond this prodigious sphere no man knoweth; but the probability is that it bears but the proportion of a grain of sand to our globe, compared to the outer boundaries of the universe of God, yet all equally replenished and crowded with galaxies and diversified forms of existence. The world we inhabit, large as it is, with its mountains and valleys, its vast oceans and continents, is small compared with other globes belonging to our system. The planet Jupiter contains a volume of matter equal to one thousand two hundred and thirty-three times that of our earth; but the sun is three hundred and fifty thousand times larger than our world. Overpowering as this magnitude is, it is diminutive compared with the size of some of the fixed stars. The star Sirius is, with good reason, supposed to be equal in size to many of our suns; but the solid contents of the bright star Vega, or α Lyræ, are estimated to be fifty-four thousand eight hundred and seventy-two times larger than the solid contents of the sun. The magnitude of such a globe is altogether overpowering to the human imagination, and it baffles every effort to approximate to a distinct conception of an object of such amplitude and splendour. Yet have we reason to be-

lieve there are millions upon millions of such orbs scattered through the spacious universe. The number of telescopic stars in the Milky Way has been estimated at eighteen millions; but who can limit the number? And it must be remembered that the Milky Way is only one collection of stars, and seems to form a type of thousands of similar clusters or galaxies, which are seen faintly looming in regions too remote for distinct conception. Sir John Herschel himself has observed two thousand five hundred nebulae, or clusters of stars, and what multitudes more may be observed by the superior power of Lord Rosse's telescope, and what further numbers more may yet be discovered through similar instruments in other hemispheres, we are unable to determine. In some of those already examined, the crowds of stars are found so dense, that "ten or twenty thousand stars appear compacted or wedged together in a space not larger than a tenth of that covered by the moon, and presenting in its centre one blaze of light."

The powers of arithmetic seem baffled with such numbers, and the aggregate magnitude of such amazing bodies confounds the imagination, and almost crushes the human spirit in its attempt to contemplate them; yet such are the creatures of God; such are the evidences of his power. Every atom of the whole was brought into being by his word; yet each single atom proclaims his omnipotence. In the view of such a universe, what force and emphasis are given to the inspired declaration—"Power belongeth unto God!" Nor can we suppose this work was a hard thing for the Almighty to accomplish. The sacred narrative represents the universe as ushered into being by his word: "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." It was the effect of a simple volition of his Almighty Mind: just as a human action flows from a mental determination, so creation instantly followed the fiat of his will. The moment before the fiat was issued, there was not an atom in being; the instant after, the material of these myriads of stupendous worlds declared that his will was obeyed.

2. *The creation of spirit.*

The Scriptures assert the existence of various orders of

spiritual beings. This is not repugnant to reason. To an omnipotent Being all things are possible, and the creation of matter declares the existence of a power adequate to produce any other substance which the Divine wisdom might determine to exist. If God has created matter, a substance so totally dissimilar to his own essence, it is quite rational to suppose, not only the possibility, but even the probability, of his creating beings of a nature in some respects resembling his own. The existence, therefore, of spiritual intelligences of various orders and capacities, may be admitted as a truth conformable to reason; and, as what reason admits revelation asserts, their actual existence is another manifestation of creative energy.

SECTION III.—THE POWER OF GOD DISPLAYED IN THE OPERATIONS OF NATURE.

THE whole universe is in motion, and its motion is the effect of power, and of that power God is the only source and fountain.

1. It has pleased God that a portion of matter should be animated, and this is full of activity. Respiration, digestion, secretion, circulation, assimilation, reproduction, growth, and decay, are modes of activity which pervade the whole animal economy; and in the vegetable kingdom a similar process is going on, so that no portion of vitalized or organized matter can remain at rest. In inanimate matter, too, there are forces in constant operation. The air and the ocean are never in repose; meteoric changes are every moment transpiring. In the more compact and solid masses of the earth—rocks, mountains, minerals, and substances apparently the most stable—electrical, magnetic, and chemical forces are ever active, producing a perpetual circle of decomposition, solution, analysis, and combination. Not a particle of matter, from the circumference to the centre of our globe, but is acted upon by a variety of agencies. Not an atom is completely isolated. It has

properties which influence other atoms, and they have properties which influence it. Reciprocal properties and influences pervade the entire mass of the globe, from its surface to its deepest recesses. This action is the result of Almighty power. A similar process of motion and activity is doubtless the characteristic of the masses of matter composing the planets, the sun, and all those vast globes which are diffused through the spacious universe.

In addition to the influences which thus operate upon the particles of matter in each separate globe, there are activities of a wider scope, and mightier force, giving to those orbs prodigious velocity through the regions of space. Centripetal and centrifugal forces are incessantly acting upon worlds and systems of worlds, and carrying them round in orbits of amazing extent, and with a velocity compared with which a cannon-ball moves with a tardy action. Stationary as our own globe appears, it is moving in its sphere at the rate of more than a thousand miles in a minute of time. The planet Mercury moves at the rate of one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three miles in a minute. But the comet of 1680 is said to move at the awful rate of thirteen thousand six hundred and sixty-six miles in a minute. While each planet and comet of the solar system is thus whirling round the sun, with various degrees of speed, the system itself has no fixed abode in space, but is shifting its place among the stars; and further, the entire collections of stars, and nebulous clusters of stars, are, with good reason, supposed to be revolving around one common centre. The term *fixed* is now found to be no longer applicable to any star in the heavens, for the apparent stability of their position arises from that prodigious distance which makes the whole diameter of our system dwindle to a point, and the duration of a thousand years too short a period to perceive any great variation in their locality. And yet such variations have been perceived as afford ground to estimate that the star Arcturus moves through space at the rate of above one thousand miles per minute; that μ Cassiopeiæ moves at the rate of two thousand one hundred and sixty miles a minute; but a

double star, 61 Cygni, is estimated to be translated through space with the astonishing velocity of twenty millions of millions of miles in a year. The varied velocities just named may be regarded as examples of the activities of the celestial machinery; and if *they* overpower our imagination, how shall we conceive of the energy which at first gave those huge bodies their motions, and which still directs and guides them with unerring exactness, regularity, and ease, as they silently journey through the regions of immensity? The mighty impulse was an emanation of Jehovah's power. The centrifugal force which hurled the ponderous masses into space is his; the centripetal force, which reins them in, and converts their rectilinear into an orbicular motion, is his! The light which issues from them, and darts through the whole area of the vast profound at the rate of eleven millions of miles in a minute of time, received its momentum from him! He who gave them their being imparted these wonderful activities. Well may he be emphatically called "The Mighty God." "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite." "He telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names." He bringeth forth Mazzaroth in his season, guideth Arcturus and his sons, and appointeth the ordinances of heaven.

2. The power displayed by the activity of all created minds proceeds from the Deity. Perhaps we have no standard by which to form an exact estimate of the power possessed by the human mind. We know it is capable of amazing activity, and that it can exercise a limited control over matter. Besides moving at pleasure the several parts of the corporeal system in which it resides, it can exert some degree of power over surrounding objects; it can employ our bodily organs, as so many pliant and well-adapted instruments, in arranging, disposing, and modifying various material substances, and transforming them into articles of utility and elegance. It can operate further, for it can avail itself of existing forces in Nature, and thus intellect can produce effects where muscular energy fails. It can employ the lever, the pulley, the screw, the expansive power of steam, and the explosive force of electricity to execute its will.

Archimedes said he could move the world, if he had but a place on which to erect his machinery; and although this assertion may be regarded as a bold hyperbole, yet it is evident that man can, by the aid of external forces, produce effects truly prodigious, both in magnitude and number, and his works look more like the operations of some superior being than of a creature so diminutive and apparently so feeble as man. We are aware, indeed, it may be justly urged, that the effects produced by the mechanism of *external* forces are rather the evidences of intellectual sagacity than of spiritual power; but it may be urged, on the other hand, that if the effects of mechanical instrumentality surpass the inherent energy of the mind, the effects of muscular instrumentality cannot be proved to limit its power. If the one be supposed to surpass it, the probability is that the other is inadequate to the full degree of its capability. On the organs of its own body it acts by immediate contact, and its power is evidently restrained and held in by the feebleness of the instrumentality it employs, just as the expansive force of steam is limited only by the strength of the copper or iron in which it is confined; and, as Isaac Taylor * remarks, "were the full power of the mind exerted, it would probably rend the vascular system, overcome the adhesive strength of the bones, tendons, and muscles, and break down the frail tenement in which it resides." In fact, we cannot estimate the power with which the Creator has endued the human mind over matter; but the probability is that, if the human mind were furnished with corresponding apparatus, its power over matter would be found to surpass the strength of any inferior animals, as much as it transcends them in the dignity and excellence of its nature. This view is corroborated by the statements furnished in the Scriptures respecting the amazing powers of angelic beings. There may be intellectual beings of various orders occupying every orb in the universe, and, besides those who reside in the visible universe, there may be—and, indeed, the sacred records

* "Physical Theory of Another Life"—a work which indicates great force of thought and a highly philosophic mind.

inform us there are—countless multitudes of pure spiritual existences. No arithmetic can calculate, no mind can conceive, the number of intelligent beings with which the blessed God has peopled his wide domain in the material and spiritual worlds. All these are beings of intense activity; thought, purpose, will, affections, and acts of power, are being incessantly put forth by these creatures. But all the energy thus employed, and all the capabilities yet to be exerted by them, are so many manifestations of the power of God. Nothing is self-existent but the glorious Creator; and as the existence of the creatures is derived from God, so are the energies they individually and collectively exert. Though their volitions and actions are their own, the *power* involved in their exertion is from God.

SECTION IV.—THE POWER OF GOD DISPLAYED IN THE
PRESERVATION OF NATURE.

REASON combines with Scripture in the doctrine that God's power is constantly exercised in the preservation of his works—in the continuance of their being and order—until they have subserved the purposes of his will. The supposition of God creating the universe and then leaving it to itself, is as irrational as it is heathenish. True philosophy disowns it, and can no more recognize a universe independent in its preservation than independent in its existence. Existence derived is ever dependent upon him who gave it, and powers and properties derived are dependent upon him who bestowed them. Besides, the sacred records speak of many direct and special interpositions in which the established order of things has been interrupted by the determination of the Creator. The waters of the sea have been divided, and they stood erect like a wall of adamant; the intensest flames have had no power to burn; the sun and moon have been arrested in their course; iron has had its gravity suspended; a handful of food has been augmented to a supply adequate for thousands; diseases have been cured by a

word ; the orb of day has concealed his light at noon without any known physical cause ; and the corrupting carcass has become re-animated. All these events, though above Nature, are quite consistent with the philosophy which recognizes the Deity as presiding over his own work, as everywhere present and every moment exercising a directing and controlling agency. Second causes are but the instruments of his power, and natural laws are but the rules which he has prescribed for his own operations. These rules he can set aside or diversify as he pleases, and in accordance with his will. Vast as is the power thus continually put forth, he fainteth not, neither is weary. The facility with which planets roll and stars shine seems to indicate the ease with which Jehovah actuates and governs all things. Cicero represents the Deity pervading and moving the universe as the soul moves the members of the body, simply by a volition of his mind.* The simile, if devoid of a pantheistic meaning, is elegant and true to a certain extent, yet it falls short of fully representing the fact intended ; for a human being in time becomes conscious of fatigue from exertion, however perfect his control over muscular instrumentality. But Jehovah is never weary with his incessant, multifarious, and almighty labours. As he sees all things without distraction, so he operates through all without exhaustion or fatigue. In the same perfect manner is his power continually employed in the spiritual world. Our souls are in his hand, and by him all spirits continue to subsist. "This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

It is puerile to allege that, as creation, however vast, is finite, therefore no manifestations of power therein can prove God's power to be infinite. The manifestation is not to be estimated merely by its extent, vast as it is, but also by its nature and quality. That manifestation includes, as we have

* "Vos enim ipsi dicere soletis, nihil esse, quod Deus non possit efficere, et quidem sine labore ullo. Ut enim hominum membra nulla contentione, mente ipsa ac voluntate moveantur ; sic numine Deorum omnia fingi, moveri, mutarique posse."—*Cicero De Nat. Deorum*, lib. iii. cap. 39, sec. 92.

seen, the act of *creation* as well as of motion, and a creative power must be an infinite power. It is impossible either to fix any definite limit to such a power, or to conceive any limitation possible. Moreover, the absolute perfection of his nature involves the possession of every attribute in an unlimited degree. Nor is our estimate of God's power diminished by admitting that it cannot effect anything contrary to wisdom and goodness; for the impossibility here contemplated is no deduction from his natural energy, but a moral necessity arising from the superlative excellence of his nature. He cannot do evil, because he is infinitely and absolutely good; his power cannot contradict his wisdom and holiness, because he is eternally and unchangeably perfect.

This doctrine opens a source of encouragement, confidence, and joy to God's people. Their God is the Lord—"The great God, the mighty God; Jehovah of hosts is his name; great in counsel and mighty in work, and his eyes are upon all their ways." This glorious Being is their Father, their covenant God. They know that he who created them, and has received them into his favour, watches over them with unceasing care; that the very hairs of their head are numbered, and all their concerns are in his hand. Assured that his providence will preserve, his power defend them, and his grace cause all things to work together for their good, they may trust and not be afraid. None can pluck them out of his hand, and no weapon formed against them shall prosper. They may, therefore, dismiss all corroding anxiety and all distressing fears, knowing that he in whom they have trusted is able to keep that which they have committed unto him, until the day of probation terminate; and they may, without presumption, rejoice in the assurance that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

CHAPTER VIII.

SECTION I.—GOD IS OMNISCIENT.

THE intelligence of God has been previously demonstrated from his works. The universe of matter and of mind is the product of his intelligence as well as of his power. Matter, its laws and diversified operations—the protracted concatenation of subordinate causes and effects; of means, adaptations, and uses, of connections, dependencies, and relations, pervading the entire fabric of Nature—were conceived and devised by his mind, before his power brought them into actual being. The phenomena of vegetable and animal life and instinct, and the still greater phenomenon of mind, with its faculties of consciousness, perception, memory, volition, and reason—its affections of love, fear, hope, joy, aversion—and its intense susceptibilities of happiness and misery—are the products of Divine intelligence. The mind which originated these wonders must possess a degree of knowledge to which no limits can be assigned.

If it be said that, as Nature is finite, all the manifestations of intelligence furnished by Nature cannot yield a positive proof that the knowledge of the Deity is absolutely infinite, we reply—

First. The exhibition of intelligence thus afforded, though finite, is so vast and diversified that it defies us either to fix any limitation to his knowledge, or rationally to suppose any such limitation possible.

Secondly. The infinity of Jehovah's intelligence may be argued also from his absolute perfection, which has been previously established. Limitation in knowledge involves ignorance, and ignorance is incompatible with absolute perfection. From ignorance may possibly result deception and erroneous judgment, and, indeed, such results appear to us inevitable; but to attribute such qualities to the mind of Deity, is as repellent to

reason as opposed to revelation. His absolute freedom from the possibility of error involves the possession of infinite intelligence.

Thirdly. The same attribute may be argued from the infinitude of the Divine nature. It will be admitted that the Deity knows himself; and if he comprehends himself, he comprehends infinity, and must possess infinite intelligence. His understanding fathoms the depths of his own essence, and all the resources of his power and boundless perfections. Self-existent and independent, he must know all things actually existing in himself; and as the Source of all being, as the Author of all life, he must know all things, both actual and possible, in the creature. As the finite cannot comprehend the infinite, it follows that the mind which comprehends the Deity and all other things, must possess infinite intelligence.

Fourthly. The intelligence of the Deity is *immediate*. All things within himself he knows by consciousness; and all things *ad extra*, or in the creature, he knows immediately by intuition and by contact. There is here an infinite disparity between him and the most exalted works of his hand. Some things we know by consciousness, and some by intuition; but far the greater portion of our scanty store of knowledge is acquired through the medium of our senses, and by the exercise of our reason. By consciousness we know our own existence, and the sensations and operations of our own minds. By the organs of sense we hold communication with the external world, and by reason we deduce certain truths and principles from the facts which consciousness and sense furnish to the mind. It is evident, from the limited faculties of our nature, that our stock of knowledge must be comparatively contracted and confined. Our consciousness extends only to a few particular truths within the narrow bounds of our own nature, and the organs of sense are chiefly confined to the limits prescribed by our personal presence. We can taste and feel only those objects with which we are in contact; we can smell and hear only those which are near; and though vision can descry objects that are distant, it can do little more than ascertain their

existence. Thus, our presence and personal contact being confined to a limited locality, our communication with the surrounding universe must necessarily be very circumscribed. Now, as reason can only deduce truths and abstract principles from the materials thus furnished, it follows that our range of knowledge must be very limited and confined. No such limits, however, can exist in the Deity, because there is no limitation to his presence and attributes. By consciousness he knows, at one view, all that is in the depths of his own nature; and thus knowing the infinite resources of his own nature, he must know, intuitively, all the *possibilities* of being in the creature; and, from his omnipresence, he must recognize by contact all the *actual* being there is in the creature.

SECTION II.—TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE.

THE deductions of reason on this attribute of the Divine Being are sustained and confirmed by the testimony of revelation. The Psalmist declares, "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite" (Psalm cxlvii. 5). Job says, that the eyes of the Lord "are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves" (Job xxxiv. 21, 22). "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?" (Psalm xciv. 9.) "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord" (Jeremiah xxiii. 24). "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. Hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?" (Proverbs xv. 3, 11.) "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. iv. 13).

Seeing that reason and Scripture unite in establishing the

omniscience of the Deity, it is evident that his knowledge comprehends all that is present, all that is past, and all that is to come.

THE PRESENT.—God is everywhere present, and wherever he exists, there all his attributes and perfections exist. It is impossible to conceive the absence of any attribute where his presence pervades. We cannot, even in thought, abstract or detach his power, his knowledge, and his other perfections from himself, or suppose them to be absent where he is present. Consequently, wherever God is, he perceives, he sees, he knows; and as he pervades all substances and fills all space, there can be nothing hidden from his view. Thus, the whole universe lies open before him, with greater clearness than this page lies open before the eye of the reader. All worlds revolving and all creatures moving under the broad and open eye of the Creator, not a leaf falls, not an atom floats, but is beheld and perceived by him who is everywhere present. Man can only perceive such qualities as his senses are adapted to observe, and it can never be supposed that our five senses are competent to recognize all the qualities of bodies; but the perception of Jehovah penetrates every occult property of matter, sees the very essence of every substance, and observes every secret phenomenon in Nature. To him nothing can be mysterious in its nature, properties, operations, or results; for he made everything in the physical universe as it is; it operates according to his design, and nothing can escape his notice.

In the same complete and perfect manner he observes every being in the *spiritual* world, and every action and thought of moral and accountable agents. The bright spirits in heaven (assuming such to exist), radiant with the beams of his glory—human minds incarnate in earthly tabernacles—apostate demons and the souls of the lost in the invisible regions of woe, are all beheld with the same minute and watchful observation. Penetrating spirit as well as matter, all the operations of mind lie equally under his eye, even as the most open and conspicuous actions of the life. Every principle we cherish, every motion that stirs in our bosom, every desire and imagination we indulge,

every thought we conceive, and the very motives which give a good or evil complexion to our thoughts and deeds, are known as fully as we know them ourselves by consciousness. Nay, more so, for they are penetrated by an eye that not only sees their actual existence, but appreciates their moral quality and tendency with unerring exactness. To such a conclusion we are irresistibly carried by reason, and it is in perfect accordance with the teachings of inspiration—"Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

THE PAST.—In the same perfect manner does the knowledge of Jehovah comprehend all that is past. As there is no period in eternity in which he did not exist, there is no period in the history of creation when he was not present with every part, in the same intimate and all-pervading manner as he is this moment; and, therefore, every part has always been under his observation. As nothing in the world of matter and of mind can elude his notice at this moment, neither could anything elude his notice in any past instant; nor can it in any future period. We must suppose the very nature of God to change before we can suppose it possible for anything past, present, or to come, to escape his knowledge. Nor can we rationally suppose it possible for him to forget anything which he has observed. The faculty of memory in the creature is an excellence, and every excellence which the creature has in a limited degree, the Creator possesses in an unlimited extent. It may be that even *our* forgetfulness of events may arise from the connection of mind with a mutable and perishable organization.* But however this may be, we can no more suppose the Deity subject to forget any fact or event in the natural or moral history of the universe, than we can suppose it possible for any such event to escape his observation at the present moment. He is independent, absolutely perfect, and immutable; and,

* It is the opinion of the celebrated Isaac Taylor, that in eternity the human soul will have the faculty of recalling the whole of its past history. —See his "Physical Theory of Another Life."

therefore, the knowledge of all that is past is as present to him as if it were occurring at this instant of time.

THE DIVINE PRESCIENCE.—God foreknew all things. It has, indeed, been maintained that there is neither foreknowledge nor after-knowledge with God. Thus the venerable Mr. Wesley states:—"If we speak properly, there is no such thing as either foreknowledge or after-knowledge in God. All time, or, rather, all eternity, being present to him at once, he does not know one thing before another, or one thing after another, but sees all things in one point of view from everlasting to everlasting." This is the notion of the schoolmen, adopted by many divines, who, denying the succession of time, denied also the succession of events—making the past, present, and future, both of time and events, "one eternal now" in the mind of Deity. The scholastic notion, which confounds the present duration with the past, and reduces all to one instant, has been refuted before, and we need not dwell upon it again. Dr. Reid has well observed:—"The schoolmen made eternity to be a *nunc stans*—that is, a moment of time that stands still. This was to put a spoke into the wheel of Time, and might give satisfaction to those who are to be satisfied by words without meaning; but I can as easily believe a circle to be a square as time to stand still."* It is equally trifling to intimate that the Scriptures are not to be understood literally when they speak of God's "foreknowledge." Either God knows events *before* they transpire, or he does not. If we affirm that he does not know them, we charge him with ignorance. If he does know events before they transpire, then he must have "foreknowledge," and the scholastic figment must be rejected.

That the Creator of the universe did foreknow all that ever will transpire, is a truth which is dictated by reason, and corroborated by the testimony of Scripture. This foreknowledge we believe to be equally applicable to the universe of matter and of mind.

Respecting the *material* universe, there will be no con-

* "On the Powers of the Human Mind," vol. i., essay iii., chap. iii.

trovery between those who admit the existence of an intelligent Creator. The archetypes or ideas of the universe existed from all eternity in the mind of Deity, and his power formed the universe after the pattern in which his mind had conceived it. From hence, indeed, arise its order and system, its exquisite arrangement of connections and harmonies, of means and ends, its uniformity and stability. It is the execution of a plan originated and devised by the mind of God. He knew it, therefore, before the fiat of creation was issued by his almighty word. As matter was made and endowed with all its properties by God himself, and as he determined also the laws which guide its multiplied operations, he must have known all the effects of those operations from the beginning and onward through all future ages. Respecting the Divine prescience in reference to the material universe, Saurin remarks:—"God knows all the effects of matter. An expert workman takes a parcel of matter proportioned to a work which he meditates; he makes divers wheels, disposes them properly, and sees, by the rules of his art, what must result from their assemblage. Suppose a sublime, exact genius, knowing how to go from principle to principle, and from consequence to consequence, after foreseeing what must result from two wheels joined together, should imagine a third; he will as certainly know what must result from a third as from a first and second; after imagining a third, he may imagine a fourth, and properly arrange it with the rest in his imagination; after a fourth, a fifth, and so on to an endless number. Such a man could mathematically demonstrate, in an exact and infallible manner, what must result from a work composed of all these different wheels. Suppose, further, that this workman should accurately consider the effects which would be produced on these wheels by that subtle matter which, in their whirlings, continually surrounds them, and which, by its perpetual action and motion, chafes, wears, and dissolves all bodies, he would be able to tell you with the same exactness how long each of these wheels would wear, and when the whole work would be consumed. Give this workman life and industry proportioned, to his

imagination, furnish him with materials proportional to his ideas, and he will produce a vast, immense work, all the different motions of which he can exactly combine—all the different effects of which he can evidently foresee. He will see in what time motion will be communicated from the first of these wheels to the second, at what time the second will move the third, and so of the rest. He will foretell all their different motions, and all the effects that must result from their different combinations.

“Hitherto, this is only supposition, my brethren, but it is a supposition that conducts us to the most certain of all facts. This workman is God. God is the sublime, exact, Infinite Genius. He calls into being matter without motion, and in some sense without form. He gives this matter form and motion. He makes a certain number of wheels, or, rather, he makes them without number. He disposes them as he thinks proper. He communicates a certain degree of motion agreeably to the laws of his wisdom. Thence arises the world which strikes our eye. By the fore-mentioned example, I conceive that God, by his own intelligence, saw what must result from the arrangement of all the wheels that compose this world, and knew with the utmost exactness all their combinations. . . . He foresaw all the vicissitudes of time: he foresaw those which must put a period to time, when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise; when the elements shall melt with fervent heat; when the earth, with all the works that are in it, shall be burned up.”* A similar view of an all-comprehending and foreseeing Intelligence is expressed by Leibnitz, Laplace, and other writers. It cannot, indeed, be disputed that Jehovah knows every minute result that will flow from the mechanism of Nature, as exactly and certainly as the operator at an electric telegraph knows the result which must follow from the touches he gives to his mysterious machine.

But while nothing is more certain than that the Deity does

* Saurin's Discourse on the "Omnipresence and Omniscience of Deity," vol. i., sermon iii.

thus foresee all the effects which transpire from the combined and multifarious operations of *matter* with the most perfect exactness, yet all such *mechanical* representations of the universe are calculated to mislead the mind, by suggesting an independent action to Nature; and, therefore, require to be qualified by the recollection of two important truths—namely, that God himself is the ever-present and all-pervading Agent, guiding and directing the whole; and that the general laws he has prescribed for the operations of Nature are not so absolute as to exclude special interpositions by his own almighty hand. Such interpositions, indeed, are repeatedly suggested by geological phenomena as having occurred in different epochs of our planet's history, and such will, doubtless, occur in its future history. The believer in the Christian revelation beholds many such special interpositions in the miracles recorded in the sacred Scriptures, and in these facts the records of Nature and of Revelation unite in their testimony to the same principle. These special interpositions, however, present no exception to the exactness of the Divine prescience: for they are a part of the Divine economy, foreseen and designed from the beginning, equally with the physical and mathematical results of mechanical laws.

With the same absolute certainty does God foreknow the actions and destinies of voluntary agents. But here we come to a subject on which the most opposite sentiments have been maintained. The Divine prescience has been pronounced incompatible with the free agency of man, and divines of opposite sentiments, to cut the knot they could not untie, have each adopted one side of the truth and denied the other. Some, to maintain man's freedom, have denied God's foreknowledge; and others, to maintain God's prescience, have denied man's freedom. It will be evident to every individual, at first sight, that one class of these divines must be in error, because each maintains an opposite proposition, and we think it not impossible to show that both are in error. Let us, then, test these opinions: first, by the dictates of reason; and, secondly, by the teachings of revelation.

**SECTION III.—THE DIVINE PRESCIENCE AND HUMAN FREEDOM
ARE IN ACCORDANCE WITH REASON.**

1. THE Divine prescience of all future events is as essential to God's absolute perfection, as his knowledge of the past is essential to his absolute perfection. In this respect there is no difference, for a defect in his knowledge of either one or the other is a defect, an imperfection—it is ignorance; and ignorance of any kind is incompatible with absolute perfection. Having already proved that God is an absolutely perfect Being, it follows that his knowledge is perfect; and if perfect, it must include all that is future, as well as all that is past.

2. The voluntary agency of man is a fact attested by our own consciousness. We need not a syllogism to prove this, for there is no fact to which our experience more clearly and emphatically bears testimony than to our moral liberty. We know we have power to commit or avoid a certain course of conduct, because our consciousness attests it. No sophistry, no metaphysical subtleties, can deprive us of this evidence; for it exists within us, and irresistibly remains in our consciousness, in spite of all plausible and wire-drawn reasoning to the contrary. Metaphysicians may bewilder a man's judgment, but they cannot obliterate his consciousness, nor suborn the testimony of his experience. Nature speaks with a voice too distinct, emphatic, and honest, to be bribed or silenced by any plausible theory of the subtle dialectician. We cannot get rid of this fact without denying our consciousness, and thus repudiating a fundamental principle, and casting doubt over everything else. If man's consciousness be denied, we deny the foundation of all knowledge, and may deny every other truth. But if the fundamental principles of truth are to be maintained, we must admit the evidence of consciousness; and if the evidence of consciousness be admitted, the doctrine of our moral liberty must be maintained.

While our consciousness attests this truth, our judgment perceives its conformity with our accountability to law, whether human or Divine; and the absolute injustice of any account-

ability in the absence of this self-determining power. Hence, where reason and freedom end, accountability terminates. Human consciousness attests our freedom, and human reason acquiesces in the accountability of our actions, because we are conscious of our liberty, and not otherwise. Here are principles which no arts of sophistry can evade. They are co-existent with mind; they are immutable and eternal: we can no more eradicate them than we can annihilate the mind itself.

Nor is there any real antagonism between the prescience of Deity and the moral liberty of man. Aristotle among the ancients, and Dr. A. Clarke among the moderns, have distinguished themselves by opposing this view, and they have had not a few followers; but their reasoning is, in our view, fallacious. Dr. Adam Clarke maintains that "God has ordained *some* things as absolutely certain. He has ordained other things as contingent. These he knows as contingent." To reconcile this doctrine with Jehovah's omniscience, it is urged, "that as omnipotence implies the power to *do* all things, so omniscience implies the *ability* to know all things, but not the *obligation* to know all things. He knows himself, and what he has formed, and what he can do; but it is alleged he is not necessitated to know, as certain, what himself has made contingent; and that as God, though possessed of omnipotence, does not evidently exert it to its utmost extent—does not do all he might do—so, though he could know all things, yet that he chooses to be ignorant of some things, because he does not see it proper to know everything which he might know."*

We believe that the doctor here states the substance of all that can be urged in favour of his theory; but, with all due deference to his talents and learning, we regard his views as untenable.

(a) Our first objection to this theory is, that it gives an unamiable aspect to the Divine character. It does not, indeed, deny the *capability* of God to foreknow voluntary actions, but represents him as voluntarily refusing to know them—as de-

* See Dr. Clarke's comment on Acts ii.

signedly excluding them from his cognizance. Such a procedure involves, at least, a partial knowledge or expectation of their character, and supposes a motive for refusing to know them more perfectly. God can be influenced by no motives but such as are wise and good; but if it be wise and good to constitute beings free agents, can it be wise and good to refuse to know the issue of their freedom? Such a notion seems to involve the idea that, had God known the result, he would not have given them such a constitution, nor have placed them in such circumstances. It represents the Deity as fearing to know the issue or moral results of his own work! How such reasoning harmonizes with the character and perfections of Deity—the wisdom, rectitude, and goodness of his administration, or the stability of his government—we are at a loss to know. In our view, it is incompatible with them all. If it be wise and good for God to constitute creatures voluntary agents and accountable beings, it is equally wise and good to know the issue of their nature and condition; and if it be incompatible with wisdom and goodness to know the result, it was incompatible with wisdom and goodness to give them the nature they possess, and place them in the circumstances of a probationary state. Our opponents will, we think, admit the correctness of this statement, and, admitting this, their denial of the Divine prescience must be abandoned.

(b) Our second objection to the theory is, that it denies to Deity the attribute of omniscience. The parallel which Dr. Clarke draws between omnipotence and omniscience is inadmissible. He states that, as omnipotence does not involve the necessity of *doing* all things within the range of almighty power, neither does omniscience involve the necessity of *knowing* all things possible to be known. But this is not a correct representation of the nature of the two attributes. Omnipotence is not an unlimited *act* of God, but the *faculty* to act with unlimited energy—not the *exertion* of power, but the *ability* to exert or put forth power to an unlimited extent. But omniscience, on the contrary, is not the mere faculty of acquiring or obtaining a knowledge of all things, but it is the *actual know-*

ledge of all things. Dr. Clarke's view makes God merely *omniscible*, but denies his omniscience; it supposes the Deity to have a capacity for boundless knowledge, but denies that the capacity is filled. It supposes the Deity to be acquiring knowledge by experience, to know his creatures more fully by the development of their moral history, and to be growing wiser each day by observing the proceedings of moral agents. If our theorists shrink from these consequences, they must renounce the system which involves them.

(c) Our third objection to the theory is, that it denies the independence, the absolute perfection, and immutability of the Divine Being. This result is seen in the preceding argument. For if the Deity be destitute of knowledge in some respects, then he is partially ignorant; and a being to whom this quality applies cannot be absolutely perfect. Besides, if his knowledge be in part gradually derived from the moral history of his creatures, then is he so far dependent upon things extraneous to himself; and thus his independence is denied. If his knowledge accumulate by experience, then must his views change, his judgment alter, and thus his immutability is denied. We cannot see how these consequences can be separated from the denial of the Divine prescience; and if they are felt to be repugnant to our reason, and our respect for the Divine character, the theory which involves them must be repudiated.

(d) Our fourth objection to the notion in question is, that it is incompatible with the regularity and order of the Divine government. In the economy of the material universe, design and object are everywhere conspicuous; and system and means nicely adjusted to fulfil the design, to accomplish the object, are seen pervading every part of his works. Nothing is more obvious than that the intellect of Deity darted through every part of the complicated system ere it was created, and that the whole was adjusted and combined to fulfil the contemplated results. We should expect the same order and foresight to characterize his government in the world of mind, every rational creature being free, yet every event foreseen with intuitive certainty, and provision made for every exigency and state

which would occur in the whole history of moral agents, so that, amid all the changes of fallible creatures, an ultimate purpose was contemplated, and that purpose fulfilled. But the denial of the Divine prescience involves the denial of such a system of order; or, if such a system of order were devised, it must be liable to interruption and disappointment. If God did not foresee the issue of moral agency, he could not plan for a given purpose, or, if he did, he could only plan in the dark; his purposes must be based on conjecture, on probabilities and possibilities, and, throughout the whole history of his government, must be liable to defeat and disappointment. Arrangements made in uncertainty and partial ignorance must often be broken; and his government, if not in its principles, at least in its administration, be subject to incessant fluctuation. The vastness of his empire would only increase the embarrassment by continually yielding events never expected, causing emergencies never provided for, and thus compelling the Supreme Governor to be continually changing his plans, laying aside some as no longer suitable, adopting new ones to meet fresh exigencies, and these again, in their turn, becoming useless, because of new events never expected. As President Edwards remarks:—"In such a situation, God must have little else to do but to mend broken links as well as he can, and be rectifying his disjointed frame and disordered movements in the best manner the case will allow. The supreme Lord of all things must needs be under great and miserable disadvantages in governing the world which he has made and has care of, through his being utterly unable to find out things of chief importance which hereafter shall befall his system, which, if he did but know, he might make seasonable provision for. In many cases, there may be very great necessity that he should make provision, in the manner of his ordering and disposing of things, for some great events which are to happen of vast and extensive influence, and endless consequence to the universe, which he may see afterwards when it is too late, and may wish in vain that he had known beforehand, that he might have ordered his affairs accordingly." Such

a representation of the moral administration, we know, is repulsive—it shocks our sense of propriety to dwell long upon it ; but these consequences logically result from denying God's prescience of moral actions ; and, because thus repulsive to our reason and to our piety, the notion must be rejected.

3. There is yet another aspect of this theory which requires a moment's consideration—namely, the alleged incompatibility between prescience and contingent or voluntary actions. It is affirmed that the two are irreconcilable. In reply to this, we observe, it has already been shown that each doctrine viewed separately is true. It is evident that our voluntary actions are free, and it is as evident that God foreknows them. If, therefore, reason do feel a difficulty in harmonizing the two propositions, that difficulty cannot neutralize either one truth or the other. It may involve a mystery, but not a contradiction. It has been previously laid down, as an axiomatic principle, that each truth must be examined by its own proper evidence, and also that no two truths can be in real opposition to one another. We apply these principles in the present argument. Each truth, separately considered, is abundantly sustained by evidence proper to itself, and that which is true in itself cannot be made untrue when compared with another truth. If any proposition be true in its separate and independent form, it must still be true when combined with other propositions equally true. Truth is immutable and eternal ; and whatever difficulty or mystery there may be to our minds, when attempting to harmonize its multifarious combinations, the fact that it is true is a pledge that it does harmonize, though we may be incompetent to demonstrate the harmony. Thus it must be with respect to the Divine prescience, and the volitions and actions of moral agents. Because each is true separately, they must harmonize when united ; and if there be a difficulty, it must spring from the absence of a power to penetrate and comprehend truth in all its various combinations and relations.

But let us look at this subject a little more narrowly. Let us examine the pretended discrepancy between Divine prescience and the freedom of human thought and action. If it can be

shown that this prescience involves no coercive or compelling necessity, it must be admitted that human volitions and actions, though foreseen, are free; and this, we think, can be made manifest. Let the three terms in question—*necessity*, *freedom*, and *prescience*—be each separately explained, and each compared with the other.

What is involved in *necessity*? It is a resistless impulse, exerted for a given end.

What is *freedom*? It involves a self-determining power to will and to act.

What is *prescience*? It is simply a knowledge of an event before it transpires.

Such being, we conceive, a correct representation of the terms, we have to inquire, Where lies the alleged incompatibility of prescience with freedom? Between freedom and necessity there *is*, we admit, an absolute and irreconcilable discrepancy and opposition; for the assertion of the one is a direct negation of the other. What is free cannot be necessitated, and what is necessitated cannot be free. But *prescience* involves no such opposition. For simple knowledge is not coercion; it is not impulse; it is not influence of any kind: it is merely acquaintance with truth, or the mind's seeing a thing as it is. If I know the truth of a proposition in Euclid, it is not my knowledge that makes it true. It was a truth, and would have remained a truth, whether I knew it or not; yea, even if I had never existed. So of any fact in history; so of any occurrence around me. My mere knowledge of the fact did not make it fact, or exercise any influence in causing it to be a fact. So in reference to the Divine prescience: it is mere knowledge; and is as distinct from force, constraint, or influence as any two things can be distinct one from another. It is force which constitutes necessity, and the total absence of force which constitutes liberty; and, as all force is absent from mere knowledge, it is evident that neither fore-knowledge nor after-knowledge involves any necessity, or interferes, in the least degree, with human freedom. Man could not be more free than he is if God were totally ignorant of all his volitions and actions.

4. Still, it is inquired, "Can foreseen actions be otherwise than as they are foreseen?" The word "can" is not, we conceive, a proper term to be employed in this question, as this word contains the idea of *potentiality*, or *ability*, in the creature. If, however, it mean, "Has the creature power to act otherwise than as God foresees?" we unhesitatingly reply, "He has that power; and that power is unconstrained and free." But if it be meant, "Will the event be otherwise than as God foresees it?" we reply, "It will not; because God foresees it correctly." The question proposed is the same thing as to inquire, "Does God foresee a thing correctly?" or "Can truth be otherwise than true?" If God foresees an event correctly, it will occur as he sees it, because he sees it correctly. But its occurrence is not the result of his foresight; it is not his foresight which causes the event, for his foresight has no influence over it at all. We know *past* events by memory, but our memory has no influence in *causing* the events which are past; nor has the Divine prescience any influence in causing events which are future. Prescience and memory are precisely the same, both as to influence and as to certainty. If memory be correct, it corresponds with the events that are past; and as God's prescience must be correct, it corresponds with future events, because it is in infallible conformity to truth. The past and the future make no difference in the consideration of this subject, for the question at issue is respecting the influence which mere knowledge has upon the events known; and we have seen that mere knowledge has no more influence upon events than mere ignorance; and the accordance of God's knowledge with all events—past, present, and future—arises simply from its perfection; it accords with fact solely because it is infallibly correct.

5. Is the question urged, "How can it be possible for the volitions and actions of free agents to be foreseen?" We reply, "It may with equal propriety be asked, 'How is it possible for God *not* to know all future events?'" Both the possibility of his knowing all things, and the impossibility of his not knowing all things, are involved in the truth that *he is God*. He is God, and therefore a Being of infinite and absolute perfection; he is

God, and therefore free from all ignorance, error, and possibility of deception; he is God, and therefore knows himself—penetrates and comprehends the infinitude of his own essence and perfections; he is God, the Creator of all things—and what he creates he knows thoroughly: comprehending himself, he must comprehend the creature—the finite is as nothing to the infinite. All things actual, and all things possible, are equally under his eye. His glance pierces through all the complicated modes of being, of thought, and of action, which ever did or can take place. He sees what will be, and knows what will not be; and no one can curtail his knowledge without limiting his perfections and dishonouring his character.

6. Should any one finally reply—"To affirm that God foreknew all things, is to affirm that God knew that man would sin, and with this knowledge the creation of man would have been derogatory to his character," we answer,—God did know that man would sin. We are not compelled to impugn his intellect in order to exculpate his character. If the *creation* of man, with a knowledge that man would sin, impugns God's character, so does the *continuance* of man's existence impugn his character. Our opponents will not deny that man sins daily; nor will they deny that God knows that man sins; nor will they deny that God continues man in existence while he is sinning, and continues to perpetuate a race of sinful beings from generation to generation. Yet, with these facts before them, they would shrink from impugning God's character. They have a logic, a philosophy, and a theology, too, by which they harmonize these events with the Divine character; and every one must admit that the same reasoning applies as much to the *creation* of beings whom he knew *would* sin, as to the *preservation* of beings who *do* sin. The question as to the existence of moral evil, however, has reference rather to the goodness and holiness of the Creator, than to his knowledge, and will be considered in its proper place.

7. The Holy Scriptures are as clear and emphatic in their statement as to God's prescience of human conduct, as they are respecting his knowledge of all past and present events. The

inspired Psalmist, speaking of God, says, "His understanding is infinite" (Ps. cxlvii. 5). Literally, his understanding is without number—that is, it has no bounds or limitation, which as forcibly expresses infinity in the Hebrew idiom as the modern Latinized term in common use. If, then, his understanding is infinite, it must include a prescience of all voluntary actions, as well as of all physical operations. To deny this, is to limit the Divine understanding—it is to deny the infinity so plainly asserted in the Scriptures. David, associating God's omniscience with his omnipresence, directly ascribes to him a prescience of the very thoughts of his heart. "Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thoughts afar off"—*afar off*—before they are either clothed in language, embodied in action, or conceived by the mind. Paul says, that "known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts xv. 18). The reference is to God's works in providence; and his providential works are intimately connected with the conduct of mankind; and if all such works are known unto him from the beginning of the world, it follows that his knowledge comprehends and anticipates the actions and thoughts of mankind.

The same doctrine is implied in every prediction which has reference to human actions. Such predictions abound in every part of the sacred volume, and, whether they refer to the destiny of nations or of individuals, they involve an exact foreknowledge of the thoughts, affections, desires, passions, principles, and conduct of individuals. It would be trifling to intimate that these predictions are based upon merely a *general* knowledge of man's moral history; for his general history is made up of individual actions and occurrences, and in many cases the predictions expressly refer to the history of isolated individuals, as Jeroboam, Cyrus, Judas, and a catalogue of other persons. The supposition would also be profane, as well as trifling; for unless Jehovah foreknew the character and history of individuals, his predictions would be no more than lucky guesses and sagacious conjectures. The multifarious prophecies recorded in Scripture, as clearly involve a prescience of the thoughts and actions of

voluntary agents, as they do of the revolutions of the planets or the operations of any physical law.

If God thus foreknew the thoughts and affections of *some* men and of *some* nations, he must have foreknown the moral history and destiny of *all* men. To deny the Divine prescience, therefore, is to deny the plain teachings of the sacred records; it is to erect our own speculations in opposition to the express declarations of God himself.

Yet in the same emphatic manner do the Scriptures assert the freedom and voluntary agency of man. They always recognize him as a creature possessing and exercising a self-determining faculty, capable of choosing the good and refusing the evil. They appeal not only to his reason, but to his will; they ply him with motives to obedience, and solemnly place life and death, blessing and cursing, before him. They severely censure his evil actions, and not only his evil actions, but his evil thoughts and affections—clearly indicating his power to resist and control both the one and the other. They command him to exercise obedience, holy affections and purposes; implying that, with the offered aids of grace, he is competent to give a holy direction to his character, and a heavenly bias to the principles of the inner man—the hidden principles of action. They make him responsible for every action and thought, and suspend the issues of an eternal destiny upon his conduct in this life; and, if he perish, they emphatically declare that his doom is attributable to no one but himself. “Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.” “I called, but ye refused; I stretched out my hands, but ye regarded not.” “Oh that thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things that make for thy peace!” If, then, the Scriptures speak the truth, and communicate that truth in language capable of being understood; if man is a moral agent and an accountable being; and if the principles of unchanging rectitude direct the government of God, man must be a free agent—he must possess and exercise a self-determining power.

On examination, then, it is found that the two opposite theories—the denial of man’s free agency and the denial of

God's foreknowledge of voluntary actions—are both unscriptural and irrational. Such denials must, therefore, be repudiated. We are bound to believe in both doctrines, because both the voice of reason and of Scripture command this belief.

REFLECTIONS.—What solemnity there is in the truth that, wherever we are there is God; that his awful presence surrounds us, and his piercing eye perceives every action we perform, every thought we exercise, every motive we cherish, every sentiment and affection that stir in our bosom! We may forget God, but his presence is ever around and within us; we may wish for secrecy, but, however retired and hidden from man, we are in his immediate presence and under his immediate inspection. The Mohammedans have a proverb that “wherever there are two persons present, God makes a third.” Yea, where ever one is present, God makes a second. We cannot escape from him, for he fills the universe; we can no more escape from God, than we can from ourselves. Nay, though we could secure at pleasure intervals of oblivion and unconsciousness, still God is there. Amid surrounding darkness all is light with him; and acts of secrecy, thoughts concealed, and purposes cloaked, are beheld with the same clearness and certainty as the most public transactions of a city, or the proclamations of an empire.

If to such a Being we are accountable, how awful his tribunal to which we must be summoned! How unerring the register of our deeds! How searching the scrutiny of our character! How proportionate the final sentence to our deserts!

In the contemplation of this attribute of Jehovah how essential must be the duty of sincerity. Here a heathen may speak to us a profitable sentiment. Seneca observes:—“We ought always so to conduct ourselves as if we lived in public; we ought to think as if some one could see what is passing in our inmost breast; and there is One who does thus behold us. Of what avail is it, then, that any deed is concealed from man? Nothing can be hidden from God. He is present with our very souls, and penetrates our inmost thoughts, and, indeed, is never absent from us.”* “He, therefore, who believes in the

* “Seneca,” epist. lxxxiii.

existence of God should never sin, neither secretly nor openly." * How inexpressibly foolish the conduct of the hypocrite, when he knows his duplicity and guile, his arts of deception and deeds of darkness, are all under the inspection of God; though concealed from man, to whom he is not amenable, they are open to the view of that awful Being by whom he must be judged! The thought that we live in God's presence, and act under his observation, should be a constant incentive to holiness—should prompt us to shun the slightest contact with evil in thought, word, and deed. We should "stand in awe and sin not."

The doctrine of God's omniscience is fraught with encouragement and comfort to the sincere and the upright. He, whose presence is everywhere, and whose eye observes every thought, is the friend of the good man, and it is always delightful to have the presence of a friend. When misrepresented and maligned, it is a solace to the upright that God knows his intentions, motives, and desires. When overwhelmed with trials and sufferings, it is a source of consolation to lift up our weeping eyes to heaven, like Hagar, and exclaim, "Thou God seest me." It is an encouragement to know that our God is at hand to exercise his tender sympathy and impart his timely succours. When we draw nigh to God in prayer, it inspires energy in our petitions to remember that Jehovah sees our necessities, reads the earnestness of our spirits, and observes our bosoms panting with eager desire. When the Saviour thrice uttered to Simon the appeal, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" it was a consolation to that true penitent to be able with confidence to refer the appeal back to his omniscient Saviour, saying, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

But this doctrine speaks the language of terror and dismay to the wicked. He dislikes God: the thoughts of him are a burden intolerable to be borne; and yet that awful and dreadful Being is constantly with him; through every moment and

* "Democrat. Sentent."

in every place, he is as near to him as to any other object, and inspects and marks every evil action and thought. Flee from God man cannot; for where can he flee to be beyond the pale of the Divine presence? Elude his notice he cannot, for God knows his acts before he has committed them, and his thoughts before they are conceived. How terrible the contemplation of this truth! When the impious Belshazzar saw but a hand writing on the wall of his palace, he trembled, his countenance changed, his thoughts troubled him, the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another. But why this terror at the appearance of a mere hand, seeing he was previously hardened and unmoved, though surrounded by the presence of God? Why this consternation at a few mystic characters on the wall, seeing, but a moment before, he cared not that the all-seeing eye of God observed every thought of his licentious and malignant breast? It was not the mere handwriting that filled him with dismay, but the sight of that strange and mystic object aroused his mind to the conviction of the fact he had forgotten—the fact that God was there—the fact that the eternal Jehovah, whose name he was profaning, whose authority he was despising, and whose laws he was trampling upon with contempt, was in the place where he sat, observing his conduct and purposing the speedy punishment of his transgressions. God is not the less present, though no mystic hand appear; nor his observance the less exact, though no visible writing record the sinner's doom. If the transgressor's eyes could but be opened to the reality of his position, what horror would seize him! A sight more dreadful than Sinai in a blaze—more terrific than the handwriting on the wall of Belshazzar's palace—a sight more awful than the drama of the world's conflagration would burst upon his vision—he would see the offended Deity on every side, he would behold himself enveloped with the presence and attributes of the eternal God, his Maker and his Judge.

CHAPTER IX.

GOD IS INFINITE IN WISDOM.

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.—Wisdom is superior to mere knowledge; it implies correct judgment, and the right use of knowledge. Knowledge furnishes only the materials with which wisdom builds. Wisdom implies discernment to determine what are the best ends, and the best means to attain them. Infinite wisdom involves the possession of other attributes, on which we have yet to descant in their proper place. It supposes infinite intelligence to be combined with absolute rectitude, unbounded goodness, and every other moral excellence. Now, as the Deity is an absolutely perfect Being, it follows that every *moral*, as well as every *natural*, perfection must be associated with his infinite intelligence, and hence he must be infinitely wise.

Before we proceed to review the lessons of wisdom unfolded in the Creator's works, it may be proper to state some of the leading characteristics of wisdom.

1. Wisdom is manifested in the conception of great and comprehensive generalizations. The Creator's wisdom comprehends all Nature, however vast, and all the beings and events comprised within all duration—past, present, and future.

2. Wisdom contemplates no ends but what are good in themselves. The ends and purposes of God are not only good, but the best that can be accomplished.

3. Wisdom seeks to effect its purposes by the most simple, comprehensive, and effective means. Such are the means employed by God in his operations.

4. Wisdom is seen in rendering the subordinate parts of a system subservient to the higher. In the works of God this order and subserviency are everywhere displayed.

5. Wisdom is manifested in connecting things of diverse and opposite natures into one harmonious whole. Such com-

bination and harmony are displayed to perfection in all the works of God.

6. Wisdom is seen in an economy in which nothing is lost or wasted, but everything turned to good account. Such is the economy of God in all his marvellous operations, in which there is not an atom lost, nor any energy expended in vain.

7. Wisdom is displayed by a mind which sees the end from the beginning, and so effectually provides for all possible events, as to realize its object, despite all opposing influences. Such is the perfection of God's plan, and such the infallible certainty and efficiency of his arrangements.

8. The indications of wisdom are the more perfect and complete in proportion to the extent of the plan, the diversity and complicated nature of the operations to be performed, and the greatness of the exigencies to be provided for, in effecting a given result. The plan of the Almighty's works has no limits; his operations are infinitely diversified; exigencies without end have to be provided for; but Divine wisdom comprehends the whole, meets every exigency, and secures the ultimate fulfilment of all his purposes. If we look through the economy of Nature, we shall see these features of wisdom illustrated in all God's works.

All the manifestations of design and contrivance, all the exhibitions of adaptation, and the arrangement of means to their respective ends; all the evidences of order and harmony in the constitution of Nature, are so many exemplifications of wisdom in the great Architect of the universe. We can direct our attention to no part of Nature, but these manifestations of wisdom present themselves; we can employ no method of investigation but they are unfolded to our view. Whether we employ the synthetic or the analytic modes of inquiry; whether we examine the petal of a flower, or the gorgeous splendour of a solar system, adaptations the most minute and exquisite, laws and operations the most comprehensive, and harmonies the most perfect, strike our attention, and excite our admiration of the wisdom which framed and adjusted the whole.

Out of materials ample to an unlimited extent, and fraught

with urgent claims to our consideration, the difficulty is to make a selection, and comprise within a few pages an impressive view of wonders which ten thousand volumes could not exhaust. We can only hope to lead the reader to the threshold of the great temple of Nature, and invite him to enter and explore for himself the marvels and glories it presents to his contemplation.

SECTION I.—THE WISDOM OF GOD IS DISPLAYED IN ASTRONOMICAL PHENOMENA.

As intelligent beings stand at the head of creation, it may be assumed that a wise Creator would construct the material universe with a special reference to the welfare of their existence. As we have already observed, a wise being will contemplate a good end, and will employ the subordinate parts of a system to those of a higher nature. Let it then be assumed, that the welfare and development of intellectual beings are the objects propounded in the Divine mind; and our inquiries into the economy of Nature will show that the resources of Divine wisdom have been incessantly employed for this benevolent result.

1. *In causing the material universe to consist of various and unnumbered worlds, there is a display of Divine wisdom.*

As matter and its conformation result from the volition of Deity, it was optional with the Creator as to how he should dispose of it. He might conform the entire mass of matter into one vast world of uniform character, or he might distribute it into many worlds of various magnitude, invested with various and distinctive properties. A wise being, however, would select the best alternative—one the most accordant with utility and beneficence; such is the one actually existent. Had the entire mass of matter been formed into one immense globe, there would have been far less space than there is for the accommodation of sentient beings—a fact not in harmony with that wise economy which makes nothing in vain, but delights to render everything subservient to the best end. Besides, there would have been comparatively little variety to delight the eye

or excite the admiration of the mind. It would be earth without any visible heavens. Instead of the glittering and gorgeous expanse around us, the firmament would have been vacant; the whole space around us being devoid of sun, moon, or stars; barren of every object to lead out the mind from itself into those varieties and infinitudes of being which are now spread out to our view. The formation, then, of innumerable worlds, instead of only one vast orb, is indicative of wisdom; affording a far more extended theatre of action for sentient existence, and unfolding a variety, a vastness, and an amplitude in creation, which at once display the magnificence and glory of the Creator, and stimulate the intellect, enlarge and exalt the mind of the creature.

2. *The construction of solar and stellar systems is an indication of wisdom.*

It was optional with Deity either to arrange and organize the orbs of heaven into systems, or to cause every one to be isolated and unconnected, without order and without motion. The latter alternative is a possibility which lay within the resources of Almighty power. But it would have been a display of power without a corresponding manifestation of wisdom. The heavens, if visible under such conditions, would unfold no harmonies, reveal no laws of dynamics, no practical geometry and mechanics, and present fewer proofs of constructive wisdom. Such is not the mode of the Creator's operations. We nowhere see power exerted but as the servant of wisdom. Far as the telescope can reach, there are indications of law, order, and system. A central orb with his attendant planets, and planets with their attendant satellites; distant stars of various hues and magnitude, revolving around each other and a common centre; and galaxies and nebular clusters, bound together by reciprocal influences, and subordinated to common laws, exhibit a magnificent and comprehensive scheme of creative wisdom, which fills the mind with instruction, while its sublimity impresses us with awe.

3. *The laws which preserve the order and harmony of the universe display the wisdom of the Creator.*

As the orbs of heaven are systematically arranged, they must be held together, either by some specific means, or by the direct agency of Deity; for, without one or the other, however perfect the original adjustment, they would soon run into chaotic disorder and confusion. By laws the most simple, comprehensive, and effectual, this great end is secured. By the well-known laws of the centripetal and centrifugal forces, the whole machinery of the heavens is regulated, and its constancy maintained. The gravitating force, which aggregates atoms into globes, exerts its influence from one globe to another on a fixed and immutable principle of reciprocity, binding the members of each system into an indissoluble union; and thence extending its mystic power, through astounding tracts of space, to remoter spheres, and congregating numerous systems into stupendous galaxies, some of which span the firmament, while others, from their prodigious distance, melt away into the faintest nebulae, and are only resolvable by the highest telescopic power. But it is evident that the gravitating force alone could not preserve the order and arrangement of the celestial machinery. It would destroy it. Its unrestrained force would drag each planet to its central orb, and ultimately bring each system into destructive collision, and thus reduce Nature to a second chaos. Its agency, therefore, had to be counterpoised by the action of another power—a centrifugal force, which the Creator imparted to each orb at its birth. An impetus to rush onward with a given velocity along a line at right angles with the gravitating force, involves a compromise between the two contending powers, and converts the tangent impulse and the perpendicular fall into a graceful curve—an orbicular sweep, in which each obedient planet wheels its steady course from age to age; maintaining that exact and measured distance from each other, and from the central orb, which is so well adapted to their reception of the solar influence, and the stability and order of the system.

If simplicity of plan be a proof of wisdom, what can be conceived of as more simple than that just two forces should constitute the dynamics of the universe? If harmony be a

manifestation of wisdom, what a display of it in the fact of huge bodies moving through space with the velocity of one thousand miles in a minute, yet that motion regulated with mathematical exactness! If comprehensive generalization be a proof of wisdom, how profound the wisdom which caused the same force, that binds an atom to the surface of our planet, to give union, order, and stability to congregated worlds! If efficiency and perfection of plan be a proof of wisdom, how complete that evidence when we see antagonistic forces, each of which, if left alone, would bring sudden destruction to the universe, so nicely balanced, so accurately adjusted, that they coalesce in the perpetual order, activity, and harmony of the celestial systems! On the one side, the omnipresent and powerful grasp of the gravitating force, that would drag the planets from their places to an all-absorbing centre, is curbed and restrained by the centrifugal force; and, on the other, the impetuous velocity that would carry the whirling orbs away into a fathomless immensity is reined in and controlled; and the combined forces made to originate and perpetuate that mechanical adjustment, which is the normal standard of order, and the embodiment of geometrical regularity. The Divine Author of this system must be wise in heart, and wonderful in counsel.

4. *The concentration and diffusion of light and heat afford a further display of the Creator's wisdom.*

If the faculty of vision be essential to the well-being of the inhabitants of a planet, and heat be essential to life and vegetation, then must there be some contrivance to supply these important requisites, and a wise and beneficent Being would select the most simple and efficient means for effecting them. How, then, were these ends to be accomplished? Shall each celestial body be made *self-luminous*? That were to divest the universe of much of its interesting variety. Besides, to have made each body self-luminous would have been, so far as we can determine, to have eclipsed, or rendered invisible to 'us, all other worlds but our own. It is the *night* that reveals the stars to our view. Amid the brightness of mid-day, an ordinary observer can see no celestial object but the sun, or at times,

perchance, he has a view of the pale moon; but even these bodies, we may suppose, would not be visible if the earth were self-luminous.

A system, then, which would exclude from human view the splendid wonders of the heavens, which would shut out from our gaze every world but our own little planet, was not desirable, and could not be chosen by that wisdom which prefers the best ends and selects the best means to accomplish them. Therefore the infinite Creator has chosen to make the sun the dispenser of light and heat to our earth, and all the planets which revolve around him; and, from his magnitude and central position, he alone is fitted for that office. Here, again, simplicity and efficiency of means are seen as the evidence of wisdom.

In reference to light, it may be remarked that its property of reflection evinces the wisdom of the Divine Being. For, however profusely the sun might shed his beams upon our world, no opaque body would be visible if light had not the property of reflection. We should see the sun glaring the more fiercely, from the surrounding darkness; the twinkling stars would be visible; but no moon, no planet by night, no landscape scene by day. Neither the countenance of a friend, nor even our own form, would be visible. Every terrestrial object, opaque in its nature, would be shrouded in Cimmerian gloom. The faculty of vision, which now reveals the marvels of creation and adds so greatly to the sum of our enjoyment, would be almost useless, and we should stumble at noon-day. But against this calamitous privation the Creator has provided, by giving to light a *reflective* property, which renders opaque bodies luminous by the beams they borrow from others, and fills our earth with radiance and beauty not its own. It is thus, too, that the dark planets and satellites of the solar system are converted into celestial mirrors, which shed their borrowed lustre upon neighbour worlds, relieving the gloom of midnight and imparting a silver radiance when the monarch of day has disappeared. How great the benefit, but how simple the means! Herein is

the wisdom of God. Other properties of light will be noticed when we come to dwell on the attribute of goodness.

But how shall an opaque body like our earth alternately receive the solar influence on *every* part of its surface? Shall the great dispenser of light and heat be carried round our little planet, as the Ptolemaic theory supposed? Such an idea was for many ages the foundation of man's favourite theory; but a system so complicated and ill-adjusted had no place in the counsels of the Creator. Modern discovery has exposed the absurdity, not to say the physical impossibility, of the Ptolemaic system, and demonstrated that, by a plan "divinely simple," the Deity secures his beneficent purpose. By giving each planet a rotation on its axis, the several portions of its surface are regularly brought under the influence of the sun's enlightening and invigorating rays, and successive day and night, so suitable to alternate periods of activity and repose, and so fitted to reveal the splendour and magnificence of Jehovah's works, are afforded to mankind. The wisdom of such sublime and manifold arrangements must strike the mind of every observer.

But another exigency was to be met. Experience shows us that the solar rays, emitted from a central body on a sphere like that of our earth, would act with too much intensity, from their directness, on the equatorial parts, and too faintly, from their obliqueness, on the polar regions of the globe; and the result would be, that while the torrid zone would be changed into a scorched and sterile desert, the higher latitudes would be bound in the ice of a dreary, perpetual, and hopeless winter, unless some means were devised to divert the solar rays from the equator, and dispense them in alternate periods over a wider area of the earth's surface. How was this exigency to be met? The Creator has given a solution to this problem. By the admirable contrivance of inclining the axis of the earth at an angle of $23\frac{1}{2}$ degrees, from a perpendicular to the plane of its orbit, each day shifts the vertical zone of the solar rays, and within the year distributes it over an area of 47 degrees; thus relieving the equatorial parts from an excess of heat, and dis-

pensing it where most needed—in the colder latitudes of the globe. Nor is this all: this admirable contrivance produces that variety in the length of the day, and that protraction of twilight, so advantageous to colder climes and higher latitudes, and affords that diversity in the seasons of the year so agreeable to our nature, and so adapted to the alternate periods of repose and activity required for the development of vegetation and the supply of our wants. In this brief and imperfect view of cosmical arrangements, what sublime and beneficent purposes are unfolded, and by what simple means they are attained! What grandeur of conception and what generalizing power! what perspicacity of view and all-comprehensive wisdom, must distinguish the UNCREATED MIND which originated the plan and executed the design!

SECTION II.—IN THE STRUCTURE AND GENERAL CONDITION OF
OUR WORLD THE WISDOM OF THE DEITY IS DISPLAYED.

THE fact that man exists as the lord of this world, implies that the earth was made for him—specially adapted as a place for his habitation—as a theatre for the exercise and development of his powers. Ere he was brought into being, this fair world was prepared for his reception. Its mountains were reared, its valleys scooped, its ocean chained within appointed bounds; its rivers, like net-work, intersecting and fertilizing its bosom; its foundations built up of solid rocks, and enriched with metallic ores; its surface clothed with living verdure, stocked with vegetation, and replenished with endless forms of animal existence; its circumference enveloped with a transparent and life-sustaining atmosphere, garnished with a drapery of clouds, and inclosed with a canopy studded with gems, sparkling with the radiance of distant worlds. The wisdom which constructed this noble theatre from a heterogeneous mass, and postponed the creation of man until his habitation was thus prepared for his reception, may well challenge our admiration.

From an inexhaustible profusion of facts, let a few evidences of this wisdom be selected.

1. *In the due proportion and distribution of land and water, the wisdom of the Deity is displayed.*

Though man is a terrene being, the waters of the ocean are as essential to his existence as to the inhabitants of the deep. But how is water produced? It is not an original and simple element, but what Sir John Herschel, in his condensed and expressive style, would designate "*a manufactured article.*" It is a compound formed by the combination of two gases, oxygen and hydrogen. Of these two gases, one—hydrogen—is inflammable; and the other—oxygen—is the supporter of combustion. How mysterious that water should consist of these two gases! How mysterious, too, that just so much water as is needed should be produced, and no more! Nor is the wonder explained away by referring the fact to the operation of chemical causes, for those chemical causes are themselves the effects of a pre-existent Cause, whose wisdom ordained the laws of chemistry, and so exactly foresaw and adjusted their operations to the production of the given result.

How is it that this liquid element is continually undergoing a circulating process, passing from the ocean to the clouds, from the clouds to the earth, and from the earth back to its source, the ocean? This process is, indeed, essential to the moisture and fertilization of the earth, and to the perpetuation of animal and vegetable life, for without it the earth would soon become a parched waste; stripped of its verdure and beauty, it would be nothing but a dreary sepulchre of everything that lives on its surface. But how is this process originated and perpetuated? By evaporation on the one hand, and condensation on the other, it may be replied. True, but evaporation and condensation are only names for effects of remoter causes, which ultimately carry us to the great First Cause, whose mind conceived and determined every link in this wonderful arrangement. Moreover, how is it that the antagonistic causes of evaporation and condensation are so nicely balanced, that the quantum of water continues apparently the same without any appreciable differ-

ence from age to age? How is it that precisely what evaporation yields condensation restores, and what condensation returns evaporation again yields up, in one continuous and uninterrupted cycle of meteoric revolutions? Were it otherwise, an end to animal and vegetable existence would speedily ensue. But why is it so? It is not enough to assign the tendency in Nature to produce an equilibrium as the cause of this harmonious balance of antagonistic forces, for the tendency to equilibrium itself is but the effect of antecedent causes, which, again, are the effects of other causes, until we reach the First Cause, the Creator, whose wisdom pierced through them all, and, contemplating the end, appointed the means with unerring and absolute precision to secure its attainment.

We may further inquire, How is it that the great mass of water belonging to our planet is confined within its present bounds? It might have been diffused over the entire surface of the globe. Had our earth been a perfect sphere, without the irregularities of hill and dale, mountain and valley, the waters of the ocean, having no capacious basins into which to retire, would have been spread over every part of the earth's surface, producing one universal deluge, and thus preventing the existence of man or any terrestrial animal. How is it that this was not the case? It is easy to reply, that the volcanic forces which upraised the Alps, the Himalayas, and other mountain ridges, opened out the yawning cavities which received the rushing tide; but this is only a very defective answer, for the question returns, How came those forces to operate, and how came they to operate with precisely the required energy? It was Divine wisdom which appointed that energy, and measured and prescribed its amount, and which arrested its fury when its work was done.

It is ascertained, by careful examination, that the waters of the ocean are extended over nearly three-fourths of the earth's surface, and this expansion of the watery element is the proportion necessary to afford the amount of evaporation requisite to supply the earth with rain, replenish the rivers and fountains, and meet the exigencies of man and beast. How was this accurate proportion secured? It might have been otherwise. The

nicest adjustment of the wildest and most furious agencies in Nature was required, to secure the harmonious results we have. Had volcanic forces acted at random, they might have formed subterraneous cavities, which would have engulfed all the waters of the ocean, and have left the surface of the earth a dry, arid waste, a dreary scene of desolation and death; or those volcanic forces might have formed much deeper hollows than we have, and contained the ocean within one-half, one-third, or one-fourth of its present extent; and in that event the amount of evaporation would have been so small as to have rendered the earth unfitted for the support of animal existence. How is it that these fatal contingencies were prevented, and that a restless element which, from its fluidity and gravity, seeks continually to escape from the surface, and find a receptacle in every hollow, should be confined within a basin of such depth and extent as prescribes its proper bounds, and presents just so much surface to the solar rays as is required to temper the atmosphere with moisture, to charge the clouds with rain, to replenish the rivers and fountains, to cover the earth with verdure, and provide for the wants of man and beast? Volcanic agency was indeed the proximate cause, but it was the unerring wisdom of the Eternal and Uncreated Mind which determined the specific force that it should exert, and which caused it to expend its fury just at the moment when it had fulfilled its mission.

In the facts adduced, and in a thousand others, which the study of the subject may suggest to a thoughtful mind, it is obvious that the multifarious physical conditions necessary to secure the due proportion and distribution of land and water on our globe, involve a degree of wisdom which has neither error nor limitation—wisdom which precisely estimated every volcanic force that has vibrated through earth's foundations, which has weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance, which gave them their definite bounds, and assigned the ocean its limits, which prescribed every chemical law, and anticipated and adjusted every meteoric change in Nature's revolutions.

2. *In the properties of the atmosphere the wisdom of the Deity is displayed.*

The existence of an atmosphere is as essential to man as water and food, and the earth is enveloped in one every way adapted to man's physical constitution. But how numerous and diversified are the conditions under which that atmosphere must exist in order to answer the desired end! It must be transparent, or no object could be seen through it, and the earth would be enveloped in perpetual gloom; it must be elastic, or it could not expand and contract to adjust itself to varied temperature; it must be omniform in its pressure, or it would crush us by its weight; it must be extremely attenuated and minute in its particles, or we could not breathe it; it must be mixed in definite proportions, or, instead of preserving, it would destroy our existence; and it must have the remarkable property of self-purification, or it would soon become corrupt and poisonous. The existing atmosphere combines in itself all these diversified properties.

It may be rationally inquired how is it that we have an atmosphere so perfectly adapted to the various exigencies of our being? The original state of our globe, so far as it can be inferred from geological facts, gave no promise of ultimately elaborating an atmosphere of such diversified, yet harmonious properties; and if it did, the incipient promise was the offspring of a wisdom which could only be equalled by a co-existent benevolence.

If the world was originally a fiery chaos, what wisdom was required to separate its confused and heterogeneous elements into their present order and harmonious distribution, so as to render the air a transparent, elastic, and life-preserving fluid covering the globe—a menstruum of all vapours, the vehicle of sound, the supporter of combustion, the nourisher of plants, the sustainer of life, and a laboratory in which Nature performs her unceasing operations of analysis, solution, decomposition, precipitation, and combination!

Here is an economy fraught with wisdom. It was wisdom unerring that conceived the beneficent end, and provided the efficient means, and superintended their operation to the given result. It was wisdom that gave to vegetation the

faculty of imbibing carbonic acid, and emitting oxygen, as the uniform condition of its existence. It was wisdom that rendered what was a deadly poison to one form of existence the sustaining pabulum of another. It was wisdom that contrived the removal of an element from the region where it was injurious, and transferred it to another where it was beneficial. It was wisdom which preserved the excess of carbon drawn off by vegetation, and laid it up in a safe deposit for a future beneficent purpose. It was wisdom which, in every age, regulated the quantum of vegetation to the specific exigency, whether for affording food to animated beings, or to purify the element in which we have to live and breathe. The skill and care of a physician, in compounding and preparing a medicine for the health of his patient, is but an inexpressive emblem of the wisdom of the great Parent in preparing, from a chaos of opposing elements, a healthful and life-inspiring atmosphere for the welfare of his creatures.

3. *In the economy which has prepared the earth to yield aliment for the sustenance of vegetable and animal life, the wisdom of the Deity is displayed.*

There is a wide disparity between the condition of matter as it existed originally—a chaotic mass—and the delicate particles which build up the human system. Yet they are identical. All organic matter is made up of the substance derived from this terraqueous globe. The pabulum which sustains the various forms of animated existence is drawn from the matter around us. But man cannot digest and assimilate earth, rocks, and minerals; and in contemplating the contrast between the human system and chaotic matter, the problem for Divine wisdom was, how to impart to the latter that refinement and elaboration which should prepare it for human sustenance and assimilation. The process by which this result has been accomplished cannot but excite our admiration.

Whether we take the light of Scripture or geology for our guide, it would appear that among the first great changes in the general mass of chaotic matter, was the separation of the solid from the liquid, and the aeriform from both, in conformity with

the general law of gravitation. It would seem from geological facts that, in the process of cooling, the more solid portions of our planet's surface assumed the crystallized form of a granitic incrustation. But how remote the texture of a granite rock from the delicate fibres of the human system! No wisdom but that of the Infinite One could conceive the process, and direct the means by which the one should be adapted to the other. But it has been done. The Deity was at no loss for either method or means. Suitable agencies are brought into operation, great geological disturbances ensue, and Nature is made to fulfil the purposes of her Creator.

In process of time the omnific fiat goes forth, and numerous forms of organized existence are created. Vegetation secretes from earth, water, and gases, the nourishment required, elaborates them into its own texture, and becomes, in its turn, a pabulum for the support of animal life. Meanwhile, the All-creating energy brings forth numerous forms of animal life, and stocks the earth and ocean with creatures great and small. Generation succeeds generation through distant periods, each carrying on the process of assimilation, and converting crude, elementary matter into a nourishing substance, and at death augmenting the fertile deposit by yielding up its own remains to decomposition and decay. In due time new species are created, meteoric changes and geological revolutions transpire, and ultimately the earth presents a beautiful and picturesque form, enriched with a fertile and abundant soil, stocked with luxuriant vegetation, and land and ocean are replenished with animal existence. Finally, man is created, to tread the green sward, as the lord of this lower world; to inhale the balmy, salubrious atmosphere prepared for him; to enjoy the bounteous provision spread before him; to gaze with an eye of intelligence on the countless wonders around him; to contemplate the perfections and rejoice in the favour of that Being who hath made them all for his own glory. Surely the end is worthy of its Author; and the means employed are illustrations of the inexhaustible riches of his wisdom. Here chance has no place; failure and error no existence. The result is seen from the

beginning; and, through the protracted process, it is kept constantly in view; nothing is premature, nothing miscalculated, nothing abortive, nothing out of place. All things work onward for the given end; and the creation of man—for whom the series of wonders have been operating for unknown ages—comes neither too soon nor too late, but just at the precise time when the earth and the elements are ready for his reception, when all Nature is prepared to greet his appearance, and administer to his enjoyment. "This cometh from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

4. *In the arrangement of geological strata the wisdom of the Deity is displayed.*

While the fertile soil was preparing for man's subsistence, the rocks and minerals, which lie beneath, were being prepared, with equal wisdom and goodness, for his comfort, his refinement, the development of his faculties, and the exaltation of his nature. While he gratefully feasts on the provisions which exuberant Nature spreads before him, he excavates the rocks for materials to construct his dwelling, erect his bridges, pave his highways, and chisel his imitations of organized beauty. He digs up a plastic clay, which he moulds into vessels of ornament and utility; he extracts a carbonaceous deposit to give warmth and cheerfulness to his dwelling, to vitrify his clay, to fuse his ores, to furnish him with new locomotive powers, and add in innumerable ways to his welfare; he finds divers metals interlacing earth's rocky foundations, and brings them forth for utility and ornament.

It is remarkable that the varied treasures of the earth's foundations abound far more with the useful than with the ornamental. Gems are few, metallic and useful ores abundant, and are so arranged and disposed as to afford to man the readiest access to them for use. To a superficial and careless observer, the word *arrangement* may seem most inappropriate to the strata which compose the crust of our globe. Amalgamated masses, so diverse in nature and disrupted in form, appear, at first sight, to be a chaos of confusion—the result of the rage and fury of the wildest elements, expending their

forces without law and without end, except to produce havoc and destruction. Nothing can be more erroneous. There is the prevalence here of order which admits of a definite and scientific classification; there is here an adjustment of counter-acting forces, even as in the sublime symmetry of the heavens; and a manifest contrivance for a given and benevolent end, even as in the mechanism of the human system. Every stratum is composed of the right materials, was formed at the right period, and occupies the right position, to fulfil a given purpose.

Had the crust of the earth, beneath the surface-soil, consisted of one homogeneous mass—say, granite, or any other single rock—we should have been destitute of iron, coal, limestone, and the precious metals, and subject to the inconveniences of the savage state. We should have been unable even to excavate the rock itself for our habitation, or to hew down the trees of the forest for our convenience, for want of the ferruginous material to form an instrument for our use. Again, if the materials now composing the crust of the earth had never been disturbed from their original position, many of the substances, so essential to our use, would have been inaccessible to mankind; and without the three minerals, iron, limestone, and coal, what a world would ours have been! Indeed, were we to be destitute of any of the three, what an abridgment of human comfort we should be doomed to experience! Mountains of gold, and oceans replenished with gems, would be no compensation for their absence. But all such disadvantages have been obviated by the wisdom of the Creator. There is not a substance requisite for man's use and enjoyment, but is provided for him. The same wise and beneficent economy which deposited these treasures in the earth, has unbarred the great storehouses of Nature, and rendered them accessible to human industry. Instead of lying horizontally at depths to which man could not penetrate, these treasures have been lifted up to our hand. The volcanic agencies, which in distant periods back convulsed the earth, have thrown up towards the surface the materials once entombed far below our reach. Sometimes these minerals crop out at the surface; but oftener

they lie some fathoms below, deep enough to stimulate human industry, but not too deep to disappoint its efforts.

It is worthy of observation, that the three valuable minerals which enter so largely into the economy and comfort of civilized life—namely, coal, iron, and limestone—are commonly found in juxtaposition, or near to each other. The advantages arising from this fact are incalculable; for the manufacture of iron depends on the properties found in the other two minerals. Coal is the smelter of iron ore; limestone, when heated, acts as a flux, and disengages the earthy from the metalliferous particles, leaving the latter free to the carbonizing influence of the coke. Thus the presence of coal and lime is indispensable. Now, had the geological arrangement been such as had widely separated these minerals, rendering the coal-fields accessible only in one region, ironstone in another, and lime in a third, the difficulties of using them conjointly, and developing their combined resources, would have been formidable. But that Providence which anticipated human wants, and contrived for their supply before man was formed, had caused these valuable deposits, so different from each other in their nature, to lie in close contiguity, so that the industry which excavates the one should be rewarded by a supply of the other; and man be enabled, with the least expenditure of time and energy, to develop the resources of each mineral, and reap the most important advantages from their use. Geology has been aptly termed the Creator's autograph recording his ancient operations, and every line of the Divine inscription proclaims his wisdom.

5. In Nature we behold a process of perpetual renovation from decay, and herein the wisdom of God is declared.

Creation and providence present an economy in which nothing is wasted, but every particle of matter is turned to good account. Decomposition is the product of mechanical and chemical agency; it pervades all Nature, and is in constant operation. Though, viewed in one aspect, it seems the antagonist of creative energy; yet, when viewed in another, it is the servant of that energy—it is the mode in which the Creator changes existing forms of matter, and prepares them to pass

into other combinations, that he may thereby renovate the face of Nature, and adorn it with fresher beauties and richer manifestations of his wisdom and goodness.

Let us suppose an economy in which death is continued, but decomposition is suspended. As the effect of such a change, this beautiful world would soon be converted into a charnel-house—a gloomy sepulchre of all that lives. The leaves that fall from the trees in autumn, the plants, and herbs, and grasses that annually die, and the millions of tons of vegetable matter which each season fall to the earth, would lie there as a dead, useless encumbrance. The great numbers of the animal creation which annually die, and the general refuse from animal bodies, would soon cover the surface of the globe. Meanwhile, the soil, being continually absorbed by assimilation, but receiving no accessions by decomposition, would become rapidly exhausted. Dead matter continually accumulating, organized existence would proportionately decline, until, finally, the earth would become divested of all beauty, stripped of all life, and of the pabulum which sustains it; very soon not an animal could live, not a flower could bloom, not a blade of grass could grow. All organized existence would die off, the process of renovation stand still, and the sterile, untenanted earth present everywhere nothing but the unsightly spoils of death on her exhausted surface.

Decomposition, then, is the general scavenger of Nature. It disencumbers the earth of the masses of dead animal and vegetable matter cast upon its surface, resolves that matter into its original elements, prepares it to enter into new combinations, and converts it into elements for the sustenance of vegetation.

Renovation succeeds decomposition, and operates with equal energy and constancy. Here is an agency which converts death into life, and transforms this sepulchral world into a paradise, causing the spoils of one generation to constitute the verdure, animation, and beauty of the next, and perpetuating the youth and activity of the earth. This principle, however, is one which cannot be resolved into mechanical and

chemical agency, or into any of the properties of matter. It is a mode of Divine operation too profound and recondite for man to unfold. There is a mystery here which baffles all scientific inquiry; but, though unable to explain, we are bound to adore. We see enough to excite our wonder and our gratitude. In the original conception of these two agencies, so opposite in their character, yet so mutually subservient to a beneficent end—in their mysterious functions—in the perfect equipoise and adjustment of one to the other, and in their marvellous results—we see the wisdom of our God.

SECTION III.—THE WISDOM OF GOD IS DISPLAYED IN THE
PHENOMENA OF PHYSIOLOGY.

HERE a field of inquiry opens to our view so varied and extensive, that a thousand volumes could not exhaust it. If the structure of the human hand furnishes enough to occupy a volume from the gifted pen of Sir Charles Bell, without exhausting the theme, it is in vain to attempt, within a space so limited as ours, to do more than call attention to a few leading facts which the physiology of vegetable and animal life presents to our notice.

1. *The Principle of Life.*

The first and most essential distinction between mere matter and organic existence is the principle of life. We will not perplex the reader with the different theories, ancient and modern, which, from the days of Aristoxenus and Lucretius to the present hour, have affected to explain the principle of life. The most elaborate and philosophical attempts to define and explain this mysterious principle, bring to the mind no clearer ideas of its nature than a popular view. They rather bewilder and obscure than explain and unfold. Yet we are assured there is life. We enjoy it ourselves by consciousness, we witness it in others by observation, and know that it is the attribute of plants as well as of animals. Though essential to intellect, sensation, and consciousness, and to all the attributes

of mind, yet neither mind nor any of its attributes are absolutely essential to life, for it can exist without them—as, for example, in plants. Yet in its *lowest* form it is essentially distinct from dead matter, however modified and refined. It is as distinct from the galvanic fluid, from electricity, from the magnetic current, and the most subtile gases, as it is from a piece of adamant. It is as distinct from crystals, however regular their mathematical configuration, as it is from the rudest mass of earth. It is also distinct from organization itself. Under its dominion matter assumes new functions and fulfils a nobler purpose. Life imparts to an organized body the power to increase by assimilation instead of accretion, vitalizing the dead matter with which it is nourished by incorporating it with the living substance, and impregnating it with the same properties; it withdraws the material fabric, in which it resides, from the absolute government of chemical affinities, and puts it under the dominion of laws peculiar to itself, and in the higher orders of animated existence it renders matter the servant of thought and volition.

Life is that which man attempts in vain to produce. He may imitate organization and motion, and he may manufacture various kinds of crystals; but life defies all his attempts. He may call all the resources of mechanics and chemistry to his aid; but the production of life he can never realize, even in its lowest forms. It is the prerogative of Deity alone; and the mystery of his operation here, as well as the astonishing results, bespeak a degree of wisdom for which we have neither appropriate terms nor adequate conceptions.

2. *Organization.*

Kant defines organization “a product of Nature in which all the parts are mutually ends and means.” Hence, every part of an organized structure is necessarily indicative of wisdom; but when our view is extended to the boundless varieties of organized life, we are convinced that the resources of creative wisdom are boundless; they can have no limitation.

Every variety of life has an organization of its own, from

which arise the numerous types of being, scientifically divided into classes, orders, genera, and species. The diversified forms of being are astounding. Botanical science has arranged and classified from eighty to a hundred thousand species of plants; new discoveries are continually increasing the number; and to these must be added the extinct species embedded in geological deposits. Zoology has numbered upwards of a thousand species of quadrupeds, five thousand species of birds, an equal number of fishes, a hundred thousand species of insects; while of reptiles, shell-fish, crustaceans, worms, radiates, zoophytes, and animalcules, the numerous species defy the industry of man to ascertain.

In these multifarious species, what diversity in size, from the microscopic plant to the gigantic pine, from the monad that finds a world in a drop of water to the iguanodon and the whale! What diversity in shape, in colours, in habits, in instincts, in physical conformation! The earth, the air, the ocean, are crowded with life, and the varieties of organization are as numerous as the conditions under which life is capable of subsisting. It is as if the Creator had called these endless varieties of being into existence for the purpose of displaying the inexhaustible opulence of his wisdom, of showing to his intelligent creatures that the resources of his knowledge and power are absolutely infinite.

In the vegetable kingdom we see the diversified species endowed with an organization perfectly adapted to the assigned mode of existence and propagation of each. There is the root to give the plant fixity in the earth, and supplied with numerous fibres with little absorbent mouths to secrete the nutritious moisture from the ground; the stem, or trunk, with its vascular tissue and capillary tubes, fitted at once to elaborate the nourishing juices, to transmit them to the remotest branches, and assimilate them into the substance of the general structure. There are the leaves, made to perform the double purpose of imbibing carbonic acid and liberating oxygen; the flowers, gay with varied beauty, and furnished with apparatus to prepare,

mature, and transmit the seed that is destined to perpetuate the species to the next generation. What proofs of constructive wisdom are here!

In the animal kingdom, we see an external structure fitted to the varied modes of life; whether the creature is destined to occupy land or water, or both, it has an organization specially suited to the element of its being. Whatever be its destined mode of locomotion—walking, creeping, leaping, swimming, or flying—it has suitable mechanical faculties for its action. Whatever be its mode of protection, of seizing prey, of procuring food, or providing its habitation, it is furnished with weapons, implements, and every requisite for the task. It is fitted, too, with organs of sense: of sight, the organs of vision being mathematically conformed to the laws and properties of light; of hearing, having an apparatus adapted to the undulations of the atmosphere and the laws of sound; sensation, furnished with a nervous system terminating in the sensorium, or the brain; with distinct apparatus for mastication, digestion, secretion, circulation, respiration, excretion, assimilation, and reproduction. What a fruitful and inviting field we have here! The subject of comparative anatomy might be pursued with a delight amounting almost to ecstasy, from the incessant manifestations of wisdom presented in the admirable structure, the nice adaptations, the delicate adjustment, the varied and extensive relations of every member in the economy of animal organization. But we must put a restraint upon our pen, especially as some remarks on the human system will be made in a subsequent chapter on the benevolence of God. There are two functions, however, of the animal and vegetable economy which seem to require special notice—namely, assimilation and reproduction.

3. *Assimilation.*

Here is a phenomenon which, as a fact, is obvious to our senses, but which no laws in the known properties of matter can account for. We can tell how a substance becomes enlarged by accretion, by attracting to itself surrounding particles of matter; but the mystery of assimilation who can explain!

How is it that earth, air, and water become transformed into a vegetable substance? How is it that a vegetable substance becomes, in its turn, transformed into an animal substance? How is it that a mass of food, taken into the animal system, becomes so incorporated with the system itself as to be animalized, to be endowed with the attributes of life, and to make a part of the living, breathing creature? How is it, too, that the various particles become so separated and distributed, that each kind finds its appropriate destiny, and becomes associated with those alone of its own nature—one particle being changed into muscular fibre, another into skin, another into the nervous filament, another into brain, another into the horny substance of the nails, another into sinews and ligatures, another into hair, and another into the refined fluids that supply the eyes with the vitreous and crystalline humours, with definite refracting powers? How is it, too, that each particle, separate from its fellows, finds its own place in the system, and enters as a component part where it is wanted? Finally, how is it that the process which is continually carrying off minute particles of the system by perspiration and waste, is so admirably counter-balanced by the process of assimilation? No alembic has resolved these results into the laws and allotropic properties of matter. No chemical affinities can account for these combinations; no microscopic investigation of the vascular system has revealed the secret of these functions. Here human science is baffled in its efforts at discovery. Nature works in secret at the bidding of her Maker. His wisdom, which imparted to matter its properties, has assigned its functions, and from age to age, without miscalculation or error, without failure or mistake, carries onward the complicated and marvellous operations which fulfil the prescribed purpose.

4. *The Phenomena of Reproduction.*

The faculty of reproduction imparted to vegetable and animal existence, and the elaborate system of contrivances provided for it, are fraught with manifestations of Divine wisdom. If we examine a plant or an animal while in the embryotic state, how unlikely that it should ever possess either

the faculty or the organization for the history it is destined to fulfil! If we look at a grain of wheat or an acorn, what is there in their composition, texture, and form, to promise from the one the graceful corn-stalk, laden with abundant fruit, or from the other the sturdy oak, to brave the storms of a hundred winters, and yield myriads of successors before it dies? If we examine the roe of a fish, what is there in the mass of diminutive granules to predicate the development of a myriad of its kind, which in their turn shall yield countless myriads more of the same species? Nor is the wonder explained away if we transfer our observation from the *ova* of animals and plants to their matured and developed structure; for though here we see a complete organization adapted to the effect, the mystery remains as to how the apparatus itself can result in the production—how a creature entirely passive and helpless as to its *own* organization, incapable of influencing it in the slightest degree, should have the faculty of producing its kind endowed with an organization, and with instincts for modes of life exactly corresponding with its own. The marvel increases when it is remembered that this faculty descends unimpaired down the stream of successive generations for thousands of years, without any assignable limitation. To talk of chemical affinities, of the peculiar properties and active conatus of matter, as being adequate to these results, or as presenting the least clue to the unravelling of this problem, is to insult both philosophy and common sense. The facts are observable, and the process may be scrutinized, but the essential connection between cause and effect eludes all inquiry. The Creator works, but over his operations he has drawn a veil which science cannot lift. His wisdom has determined the result, and contrived the means for its accomplishment, but that wisdom is too profound for man to fathom, and the connecting points in the chain of causes and effects are too ethereal for the keenest eye to detect. Indeed, the facts involved in reproduction proclaim as distinctly and audibly the presence and agency of the Deity, as if the existence of each creature were effected by a special and separate act of *creating energy*.

The organization and the numerous physical conditions ordained for the purpose of reproduction are perhaps as wonderful as the faculty itself. In addition to that elaborate system of reciprocal means and ends formed for the growth, development, and conservation of each plant and animal, we find each provided with a distinct apparatus for the production of its own species. In the anthers, the stamens, the stigmas, and the pollen of plants, we have a contrivance combining beauty and utility, a provision to invest Nature with its gayest colours and sweetest odours in the act of giving birth to a succeeding race. Then, what numerous contrivances to protect this delicate apparatus, to evolve and mature the nascent seed, and cast it forth at the proper time! What care to inclose the seed in a covering fitted to preserve it against adverse influences, until placed in a favourable condition for development! Some seeds are covered with a strong close tunicle; others incased in hard and enduring shells, husks, and parchment pods; others embedded in mucilaginous pulp or glutinous syrup; others enveloped in down and wool, or surrounded with an armour of scales, spikes, and thorns. What tenacity and durability, too, in the vital principle! Mustard-seed has been known to germinate after a hundred years, and wheat to grow after being inclosed in the case of a mummy for more than two thousand years. Yet however diversified the productive apparatus, and however varied the forms and structure of seeds, there is nothing in vain—the organization is indispensable to meet an exigency, or to promote the fecundity of the plant. A purpose is everywhere observable, the structure is always subservient to the purpose, and no means can be imagined so perfectly adapted as those which are contrived for this end.

In the animal tribes, the provision made for their reproduction is still more elaborate. Here, again, that wisdom which delights to manifest itself in the variety of species, displays its resources in the diversified modes of their multiplication. Some produce their species by gemmation, or budding, others by fission, or division. Some are oviparous, producing their young by eggs; and others are viviparous, bringing forth their

young alive. The ova of some require no maternal care, but once deposited, the natural warmth of the elements gives them development; while others require the patient incubation of the parent animal. Some are brought forth with the complete development of their specific organization, whilst others have to pass through a series of metamorphic stages, before they attain perfection in the peculiar attributes of their species. Some are prepared at once to feed on the aliments around them, while others have to be supplied for a time with a refined, a warm, and nourishing pabulum, adapted to a transition state, before they can digest the coarser aliments. Some are fitted at once to provide for themselves, to exert their locomotive powers, and enter on the race of life; while others are brought forth in a feeble and helpless condition, requiring much parental care and attention to rear them.

How diversified the physical and instinctive conditions requisite for all this! Yet there is a special organization for it peculiar to each species, and one which can neither be transposed nor altered. It is perfect in itself, and is incapable of amendment. There is also an organization for sexual distinction, and a provident arrangement which, through successive ages, unerringly preserves the numerical proportion between the sexes. In the mammalian tribes there is the beautiful contrivance of the mother's breast filled with a warm nutritious beverage, just at the moment when her feeble offspring are cast upon her care.

There is also a distinct class of instincts suited to the procreating faculty and organization, and these are so essential to each other, that both would be useless without their co-existence. The organization would be in vain without the instinct, and the instinct useless without the organization. The eggs of the bird must perish unless instinct prompt her to cherish them by patient, assiduous incubation, and her naked brood, when brought forth, must soon die, if maternal affection did not prompt her to feed them, and to cherish them beneath her fostering wings. The helpless infant must expire in a few hours, if parental affection did not prompt to tender nursing and unceasing care. The perpetuity of the species is guarded

and promoted by the most active and powerful instincts of animal nature, instincts so complete that every want has been anticipated by the provision of Nature; so unerring that no instruction is required for their guidance; so active and spontaneous that no law is required for their enforcement; and so strong as to exceed the love of life itself. It is worthy of remark, too, that instinctive affection uniformly rises with the helplessness and tenderness of the offspring.

In human nature, these instincts rise to their highest perfection, and subserve the noblest purposes of our being. They are the source of the most intimate and endearing relations, the active spring of domestic and social virtues, and they yield the most refined connubial happiness. Moreover, they become associated with the moral sentiments, are brought under the dominion of intellect and conscience, and they largely promote the elevation of our moral nature.

In the faculties, organizations, and instincts created for the perpetuation of the numerous species of animals, there are such minute and diversified adaptations, so many connecting links and anticipative contrivances, all adjusted with such unerring skill, that we have therein a more striking display of Divine wisdom, than we could have if each animal were brought into existence by a distinct and special act of creation. He, who in the beginning endowed the unconscious plant with the faculty of transmitting the life and organization of its species through all succeeding generations—He, who in animal nature has combined this power with the higher attributes of sensation instinct, and mind—He, who raised the temperature of the fowl's body just at the moment when she acquired the desire to sit, who inspired her with a generous affection for her young before they had burst from their shell—He, who filled the breasts of the dam with a mild, nourishing fluid for the sustenance of her young before they were brought forth, and filled her heart with a fondling sympathy at the moment of their birth—He, who in all the myriads of species has unerringly adapted the organization to the instinct, and the instinct to the organization, and adapted both to their specific results—who

has harmonized all these relations with a perfection that admits of no amendment, and of no alteration without detriment and danger—He, who in human nature has blended natural instincts with moral sentiments, and made them subservient to social virtue and the elevation of our being, must be infinitely wise. On all his marvellous works he has left the deep and legible impress of his unbounded wisdom.

SECTION IV.—THE WISDOM OF GOD DISPLAYED IN THE
PHENOMENA OF THE HUMAN MIND.

A TREATISE on the mind would impose upon us the obligation of a careful analysis of its powers and functions, and an examination of the several rival theories which offer their respective claims to our preference; but this would require a volume of considerable magnitude, and divert us from our main object. Our space and our task impose the necessity of brevity and condensation. Our aim, therefore, is merely to notice a few points in our mental constitution which illustrate the wisdom of our Creator.

Although the mind, from its spirituality, exhibits fewer marks of contrivance than our physical organization, yet, from its nobler nature and higher attributes, it yields a more profound and impressive evidence of Divine wisdom. It is the possession of this mind that elevates human nature to a pre-eminent distinction, above the highest types of mere animal existence, and constitutes a resemblance to the Deity himself. The slightest consideration of its powers reveals the fact that they were intended to serve a higher purpose than to provide for the wants and welfare of our physical nature; for the mind is capable of acquiring a knowledge of physical and abstract truths, of becoming enriched with treasures of wisdom, of being refined and ennobled with the possession of moral sentiments and high degrees of moral excellence.

It will not be disputed, that if the mind be formed with faculties for the acquirement of knowledge and wisdom, the

Being who has endowed it with these faculties must himself be wise; for such noble attributes in the creature must be a reflection of a corresponding perfection in the Creator. Let us, then, briefly review some of the powers imparted to our mental nature.

Consciousness—The faculty by which we recognize our own existence and identity, and the various thoughts, emotions, and states of being which pass in our own minds. This is the foundation of all knowledge, and without it no other mental faculty could exist, or be exerted if it did exist; indeed, without consciousness, life would be reduced to a kind of vegetative being.

Sensation—The faculty by which the mind receives impressions from without, through the organs of sense. Without this, the functions of consciousness must be confined within a very narrow range, for we could have no communication with the external world, and should be shut out from the acquisition of knowledge. Sensation is the inlet of knowledge from without.

Understanding—Whether or not this term comprehends several faculties, we stay not to debate. We mean the power of the mind to perceive a proposition. Without this we might receive ideas and impressions, but should not be competent to give them the form and character of knowledge, nor to hold intelligent converse with one another. The understanding is the faculty by which the mind becomes cognizant of simple elementary truths.

Memory—The faculty of recalling past ideas. Without this we could make no progress in knowledge, nor derive any benefit from experience. Our knowledge would pass away as it came, like the scenes of a moving diorama, and leave the mind vacant and incapable of the least acquirement. Memory enables us to live life over again, to derive instruction from experience, to build truth upon truth, and add to our stock of knowledge through every period of our being.

Reason—The noble faculty by which we distinguish truth from error, and deduce one truth from another. Without this

faculty, our knowledge could never advance further than simple propositions and self-evident truths; and, however tenaciously these might be retained in the memory, we could never proceed beyond the first principles of knowledge. It is *Reason*, therefore, which enables us to examine abstract truths, to apply the first principles of knowledge in the discovery of remoter truths, and extend the bounds of our knowledge in every department of science, literature, ethics, and religion.

Imagination—The faculty by which we may separate and variously combine our ideas. Without this faculty the mind would have its thoughts confined to naked facts and propositions, and truth would be divested of much of its power to attract and interest. Imagination imparts drapery, colour, and life to our thoughts; it gives a soul to the objects of sense, and a body to the abstractions of philosophy. Poetry, oratory, and the fine arts, derive their power from the imagination.

Affections and Passions—Without affections and passions, man would be incapable of emotion; and, destitute of emotion, his mental nature would be devoid of either enjoyment or suffering. He would be unfitted for society or religion. He would be unsusceptible of motive, and in his mental being sin could have no scourge, and virtue and piety no reward. He would regard good and evil with equal indifference, with as much absence of moral sentiment as he regards the truth or error of the most abstract mathematical theorem. The affections and passions, therefore, are essential to the development of social virtues and religious principles, and they are bestowed for this purpose.

Volition—The power of choice. Destitute of this faculty man would be a mere machine, incapable of responsibility and of all moral excellence. It is the faculty of volition, freedom of choice, that constitutes the foundation of virtue, of all moral dignity and personal excellence.

Conscience—The faculty which at once perceives and feels the distinction between good and evil, and which connects the emotion appropriate to the dispositions we cherish, and to the

actions we perform. Without the faculty of conscience, there would be no inward monition of duty, no restraint upon vice and crime, no stimulant to virtue apart from secular influence. Our selfish instincts would be the governing principles of our conduct, and passion and appetite be left without a directing and counteracting agency. Conscience, therefore, is a faculty essential to the perfection of our moral nature. It is the ever present, active, and unsuborned witness for truth and right; the faithful vicegerent of God, asserting his authority, enforcing his laws, and reminding us of our responsibilities to his tribunal.

We do not pretend to furnish a complete category of our mental faculties, nor a refined definition of those we have introduced to notice. We are content to name the more prominent powers of the mind, and plainly set forth their use and importance.

In these faculties we see a wise and beneficent economy. There is nothing either superfluous or defective. Not one faculty could be withheld without a deterioration of our mental nature; nor can we conceive of one that is wanting to complete our manhood. They are all essential to a thinking, intelligent, moral being, and they are adequate to our full development in this state of existence. Faculties of a higher nature might, indeed, be given to beings in a higher state; but for man, as an inhabitant of earth, and as a being combining a physical with an intellectual and moral nature, they are fully adequate to answer the noblest ends of his existence.

In our mental faculties we perceive also a mutual dependence and relation indicative of unerring wisdom. Between the simplest exercise of perception and every intervening faculty, up to the highest offices of reason and conscience, there is a necessary connection and a symmetrical adjustment, fitting the mind to accumulate, retain, analyze, arrange, and employ its treasures, and subordinate all its intellectual acquirements to the social and moral happiness of our being. Nor must we omit to notice, in estimating the wisdom of God in our mental constitution, the remarkable capability of the soul to become

refined, expanded, and enlarged by exercise ; to which capability, indeed, there seems no limit, except from the frail and perishable organization which it employs. While the material fabric retains its vigour, it appears that exercise not only extends the bounds of our knowledge, multiplies our mental resources, and fills the mind with ennobling sentiments, but quickens and invigorates our faculties, and prepares them for greater achievements. Newton and Pascal, Sir W. Jones, A. Murray, and Clarke, were illustrious examples of this truth, proceeding from the simplest rudiments, the infantine elements of knowledge, to those cyclopædian attainments in scientific and sacred lore, which have placed them in the dignified position of intellectual guides and luminaries to mankind. But, however varied and extensive the mental acquirements of men, they are but the humble and shadowy reflections of the wisdom of God ; for men have nothing but what they have received from his resources. All their mental powers are derived from him, and their knowledge is made up entirely of ideas and truths which had previously flowed from his unbounded fulness. Every truth in Nature, in science, in ethics, in religion, is evolved from the mind of God.

Nor must we overlook the fact, that the same powers which fit the mind for penetrating the arcana of science, for acquiring and treasuring up unlimited stores of knowledge and wisdom, qualify it for communicating those treasures to others. It is mind that employs the tongue and the pen to give utterance to its thoughts ; that converts the vibrations of the atmosphere, and even the subtile stream of the electric fluid, into articulations of truth and knowledge ; thus transmitting its thoughts and sentiments through every latitude of the globe, and every period of time. It is mind that not only explores Nature, but subdues it, makes the stubborn materials of earth and the volatile elements subservient to man's convenience, his refinement, and his wishes. Such being the wonderful attributes and capabilities of mind, in what language shall we express our admiration of the wisdom of its glorious Author? He who has made man, and endowed him with faculties thus to acquire and

thus to communicate wisdom, must himself be wise, and possess this attribute in an infinite degree.

To complete our view of mind as a reflection of the Divine nature and an expression of his wisdom, its spirituality must be taken into account.

Mind is not matter, however attenuated and refined. As thought is not material, neither is the principle that thinks; as an idea has not the properties of matter, neither has the soul that conceives it. Though material organs are, indeed, employed by the mind, there is as much difference between the mind itself and the organs it employs, as there is between a musician and the instrument he uses. The chords that vibrate to his intelligent touch are indeed adjusted to certain properties of the air, even as the organ of the ear is constructed in relation to the laws of sound; but as the intelligent musician is distinct from the unconscious instrument he plays, so is the conscious intelligent mind distinct from the material mechanism it employs. It is spiritual, like its Divine Author. We have thus, in the constitution of our nature, two substances essentially different in their properties, yet so intimately united as to make one conscious being. We have mind homogeneous in substance, yet possessing divers faculties; spiritual in its nature, yet acting through material media. These facts enhance our view of the wisdom of him who conceived and created both matter and mind. The Deity has filled the universe with the manifestations of his own perfections, and he has brought into existence a being endowed with faculties to read the lessons he has inscribed, so that by the study of Nature around him, and by the study of his own powers, he may see and appreciate the manifold wisdom of his Creator.

SECTION V.—SOME OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

CLEAR and convincing as are the evidences of wisdom in the Creator's works, infidelity and scepticism have often affected to find grounds of objection to it. It may be, indeed, that

some serious inquirers have been perplexed with certain facts which seem to clash with the manifestations of Divine wisdom. Some of these claim our attention.

1. *The prevalence of death, and of various forms of evil in the world.*

It has been alleged that if wisdom choose only good ends, death, and the various forms of natural and moral evil which prevail, are facts repugnant to the wisdom of the Deity. This objection requires due attention, and it shall have that attention in its proper place; but as its force, if it have any, applies equally against the *goodness* of God, we shall reserve our reply until we come to contemplate the attribute of benevolence.

2. *The complicated character of God's works.*

It is further alleged, that if simplicity of structure be an evidence of wisdom, that characteristic does not uniformly apply to the works of God, inasmuch as many of his operations present a very elaborate and complicated structure. To which we reply—

1. The nature of the objection itself yields homage to the wisdom of God. If the objection have any force, it implies that the displays of Divine wisdom are too exuberant—that the Creator has been too lavish in the displays of his wisdom. But that this has not been the case may easily be shown, for,—

2. Simplicity is certainly the prevailing characteristic of inorganic Nature. Matter itself, though infinitely diversified in composition, in figure, and in subserviency to the Creator's purpose, has been resolved into about sixty-five elements; and of these elements, some eight or ten form the whole list of substances which compose the *great bulk and mass* of those objects we see around us. The atmosphere consists chiefly of two gases, oxygen and nitrogen; water is constituted of two, oxygen and hydrogen; the solid earth on which we tread is chiefly made up of the oxides of one non-metallic body, silicon, two metals, aluminium and calcium, the metallic base of lime, and a few other substances.*

* See Fownes's "Chemistry," 2—4.

In organic bodies the same simplicity is observed ; carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, a little phosphorus and sulphur, and sometimes a small proportion of two or three alkaline and earthy salts, are the sole materials employed in the construction of those countless multitudes of living objects which people the earth, and clothe it with beauty. Indeed, modern organic chemistry, vast as it is, consists of little more than the study of the four elements of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, and nitrogen, and their combinations.* Such, then, is the simplicity of Nature as to the elementary constitution of bodies.

3. If we refer to the most stupendous operations of Nature, we find that they are comprised within a few general laws. It is the same law that rounds a tear and a dewdrop, that moulded the earth into a globe, and gave a spherical figure to the planets, the sun, and the greatest orbs in the universe. The same law that binds a pebble to the earth gives firmness to the foundations of our buildings, retains the waters of the ocean in their place, compels the subtile atmosphere to cling to our world, retains the earth and planets in their orbits, and carries even the stellary systems themselves through space, and as is now supposed around a common centre. Not only the harmonious revolutions of celestial bodies, but the meteoric changes that purify the elements, and fit the earth for our habitation ; the agencies that have diversified the earth's surface, and created the beauty and grandeur of the scenery around us ; that have opened out the mineral treasures of the world's foundations ; that have formed the cavities of the ocean, and given activity to the rivers and fountains, may all be traced to the operation of a few general laws. Everywhere, throughout inorganic Nature, so far as the eye of man can reach, or the telescope can pierce, we see magnificent results combined with simplicity of law, multifarious effects traceable to unity of cause—the obvious production of a mind to which nothing short of perfect wisdom can be ascribed.

* "Chemistry exemplifying the Wisdom and Beneficence of God," by Professor G. Fownes, 3.

4. Simplicity of structure is equally a characteristic of the human mind. While spiritual and homogeneous in its nature, its faculties are few, indeed, in number, contrasted with their amazing functions and capacity. All the elaborate investigations of the mathematician, the scholar, the logician, the politician, and the divine, are performed by the exercise of a few simple powers. The simplicity of our mental constitution is only equalled by its wonderful attainments.

5. It is true that organized matter presents an assemblage of various elaborate and complicated structures, but they are such as the conditions of existence required; their conception, therefore, is an evidence *for*, and not *against*, the wisdom of the Creator. It is only when simple means might have been equally efficient for a given result, that a complicated mechanism becomes an indication of imperfect wisdom. But when the conditions of existence are such that a given result can only be attained by an elaborate system of means, it follows that the more elaborate the system, the more striking the proof of the wisdom of its Author. Such, then, are the actual conditions of organized existence.

In Nature there is a boundless variety; there is a system in which every part is connected with the whole; and there is an economy in which Nature is made to minister to its own continuance. These conditions are such as necessarily required an elaborate organization. Let us examine them.

(a) *Variety of existence.*

Had the Creator abridged the variety of existence, he might have dispensed with much of that elaborate system which marks his operations. Had he created nothing higher than confervas and cryptogamic plants, and nothing higher than worms and molluscs among animals, organization would have been simple, indeed; but Nature would have been left barren and vacant, compared with its present fecundity and fulness. To extend the variety so as to replenish the earth, the ocean, and the air, with life, the species must be numerous and widely diversified in size, in form, in habit, and in instincts, to fit them for the varied conditions of life; and in order to meet

these exigencies, the internal and external organization must be diversified; and the mind that contrived for all these varied exigencies displays, not its weakness, but its wisdom; not its imperfection, but its boundless resources.

(b) *Mutual dependence.*

Nature is a system in which all the parts are mutually connected and dependent; and this is another condition which necessarily requires an elaborate organization. Had the Creator divested his works of system; had each part been isolated and unconnected, then much of the elaborate contrivance which now prevails in Nature would have been obviated; but, in this case, the proportion, the harmony, the mutual subserviency of one part to the other, would not have existed, and the resources of Divine wisdom would not have been unfolded as they are now. To render creation a system of means and ends, in which nothing is isolated, in which every part is connected by mutual dependence, relations, and subserviency, is a plan infinitely more worthy of its Author. Such is the plan the Deity has selected, and its conditions necessarily required an elaborate contrivance; and the mind that has fully met the requirement affords a further display of its inexhaustible resources of intelligence and wisdom.

(c) *Continuance.*

Nature is made to minister to its own continuance, and this is another condition of existence which necessarily requires elaborate contrivance. There is, perhaps, no part of an organized system which reveals a more complicated structure than that which is formed for the sustenance of the individual and the continuance of the species; but this elaborate organization was indispensable. For how was an animal to be sustained without food? In no way except by miracle or special interposition; and in this case the Creator must have been perpetually contravening his own laws, setting them aside, suspending them, altering them to meet an exigency; a mode which would indicate defect and imperfection in his arrangements. Moreover, how was each species to be multiplied and continued without appropriate structure and instincts? In no

way we can conceive, except by the Deity putting forth a special and distinct act of creating energy for the production of each individual successively? This would have been to reiterate his acts unnecessarily, and to multiply causes without end—another indication of an imperfect arrangement. The wisdom, therefore, which provided a digestive and reproducing system in each creature—thus rendering Nature itself the instrument of fulfilling his purposes—is far more strikingly displayed than it could be in the continued repetition of creative acts.

Thus the objection not only falls to the ground, but its examination enhances our estimate of the Creator's wisdom. It was the design of God to manifest his wisdom by the displays of his power, and to render that manifestation intelligible and impressive to his rational creatures. He has done this, and done it in the most perfect manner.

In Nature we have a system of reciprocal means and ends, so vast and multifarious that imagination itself cannot fix its bounds; we have laws the most simple and comprehensive, combined with organizations the most minute and elaborate; we have generalizations which comprehend the utmost circle that bounds the limits of creation, and a mechanism which provides for the instincts of the smallest monad; we have an infinity of parts forming one stupendous whole; we have connections, dependencies, relations, and harmonies pervading all creation; we have the lowest forms of being subserving the interests of the highest, and the highest ministering to the functions of the lowest; we have a provident economy in which not an atom is lost, wasted, or unemployed—in which not an exigency is unanticipated or unprovided for, nor an end without its appropriate means, nor means without an appropriate end. The great Being who is the Author of the whole, knew all the properties and capabilities of matter before his almighty fiat brought it into being, and he must have known both all the given and all the possible results of its combinations before he disposed it in order, or caused it to enter upon the mysterious cycle of its operations. His wisdom, therefore, is infinite.

SECTION VI. — THE ARGUMENT SUSTAINED AND EXTENDED BY
THE TESTIMONY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE.

THE Sacred Writings abound with declarations of Jehovah's wisdom. Job affirms that God "is wise in heart, and mighty in strength" (Job ix. 4). The Psalmist, in grateful admiration, exclaims, "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all" (Psalm civ. 24). Jeremiah declares, "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heavens by his discretion" (Jer. x. 12).

If the sacred volume was written by Divine inspiration, it follows that whatever manifestations of wisdom it contains must belong to that Being who is its author and its end. Here, then, a new and extended field of vision is opened before us. Here a scheme of providence, comprising all the events of time, and an outline of moral government comprehending all the relations, duties, responsibilities, and the final destiny of mankind, are unfolded. The realities of the spiritual state, and the events of the eternal world, with the character and condition of other intelligent beings, are presented to our contemplation. A series of dispensations, commencing with the creation of man, and extending through all time, are depicted—the past by historic narrative, and the future by prophetic announcement.

Here God is seen evolving and accomplishing his plans, not merely with plastic nature, but with mind—with mind endowed with thought, volition, reason, and freedom of action—and, amidst various powerful and counteracting agencies, carrying out his grand and comprehensive purposes.

Holy Scripture informs us that God's glory is the ultimate end of his dispensations, the great and final purpose, but, at the same time, one that embraces many minor designs. The sacred page shows also that this comprehensive purpose, through all ages and despite all counteracting agencies, has steadily and triumphantly advanced. Conflicting events occur, and enemies oppose, but the plans of wisdom are still unfolded, and the

purposes of the Divine mind are progressively fulfilled. Infinite wisdom is ever prepared to meet each rising exigency, and turn the most malignant opposition into a new occasion of triumph, or a richer manifestation of the Divine glory. Man sins and falls from his dignity, and his rebellion seems to fling a dark shadow across the path of providence; but the resources of wisdom convert the dire apostasy into an occasion for a brighter and fuller display of the Divine perfections. A haughty and imperious monarch of Egypt oppresses God's people, and uplifts a defiant hand against his will; but the proud tyrant falls, and his kingdom wails beneath the avenging scourge, while the wonders wrought in the land of Ham publish throughout an idolatrous world that Jehovah is God alone. The ambitious and haughty monarch of Babylon usurps the authority of Heaven, and erects a colossal statue, before which the trembling nations are commanded to bow; but this flagrant insult to Jehovah's name is turned into an occasion of proclaiming, wide as Babylonia's realm, that the gods of the heathen are vanity and lies, and that Jehovah alone is the true and proper object of religious homage. Darius the Median, at the instigation of his crafty courtiers, promulgates a law which interdicts the worship of God; but the fidelity of Daniel overturns the royal dogma, and elicits a counter-decree, which proclaims throughout the hundred and twenty provinces of the Persian empire, that all nations should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel. The Grecian empire succeeds the Persian, and, amidst the awful carnage which punished a guilty nation, it fulfils another mission in dissolving colossal despotisms that had long stood as barriers against human progress, and in diffusing through the civilized world that copious and expressive language in which the Scriptures were to be transfused for the enlightenment of man, preparatory to Messiah's advent. The Roman empire succeeds the Grecian, and, while spreading civilization among the barbarian tribes, opens out a highway of intercourse amongst the remotest nations, that the heralds of the Cross might run to and fro with the message of mercy and salvation.

When cities and nations fall for their sins, they are made to

utter not only an admonitory voice to others, but to bear some witness for God to posterity. The revolting crimes of Sodom and Gomorrah cried aloud for vengeance, and those debased cities were destroyed; but to this day, near four thousand years after the storm of fiery vengeance had fallen, the site of their blasted ruins confirms the sacred records, and warns the impenitent transgressor of his doom. The dynasties of Egypt, of Babylon, of Nineveh, and Persia, perish for their iniquities; but their monumental ruins still survive the wastes of time, to bear an emphatic testimony to the truth which their ancient owners rejected and despised. Edom was blotted out for his apostasy; but the stones of his desolation cry out to future generations that God is just and his word is true. The wealth and maritime glory of Tyre and Sidon disappear before the breath of Heaven's indignation; but their naked rocks and solitary ruins still echo a response to the predictions of Isaiah and Ezekiel. Jerusalem, the chosen city, twice fell for her idolatry and unbelief, and her people were banished into exile; but the Jews, in their ancient captivities, were the disseminators of forgotten truths among benighted nations, and in their present wide dispersions they bear in every land an unsuspected testimony to the truth of the sacred oracles, and to the divinity of that dispensation which was the precursor and the basis of the Christian economy.

We may not enlarge, though the theme is inviting and instructive. Suffice it to say, that the Bible is a brief history of Providence as well as of man. It differs from profane history chiefly in this feature. The latter records the doings of men, as if God had little or no concern in the affairs of his own world; the former shows us God acting in connection with human agency. In the Bible, as in other books, we see generations come on and pass off the stage of life, the scenes of human enterprise transpire before us; but here the veil is uplifted, and things appear as they really are. God is ever present, the helm of government is in his hand; he connects the events of time with the counsels of eternity; he selects his proper agents for their work; he superintends all events; he

renders all things subservient to the unfolding of his designs; he works out his counsels by human volitions without destroying their freedom; he makes his enemies the unconscious promoters of his purposes; he causes the very wrath of man to praise him; and, despite the antagonism of earth and hell, his glory is promoted, and his eternal counsels are accomplished. "This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." The Bible is full of the displays of Jehovah's wisdom—wisdom which no cunning can deceive, no machinations circumvent, no difficulties embarrass; which can pierce through all stratagems, and provide for all exigencies; it never errs in its anticipations, and never fails in the consummation of its projects.

In redemption the wisdom of God is displayed. This great fact affords a solution of the profound problem,—How shall the holy God and righteous Governor of the universe extend mercy to a rebel, restore him to favour, and reinstate him in all his forfeited privileges, without a compromise of the principles of his moral government? To restore the rebel by the exercise of mere prerogative would invalidate the claims of public justice, impair the authority of law, exchange the principles of moral administration for a mutable expediency, and thus, by rendering his administration unstable, weaken the motives of intelligent beings to reverence, confidence, and obedience. Such a compromise of the Divine character, such a departure from the principles of a righteous government, could not take place. If the rebel is to be saved and restored, it must be under an economy which shall preserve unimpaired every principle in God's administration, and harmonize with every attribute of his character. How was this to be effected? How were these opposing claims to be reconciled? How were these contrary objects to be accomplished? The Gospel solves this profound problem. It tells us that God has given his beloved Son, to redeem us by his death, as a sacrifice for us. Him "hath God set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through

the forbearance of God, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

The sacrifice has been rendered and the redemption effected, and in it we see all the claims of justice satisfied, and the purposes of benevolence realized. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Here we see an economy of mercy equally adapted to the helplessness of the sinner, equally conservative of holiness, and promotive of the Divine glory. God's holiness is vindicated, his law honoured, and his tender pity displayed; the penalty of sin is remitted, yet God's displeasure against it is equally manifested; pardon is bestowed, yet the motives to obedience are sustained and augmented. In fine, all the ends of a righteous government are secured and promoted in connection with a dispensation of mercy and salvation, and a more glorious manifestation of the Divine perfections. While in the universe we see Divine wisdom presenting before us an economy which unfolds what men term the *natural* attributes of the Creator, in the economy of redemption we behold that wisdom devising a remedial dispensation which exhibits the *moral* perfections of God, and which, at the same time, is adapted to save, and purify, and elevate our nature to the highest dignity and happiness.* Well might the Apostle Paul exclaim, in profound amazement and awe, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Romans xi. 33.)

* The distinction between the natural and the moral attributes of God is for human convenience; but in the Deity the natural attributes are moral and the moral are natural.

CHAPTER X.

THE BENEVOLENCE OF GOD.

BENEVOLENCE is kindness of disposition. This attribute in man is justly regarded as an excellence; and if it be an excellence in the creature, it must be one in the Creator, for the cause cannot be inferior to the effect. By consciousness we are assured of its existence in our nature, and reason assures us that in the nature of a Being comprehending all possible perfection, this attribute cannot be absent. Such a noble quality imparted to man necessarily implies its previous existence in his Maker. It is found in the stream, because it abounds with inexhaustible fulness in the eternal fountain; and the affection itself must be the same in essence, however vast the difference in degree. Benevolence is benevolence, whether God or man be its possessor or its object, for an attribute does not part with its essence by its infinity. To obtain, then, a correct idea of the benevolence of God, we must consider the affection in our own bosom purified from all unholy ingredients, and enlarged to a degree corresponding with His infinite capacity—a pure, holy, benevolent affection, dwelling in his mind with infinite fulness. The evidences of this attribute are exceedingly abundant.

SECTION I.—CREATION IS A PROOF OF THE DIVINE
BENEVOLENCE.

1. *Creation was a voluntary act.*

The act of creation was either necessary or voluntary. That it was not the effect of an absolute necessity, has already been demonstrated. God never works from the influence of any physical necessity, because no such necessity operates either

within him or upon him. Existing alone from eternity, there was nothing external to compel or induce him to put forth his creative energy. Existing, too, as an intelligent and voluntary Being, there could be no internal necessity inducing the production of the universe. Creation, therefore, does not emanate from the Divine essence as water flows from a fountain, or as light beams from the sun. His works flow from his purposes, and his purposes are the offspring of his wisdom; and, therefore, all his operations must be voluntary and free.

2. *The act of creation, being voluntary, is an evidence of a benevolent nature in the Creator.*

If the creation of the universe was a voluntary act, and that act originated from a wise purpose, it follows that the purpose itself must have originated from some *motive*; for to suppose God to act without a motive is to impugn his wisdom. What, then, was the motive which operated in the bosom of the Deity? Was it a selfish one? Was it from a sense of his own need? Impossible; for as an absolutely perfect Being, he could need nothing. From all eternity he had been infinitely and independently happy in the possession of his own all-sufficiency, and could need nothing. Was the motive a malignant one? This also was impossible; for a malign disposition is the property of an imperfect nature; but the nature of the Deity is perfect, and its absolute perfection necessarily excludes the possibility of malignity; and the works of the Deity furnish, as we shall show hereafter, abundant evidence that no such passion had any place in his bosom. If, then, the motive was neither a selfish nor a malignant one, it must have been a benevolent one. Creation must be the offspring of love. Created existence, then, in all its varied forms, proclaims the goodness of God. The unnumbered worlds which his almighty hand has scattered throughout immensity, and the countless myriads of sentient and intelligent beings inhabiting them, are all the irradiations of his spontaneous and boundless love. His love prompted both his wisdom to devise, and his power to effect, the wondrous universe of being.

Although the preceding argument is perfectly valid and

irresistible as far as it extends, yet justice to the subject requires it to be followed up by a view of the works of God. We judge of the dispositions of a being by his doings, especially by his proceedings towards others. We know the class of actions which flow from benevolence, and find no difficulty in distinguishing them from the effects of hatred, malignity, or indifference. Let us, then, estimate the character of God by his works; let us judge of his disposition by referring to his deeds.

SECTION II.—GOD HAS MANIFESTED HIS BENEVOLENCE BY IMPLANTING LOVE IN THE NATURE OF SENTIENT BEINGS.

1. *Love is a universal affection.*

It is a fact worthy of observation, that in every animal capable of reciprocating any emotion we find the affection of love. Some classes of animals may be too low in the scale of existence to be capable of reciprocating any passion, but in all where that capability exists we believe the affection of love may be found to exist. Among the numerous irrational tribes it exists as an instinctive passion, uniting the bird to its mate, the parent animal to its young, and producing often a social and kindred attachment through the same species. This affection, too, is frequently excited and reciprocated among animals of different species, and is sometimes cherished by brute creatures towards human beings with peculiar fondness and fidelity. In man, also, this affection exists as an instinctive passion, exercising a similar influence, and is the foundation of our social attachments and relations. But when the heart of man embraces the Gospel (we speak of an experimental fact), it becomes possessed of an affection higher than instinct—a love more refined, more intense, and more ennobling than an instinctive passion—a spiritual principle, which causes the soul to delight in God as its chief good, and expands the bosom with a consciousness of pure and ardent benevolence to man. The existence of this amiable affection in the creature proves its existence in the Creator.

We are aware it may be replied that most of the creatures described as under the influence of the affection of love are influenced also by other passions, and some of them of a *malign* character. This cannot be denied, but several important facts require to be well observed, which neutralize any objection from this source.

2. *A malign disposition is an evidence of imperfection, but benevolence is an excellence.*

In estimating the character of God from his works, it is an axiom that the dispositions and properties of the Creator are to be inferred from the *excellencies* of the creature, and not from its *defects*, because defect, or imperfection, can have no place in a self-existent and independent nature. Now the malign passions, under any form, are marks of the creature's limited and imperfect nature. Any disposition or temper repugnant to love, whether it exist in the irrational tribes or in human beings, is an evidence of inferiority and imperfection; but love is an excellence, which ennobles and dignifies the creature possessing it, and the dignity and excellence of the creature rise in proportion to the degree in which this benevolent affection is cherished and possessed. Now, as we cannot infer the character of God from the imperfections of the creature, we cannot ascribe to him any of the malign passions; but, as we estimate his character from the superior and the excellent dispositions he has planted in our nature, we are carried to the conclusion that God is a benevolent Being—that he has infused a measure of this excellent disposition into the creature, because it dwells in infinite plenitude and perfection in himself.

3. *Benevolence commands universal admiration.*

The nature of intelligent beings is so constituted that we approve of and admire benevolent affections, but disapprove and condemn those of a contrary nature. Pure disinterested love throws around the character of its possessor an amiability, an attractiveness, which force our respect and admiration. Why should our nature be endued with an instinctive approbation of the benevolent affection, but that it expresses the disposition of our Creator? that, by our admiring what is amiable

in his creatures, we might learn and admire a corresponding excellency in himself ?

4. *The malign tempers are sources of unhappiness.*

They render the possessor of them miserable, and inflict misery on others. But the benevolent affection is a source of happiness to its possessor, and is calculated to produce happiness in all towards whom it is exercised. Love is not an indolent or speculative sentiment, but an active principle. It prompts its possessor to effort for the good of others. It renders the work of doing good our element and delight, and thus its exercise yields happiness within and happiness without. It yields a rich harvest of personal enjoyment in the holy work of imparting peace and enjoyment to all around. The universal diffusion of love would, indeed, dry up every fountain of misery, and fill the world with harmony, happiness, and joy. We ask, then, Is it conceivable that the Author of this beneficent principle is a malignant being? Certainly not. He could not give an excellence he did not possess; he could not fix the seal of his approval on what he abhorred; for that is to suppose a contradiction between his disposition and his works. It is to suppose that his works, instead of being the exponents of his disposition, are the exponents of dispositions diametrically opposite to his own; which is to suppose, not only that he acts without motives, but that he acts contrary to his own motives. All such suppositions involve absurdities too flagrant to be entertained for one moment. God's works cannot contradict, but express, his nature and disposition; and, therefore, if he has invariably associated happiness with the possession and exercise of benevolence, it is a proof that he is benevolent himself, and an evidence that he approves of this amiable disposition in others. He thereby stimulates the creature to imitate himself. In the very constitution of our nature, he says, "Be loving, for God is love." There is no affection so refined in its nature, so happy in its influence, and so ennobling in its effects as love, and there is none so visibly impressed with tokens of Divine approval. The inference, therefore, is irresistible that God is a benevolent Being.

SECTION III.—GOD'S CARE FOR HIS CREATURES DECLARES HIS BENEVOLENCE.

WHEN a parent cheerfully provides for the necessities of his offspring, it is justly regarded as an evidence of his love for them ; and if this care be uniformly manifested, no rational mind will question the strength and sincerity of his affection. In estimating God's disposition towards his creatures, we look for similar evidence, and it constantly presents itself to our view. Indeed, every manifestation of wisdom is accompanied with some evidence of goodness. It would be no service to truth to neglect, or gloss over, the fact that there is suffering in the world. This fact we shall look fully in the face at the proper time. But in our present argument we have to ascertain whether God evinces a paternal care for his creatures by providing for their welfare ; for if this disposition be manifest, his benevolent disposition is proved. Now, all inanimate Nature is one vast and wonderful system, whose operations are directed to the welfare of living beings, thus affording a display, not only of infinite intelligence and almighty power, but of boundless benevolence. The good of sentient and rational creatures is obviously the design of all the Creator's works. That this is extensively and very generally enjoyed, we do maintain ; but that this good is invariably and in every instance fully realized by the creature, is what we do not affirm. The good intended is, indeed, sometimes partially lost by the creature's own conduct, and sometimes by circumstances over which the creature has no control ; but whatever this may prove, it does not neutralize the clear and palpable evidences of a benevolent disposition and intention on the part of the Creator. From the endless multitude of examples which press upon our view, only a few can be selected.

1. *The phenomena of circulation and respiration.*

Our mysterious nature is so constituted that the circulation of the blood and the respiration of air are essential to life. It is the blood which continues to supply the waste of our system, and to build it up with new material ; and for this important

end it penetrates every part of the body, and is made to circulate through it with great rapidity—the state of health depending upon the quality of the blood, and the regularity of the circulation. But the important functions of the blood are constantly exhausting some of its vital properties, and it becomes necessary that its deteriorated qualities should be discharged, and a fresh supply of vitalizing properties should be as constantly imparted to it. This is effected by respiration. Now, in the animal economy we see an apparatus fitted for breathing, and in the surrounding atmosphere we see an element, or a mixture of elements, exactly suited to Nature's requirements, possessing those properties which it is essential the blood should imbibe to qualify it to support existence. In order that these life-sustaining properties may be imbibed, all the blood in the system is made to pass through the lungs once during every few minutes of time. Hence it is necessary that the air and the blood should have the greatest facility of contact; and to effect this, the lungs are composed, according to M. Rochoux, of six hundred millions, and according to other anatomists, of one thousand seven hundred and forty millions of membranous cells, communicating with one another, and which, if expanded, would extend, it is said, over a surface of from a thousand to fifteen hundred square feet. Thus it is contrived that a stratum of blood, of from ten to fifteen hundred feet, should every moment be brought into contact with a corresponding stratum of air, that the necessary properties of the latter may be imbibed in sufficient quantity to support life, and with such facility, that a person in health is scarcely conscious of the act of respiration.

In reference to this wonderful process, which is alike distinguished by wisdom and goodness, Dr. Smith states, as the results of some experiments on the subject—“1. The volume of air ordinarily present in the lungs is twelve English pints. 2. The volume of air received by the lungs at an ordinary inspiration is one pint. 3. The volume of air expelled from the lungs at an ordinary expiration is little less than one pint. 4. Of the volume of air received by the lungs at one inspiration,

only one-fourth part is decomposed at one action of the heart, and this is so decomposed in the five-sixth parts of one second of time. 5. The blood circulates through the system and returns to the heart in one hundred and sixty seconds of time, which is exactly the time in which the whole volume of air in the lungs is decomposed. 6. The quantity of blood that flows to the lungs to be acted upon by the air, at one action of the heart, is two ounces, and this is acted upon in less than one second of time. 7. The quantity of blood in the whole body of the human adult is twenty-four pounds avoirdupois, or twenty pints. 8. In twenty-four hours, twenty-four hogshheads of blood are presented to the lungs to receive the influence of the vital air. 9. In the mutual action which takes place between the quantities of air and blood which come in contact in twenty-four hours, the air loses three hundred and twenty-eight ounces of oxygen, and the blood ten ounces of carbon."*

It is thus made apparent that in order to relieve the blood of superfluous carbonic acid, and supply it with a due proportion of oxygen, there must be a relative proportion between the action of the heart and the action of the lungs—between the quantum of air inhaled by each inspiration of the lungs—between the return of the blood after being oxygenated and the expiration of the deteriorated air after the absorption of its oxygen—between the time required for the absorbing power of the blood and the decomposing susceptibility of the atmosphere; and unless these proportions were exactly adjusted the creature must die, or linger through a suffering existence. Now, to provide for all these exigencies, to adjust all these multifarious proportions, to harmonize all these relations, required an elaborate and complicated organization, which only Infinite Wisdom could accomplish. But it is accomplished. The Creator has put forth his skill to secure the life, the health, and the comfort of his creatures. Is this the result of malignity,

* The estimates of physiologists on these points exhibit some variety, but that substantial agreement in the main, which completely sustains the view as to the wisdom and goodness displayed in the economy.

or of benevolence? Are not wisdom and power herein employed in fulfilling the suggestions of kindness and love?

2. *Similar benevolent adaptation in the properties of the atmosphere.*

An atmosphere of some properties would destroy life instead of sustaining it. An atmosphere but a little varied from that we have would produce discomfort and suffering. Air was necessary with such properties as the blood required, which the system could bear, and which could be inhaled with safety and comfort. Such an atmosphere is that ethereal ocean which envelops our globe. Supposing any given quantity of air divided into 100 parts, its average constitution, without reference to the occasional presence of foreign matters, may be stated as follows:—

		By measure.		By weight.
Nitrogen	77·94	...	76·14
Oxygen	20·60	...	22·78
Aqueous Vapour	1·42	...	1·03
Carbonic Acid	0·04	...	0·05
		<u>100·00</u>		<u>100·00</u> *

These gases are thoroughly mixed together, and equally diffused through the space around us. Oxygen gas supports combustion, and is essential to life; but nitrogen and carbonic acid destroy life, and extinguish flame. An animal placed in a vessel filled with either of these two gases soon dies. Yet the three gases, contrary as they are in their properties, are, when mixed in the above proportions, exactly suited to the animal system. If, however, these proportions were altered, comfort and life would be destroyed. If, for instance, the proportions of oxygen were greatly increased, the flame of life would burn too intensely for our present physical constitution, and we should soon die; if the proportions of either of the other gases were augmented, we should expire in agony from poison or suffocation. Nitric acid is a deadly poison, and yet it is com-

* Some authorities give proportions slightly differing from the above; but the difference is too slight to be a matter of controversy.

posed of oxygen and nitrogen, the two principal gases forming our atmosphere, only in different proportions. Now, if the *same* proportion of these two gases constituted the surrounding air, to breathe it would be to inhale poison and death. But our Creator has so ordered it that the atmosphere in all parts of the world consists of the before specified proportion of two gases—oxygen, nitrogen, with only a little carbonic acid. Here, then, is an economy which protects innumerable creatures from poison, suffocation, and death, and secures for them the blessings of life, health, and comfort. Is the Author of this economy a malignant or a benevolent being? Does he hate the works of his hand, or is he even indifferent to their welfare? Is there not here the care of a parent, and is not that care the offspring of love?

But to adapt the atmosphere to the life and health of the creature, a variety of other provisions were requisite. The air, on being decomposed by breathing, is unfitted for a second respiration until it has undergone a renovating process. When expelled from the lungs, it consists chiefly of nitrogen and carbonic acid gas, and to breathe this again for any considerable period would destroy life. Nor are the lungs the only media by which impure gases are disengaged from the human system. They are discharged from the whole surface of the body; and, from careful experiments by scientific men, it has been ascertained that the body of a middle-sized man disengages from the lungs and the skin together not less than thirty-eight thousand cubic inches of carbonic acid within the period of twenty-four hours.* If such be the amount of a poisonous gas exhaled from *one* human body in a single day, how vast the quantity of poison which passes each day from the world's population, and how soon must its deadly effects be universally realized, were it not that Divine goodness had abundantly provided counteracting agencies!

The fatal effects of breathing over again the foul air expelled

* Experiments made by Messrs. Allan and Pepys, in "Philosophical Transactions" for 1808; also, "Memoirs of Sir H. Davy."

from the lungs were seen in the case of the English prisoners of war, treacherously driven, on the 30th of June, 1756, by the Indian Nabob, at the point of the musket and sabre, into the dungeon called the Black-hole at Calcutta. One hundred and forty-six persons were thus forced into a space of only about eighteen feet square; and, of that number, one hundred and twenty-three expired the same night, and the twenty-three survivors were in a state of putrid fever. A similar result occurred some time ago from closing down the hatchway of an emigrant vessel. In such cases, the cause of mortality was the close confinement, preventing both the escape of the putrid air expelled from the lungs, and the access of pure air from the surrounding atmosphere. We see, then, what awful torment and death would await us, if no provision had been made by our Creator to shield us from the effects of our own breath, and give us every moment a supply of fresh air. It is, therefore, ordained that the noxious air, expelled from our lungs, shall immediately escape from our vicinity, and be subject to a renovating process before we inhale it again. The impure gases expelled soon become agitated and diffused through the surrounding air, which, by winds, tempests, evaporations, vast exhalations of oxygen gas from vegetation, and meteoric influences incessantly acting, is constantly undergoing such a purifying process as preserves to it, in all the latitudes of the world, the same properties we have previously described, and, under all ordinary circumstances, fits it to sustain life and promote health. We demand, Was it a malignant disposition which made this provision for the creature's welfare? Did hatred, or love, dictate the constitution of these remarkable properties of the air, and devise a scheme for the perpetual renovation of an element so essential to our life and comfort? The inquiry itself suggests the only answer which reason can give—"God is love."

Another fact must close our remarks on the atmosphere, though a folio volume would not exhaust the adaptations suggested by the goodness of God in the constitution of this ethereal element. The fact we refer to is the facility which

these gases have of combining with one another, or of their entering into union one with another, so that they become completely mixed. Were not this the case, each gas would form a distinct stratum according to its specific gravity. Carbonic acid, being of the greatest density, would form the lowest stratum; oxygen, being the next in gravity, would form the next stratum, and dispose itself immediately above the carbonic acid; and nitrogen, being the lightest, would form the uppermost stratum. The lowest stratum, consisting of a gas destructive to life, would be of a depth or thickness of several feet, filling the valleys and lower levels of the earth with a poisonous fluid, and causing death to all who became immersed beneath its treacherous surface. The effect now supposed may be illustrated by a well-known fact. Near to Naples, in Italy, there is a cave called Grotto del Cani, or the Dog's Grotto. In this cave there is a natural exhalation of carbonic acid gas, and a man who attends on visitors usually enters with a dog, which he places on the floor of the cave: the dog soon dies, but the man is not at all affected; for the carbonic acid, by its weight, lies at the bottom of the cave, forming a stratum of about eighteen inches in depth, and above this the air is pure. Now, had the three gases, which form the genial atmosphere, not had an affinity for each other, so as to become diffused through and mixed with each other, the carbonic acid gas, now universally diffused through the air, would all have settled down in one mass on the surface of the earth, like that in the grotto just named, forming a deadly poisonous stratum. So, then, if the law of affinity which unites these gases had never existed, life could not have been given; and were this law to be suspended even for a short time, life would become extinct. We know of no philosopher who can assign any cause for this law, but the will of God. It exists; but no one can philosophically explain why it exists. It is an ultimate fact for which, like many others, no cause can be assigned but the will of God. We ask, then, What disposition originated that law incessantly in operation? Its existence subserves life and comfort; and what disposition can it be which provides for the

creature's life and comfort? Is it a malignant, or a benevolent one? If the provision of a father for the preservation and comfort of his child's life and health indicates, not his hatred, but his instinctive love for his offspring, so does the conduct of God in the instance before us—it emphatically proclaims that “God is love.”

3. *The phenomena of nutrition prove the Divine goodness.*

In the same manner does the bountiful supply of food indicate the benevolence of God. While air is essential to supply the blood with oxygen, and maintain its vital properties, food is essential to supply the pabulum of which the blood is formed; and as a portion of the blood is continually being expended by assimilation, and by supplying the waste of Nature, it becomes necessary that it should be replenished with the material afforded by food. To meet this necessity, we see a combination of internal and external means admirably adjusted. In the human system, we see an elaborate organization for stimulating the appetite when food is required; and for mastication, deglutition, digestion, secretion, absorption, and assimilation, when food is supplied. In the economy of external Nature, we see a corresponding system of adaptation. As before observed, neither man nor the inferior animals can live on minerals or mere earths, and the process of vegetation converts the earth into nutritious aliments, and thus prepares them for the digestive organs of animal existence. This process involves another system of organization, in which other wonderful adaptations are seen. Again, if we step further back to contemplate a preceding economy, which anticipates and prepares materials for vegetable existence, we see all Nature operating like an immense laboratory, ever actively employed in decomposing, resolving, and analyzing unorganized substances, and fitting them to form the pabulum of vegetable life. Electricity, solar heat, evaporation, rains, dews, winds, frost, snow, &c., are all so many active instrumentalities preparing materials which are appointed first to cover the earth with vegetation wherewith next to nourish and sustain the existence of animal life. Vegetation, therefore, which occupies the middle position

between inorganic matter and animal existence, is the great agency appointed by the Creator to elaborate dead matter into a fit pabulum for animal subsistence ; and here is an economy alike indicative of wisdom and goodness. Dumas, an eminent chemical philosopher of France, has contrasted the opposite functions of plants and animals in the following interesting form :—

THE VEGETABLE	THE ANIMAL
Produces the neutral azotized substances.	Consumes the neutral azotized substances.
Produces fatty substances.	Consumes fatty substances.
Produces sugar, starch, and gum.	Consumes sugar, starch, and gum.
Decomposes carbonic acid.	Produces carbonic acid.
Decomposes water.	Produces water.
Decomposes ammoniacal salts.	Produces ammoniacal salts.
Disengages oxygen.	Absorbs oxygen.
Absorbs heat and electricity.	Produces heat and electricity.
Is an apparatus of reduction.	Is an apparatus of oxidation.
Is stationary.	Is locomotive.*

In this scientific analysis we have a beautiful and impressive illustration of the subserviency of the vegetable to the animal kingdom, and of the manner in which the functions of the one administer to the well-being of the other. Now, if vegetation be thus essential to animal existence, how necessary that its supply should be abundant ! Want or scarcity here would soon be painfully felt, and disease and death would speedily follow. A malign temper, or even a defective benevolence, might soon render itself apparent by withholding the bounties required. But what an eloquent lecture does the green earth everywhere utter of the goodness of God ! What a well-furnished storehouse is Nature !

If we cast our eyes abroad, how rich the vegetable verdure which covers the earth's surface ! How thick the fields stand with corn ! What an ample reward does Nature give to indus-

* Fownes' "Actonian Prize Essay on Chemistry," quoting from Dumas' "Annales de Chim. et Phys.," Dec., 1842.

try ! What profusion meets our eye, when on a summer's eve we quit the dusky haunts of the crowded city, and walk for an hour in Nature's free domain ! If, now in the midst of this bountiful supply, this luxuriant paradise, we ask—What is the disposition of the Almighty Donor ? What impelled him to originate such a complicated system, which runs through all Nature, to provide for the countless myriads of creatures dependent upon him ? If we look at their helplessness and his independence, their daily necessities and his unceasing bounty, what reply can reason utter ? If we remember that the suspension of his provisional operations for one year would extinguish all existence, but that these operations never are suspended for a single hour, what answer can our judgment give ? There is but one, and it is beautifully expressed by the grateful Psalmist—“The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works.” His wisdom contrives and ordains at the suggestion of goodness ; his power works at the bidding of love.

4. *The fecundity of Nature.*

It is a prevailing feature in Nature, that whatever is most necessary to the well-being of man, who is the highest type of animal creation, is the most abundant. Now, this is what we might expect from a Being who is equally wise and benevolent ; and facts which realize the expectation everywhere abound. The atmosphere, so essential to life and health, is a vast circumambient ocean everywhere present, and so completely filling all places that art itself can scarcely remove a creature from its sustaining influence. Water, next in importance, descending in showers, or bubbling in springs, or flowing in streams, or heaving in the ocean's waves, gladdens and refreshes us at every turn. Coal is abundant, but diamonds and gems are scarce. Does not benevolence indicate a sufficient reason for this distinction ? Gold and silver are precious, but iron is plentiful ; and if a sudden catastrophe should reverse the proportions of these metals, we should soon be made sensible of the present benign arrangements. Grass, which is the support of almost all useful animals, is indigenous to every clime—the common, but beautiful carpet of Nature. The gayest and most odoriferous flowers

that ornament our gardens would be a pitiful substitute for the plain herbage of the field. Corn, and the various kinds of farinaceous grain which form the staff of life, grow in almost every clime, and their fecundity yields abundance for the millions of our race; and, by an improved process of agriculture, might be made to supply the wants of as many millions more. A single grain has been known to produce above one hundred ears, and many of them to yield from sixty to seventy grains each. Indeed, Mr. C. Miller, of Cambridge, in the year 1766-7, by repeated division and transplantation of the root, caused a single grain to produce 500 plants, which yielded 21,109 ears of corn, making collectively three pecks and three-quarters of clear corn, and numbering 576,840 grains, as the total produce of a single grain within the space of about sixteen months.* The fact proves the amazing fecundity of that plant, which, from its wholesome and nutritious properties, is the chief support of human life. Had it been otherwise, our privations would have been great. All the gay and odoriferous plants which deck the face of Nature with their beauties, and fill the air with their perfumes, are as nothing compared with the nutritious grain. We could better spare all the fruit trees of the earth, than be destitute of the simple plant of wheat. Had this plant, and other farinaceous grains, been unpalatable to the taste, or feeble and scant in their productive powers, or, like some exotics, limited to a certain clime and difficult of cultivation, we cannot fully estimate the fatal consequences; but that plants the most nutritious should be at once the most agreeable to the palate, the most easy of digestion, and the most abundant in their fecundity, yet so hard in their nature, so simple and easy of cultivation, and so well adapted to flourish in various climes, are facts that utter an eloquent expression of Divine goodness towards needy and dependent creatures.

Nor should we forget the fecundity and abundance of fowls and various quadrupeds, which so largely supply us with food,

* The case is related in Dr. A. Clarke's Commentary on Matthew xiii. 8.

or minister to our daily convenience and comfort. How prodigious the quantity of those two nutritious articles, milk and eggs, which are daily yielded for our support! How abundant the amount of various kinds of animal food supplied to our markets! How great the supply of wool, furs, leather, and various materials for clothing, which the creatures render for our comfort! and how diversified and important the active services which beasts of burden perform for mankind! It is remarkable, too, that tameness and gentleness of disposition are usually combined with fecundity, nutritiousness, utility, and a simple, inexpensive mode of subsistence; and these qualities are sometimes united with sagacity, activity, and strength, admirably fitting the animals to serve for the good of man. Such a combination of qualities can only result from a benevolent economy.

If we divert our attention from the productions of the earth to those of the waters, we find them also teeming with bounties for mankind; and here the rule again prevails—the most useful are the most prolific and abundant. Sharks and predaceous fishes are comparatively scanty in their productive powers, while herrings, mackerel, cod, salmon, and other wholesome and nutritious fishes, are endowed with amazing powers of multiplication. As many as 68,606 ova have been discovered in the roe of a single herring; 540,000 in the roe of a mackerel; and Leuwenhoek is said to have found in a middling-sized cod, the prodigious number of 9,384,000 ova. No creatures are so productive as those which inhabit the waters; and while they are so abundant, and form so large a source of support, they cost us neither money, labour, nor care to maintain them, nor trench upon other sources of our comfort and subsistence. They grow and multiply beyond all computation in an element peculiar to themselves, and man has only to go to the mighty waters and help himself to the countless myriads which are provided to his hand. Often, indeed, they come in shoals, extending for miles, and cast themselves upon the very coasts where man resides, or fill up the large bays and estuaries which approach his dwelling. Of herrings alone, at Norway, 400

millions are taken in one year, and sometimes twenty millions in a single fishery. The inhabitants in the neighbourhood of Gothenburg, in Sweden, take as many as 700 millions in a year; and in the British Isles, Germany, France, Holland, and America, immense numbers are caught. Indeed, many hundreds of thousands of the earth's inhabitants chiefly subsist, for a great part of the year, on fish. If this source of subsistence were to be withheld, or greatly diminished, a dreadful calamity would be felt by all mankind. The unsparing bounty, therefore, which continues the supply from age to age, demands our gratitude; it flows from the unbounded goodness of Him who gave us our being, and who grants us all things richly to enjoy.

5. *Divine goodness is displayed in the organization of the human frame.*

In the mechanical structure of the animal frame we have an elaborate system of contrivances, as fraught with benevolence as with wisdom. Every part of the arrangement points to a definite end, and that end is the good of the creature; its wants, its instincts, its comforts, and enjoyments are all fully provided for.

In the human system we have the perfection of animal organization. The bony structure forms a collection of basements, pillars, curves, and arches, built up and adjusted so as to give firmness to the fabric and protection to the vital organs; and all are placed, inserted, and articulated, so as to combine strength with convenience and facility of action. On the bony structure the fleshy fibre is laid, forming four hundred and seventy muscles, compacted and levelled with inlayings of fat, and adjusted and bound by ligaments and tendons, as so many pulleys to give action to the osseous framework. Through the muscular fibres are distributed the endless ramifications of the nervous tissue, with the arterial and veinous conduits, and numerous vessels for various purposes in the animal economy; and over the whole an elastic cuticle, forming a smooth, transparent, and sensitive drapery, has been thrown by the Creator. We cannot conceive of symmetry more elegant, proportions more beautiful, and adaptations more complete, than are here pre-

sented. Not a joint, a hinge, a pin, or a cord of this complicated tabernacle is redundant, or can be dispensed with as unnecessary to the comfort and welfare of the inhabitant. The material fabric is also exactly suited to the wants and requirements of the mind, and has been fabricated for its use.

We can easily conceive painful and distressing results to have flowed from a different construction. Had the backbone, for example, been one solid inflexible pillar, like the thigh bone, any bending or voluntary curvature of the body would have been impossible; but the beautiful structure of a series of vertebræ, nicely articulated, and combining firmness with flexibility, enables man to erect or deflect his body at pleasure; yet, had such vertebræ formed the bones of our limbs, they would have been the most inconvenient. As the head is a mechanism where all the senses are concentrated, and by which the mind has the most frequent and important communication with the external world, it was requisite that it should be capable of turning freely every way, of moving vertically or horizontally, so as immediately to adjust the organs of sight, hearing, and the other senses to every surrounding object soliciting their attention. Without some contrivance for this diversified action, the head could not be moved at all without, at the same time, moving the entire body; and it is easy to see that with such an organization we should be subject to inconvenience, excessive trouble, and not unfrequently to danger. A contrivance is formed to meet the exigency by a compound mechanism in the vertebræ of the neck, including a hinge joint, with a tenon and mortise. "First, the head rests immediately upon the uppermost of the vertebræ of the neck, and is united to it by a hinge joint, enabling it to move forward and backward as far either way as is necessary, or as the ligaments allow; and *secondly*, in the joint below is a mechanism resembling a tenon and mortise. This uppermost bone but one has what anatomists call a process—namely, a projection somewhat similar in size and shape to a tooth—which, entering a corresponding hole or socket in the bone above it, forms a pivot or axle, upon which that upper bone, together with the head which it supports, turns freely in a circle, and as

far in the circle as the attached muscles permit the head to turn. When we nod the head, we use the hinge joint; when we turn the head round, we use the tenon and mortise."* This beautiful mechanism resembles that of an elaborately mounted telescope, by which that instrument may be turned upwards or downwards, laterally or horizontally, to command an aspect from different parts of the heavens without removing the stand on which it is supported. Sometimes a severe cold, causing a stiff neck, gives us to feel in part, and for a short time, the serious inconvenience which we should suffer perpetually but for the wise and benevolent adaptation now mentioned.

Had the legs been formed of one continuous bone, without a knee joint, who can describe the inconvenience, suffering, and danger, attending every effort to rest the body by sitting or reclining, or of rising from that posture to an upright position? Had the arms consisted each of one continuous bone, without a joint at the elbow, the hands could never have conducted food to the mouth, and myriads of important offices, now performed with ease and alacrity, could never have been performed at all. Had not muscles been constructed by which to move the eyelids at our will, the advantages and pleasures arising from the organs of vision would have been greatly diminished, and incalculable inconveniences and sufferings must have been our lot. The writer is especially impressed with this truth, from the fact of his having once seen a poor boy, apparently about thirteen years of age, whose eyelids had no muscular action. His eyes were apparently good, but he could not use them without the constant trouble of lifting up the eyelids with his fingers, and thus holding them open as long as he desired to see an object. They closed the moment his fingers let go their hold; and I observed, that as the trouble and inconvenience of thus employing both hands were too great to be constantly endured, one eye was generally not used, and often both were closed in darkness. So much does our well-being and comfort depend upon the diminutive organization which moves the eyelid—an

* Paley's "Natural Theology."

organization which we all use through every moment of our waking hours, perhaps without a thought of the contrivance, or the benefits resulting therefrom !

In each of the cases adduced we have an elaborate organization, embracing a wonderful combination of means, and adaptations, and uses, requiring the most perfect and unerring wisdom for its design and execution ; and what is the object ? Most obviously, the good of the creature ; to save the creature from inconvenience, from unnecessary toil and care, from suffering, and in many instances from premature death. Can such objects be contemplated by a malignant being, or by one devoid of regard for our welfare ? We know they never were, and we are sure they never can be. The objects are those alone at which benevolence aims, and in which love delights. These contrivances, and all of a similar nature in the animal economy, are so many evidences that our Creator is a God of love.

Inviting as the subject is, our limited space puts a check upon our pen, yet we cannot refrain from a few additional observations. As the mouth is formed for the admission of both food and air, which, as we have seen, perform separate functions, and enter into different parts of the system, there are two passages from the mouth—one called the œsophagus, leading to the stomach, and the other the larynx or wind-pipe, leading to the lungs. As the admission of food to the lungs would not only be excessively painful and distressing, but fatal, some organization was necessary to close the larynx while food is swallowed. This has been provided for by the construction of a little valve, called the epiglottis, which opens of itself while we breathe for the admission of air, but which closes by muscles which act upon it in the moment of swallowing, and thus effectually secures the wind-pipe from the intrusion of a single particle of food. This mechanism operates freely, without any trouble on our part, and without any emotion which renders us conscious of its existence ; perhaps, indeed, not one person in a thousand is at all aware of the organization, or thinks of the evils thus prevented, or the benefits thus conferred. Had not this organization been formed, the taking of food would have pro-

duced paroxysms of coughing, sensations of violent irritation, and ultimate death ; and were this organization to be suspended in its operation, or easily put out of order, these dreadful results must follow. The author had a very dear friend, who from a disease in the throat did experience this irritation, and the suffering consequent on an imperfect action of the epiglottis ; and after lingering awhile, in paroxysms of extreme agony, he expired. Need we again ask, What was the disposition which induced Jehovah to construct the exquisitely beautiful, yet simple and efficacious organization in question ? The prevention of suffering and the preservation of life are the objects clearly contemplated. What, then, are the motives which induce a man to avert pain and suffering from a fellow-man, and plan and devise for his comfort ? Malignity never employs genius to avert suffering ; it is the office of benevolence and love. It is the motive which incited to the labours of a Howard and of other philanthropists whose lives were spent in doing good. So the provision in question is the effect of Divine wisdom and power, stimulated by paternal and infinite love.

Similar examples crowd upon our attention, but we must forbear, leaving to the reader the pleasing and grateful task of selecting and multiplying for himself instances of Divine benevolence. The air we breathe, the food we eat, the raiment which covers our bodies and grows upon the skin of the inferior tribes ; the pleasing light and genial heat of the sun ; the succession of day and night by a law sublimely simple—the former adapted to labour and activity, and the latter to refreshing repose ; the regular return of the seasons, by a law equally simple and sublime, dispensing in alternate periods the blessings of solar influence and vegetation to every part of the earth's surface ; the capacious ocean, whose depths teem with innumerable creatures, whose vapours ascending temper the atmosphere, and descending fertilize the earth ; the gentle breeze which fans us in the summer's heat, and the howling tempest whose impetuous wings agitate the atmosphere, and sweep away pestilence and death ; the salubrious frosts which purge away noxious effluvia from the air, and prepare the womb of Nature

for the fructifying seed; the earth's surface, diversified by hill and dale, and irrigated by rivers and springs—her strata fraught with materials for our use, and the fecundity of her soil enriching the face of creation with endless forms of beauty and abundant stores of food; the animal and vegetable economy, fraught with adaptations for the well-being of sentient life;—all these, and ten thousand other wonders which a library could not record, proclaim the goodness and the benevolence of God, and summon the whole intelligent creation to gratitude and praise.

SECTION IV.—GOD'S PROVISION TO AFFORD ENJOYMENT TO THE CREATURE IS A PROOF OF HIS BENEVOLENCE.

THE benignity of Jehovah's disposition is manifest not only by providing to shield his creatures from numerous evils and sufferings, but also by providing for their *enjoyment*. Whether we survey the rational or the irrational classes of animated being, we find each endowed with some capacities for enjoyment, and provided with ample sources whence that enjoyment may be derived.

1. *Sensation is a source of enjoyment.*

Every bodily sense is made an avenue of pleasure, a means of ministering gratification and delight. What a boundless field of enjoyment is opened to us in the sense of sight, by which the endless forms of beauty and magnificence in the productions of Nature and of Art are unfolded to our view! What delight is ministered to us in the sense of hearing, by which the mellifluous harmonies of music, the soft tones of friendship, and the thrilling charms of eloquence are made to vibrate through the soul! What delicious gratification is afforded in the sense of smelling, by which we are regaled with the aroma of flowers, and the richest odours of Nature are made to yield to our pleasure! Nor are the senses of touch and taste barren of the power to produce agreeable sensations. In an inferior degree, the lower animals share with us the pleasures of sensation; but the faculty of reason vastly augments the

power of sense to gratify, because the pleasure of sensation, when combined with reflection, is refined in its nature and heightened in its intensity by agreeable associations, and in some degree repeated by recollection. To secure these pleasing sensations, a variety of distinct organs are formed, of elaborate and exquisite mechanism. Now when we see enjoyment super-added to comfort, pleasure joined with utility, and infinite skill employed in securing for us these results, we cannot mistake the intention of the Creator; and the intention unfolds the disposition. Thus every organ of pleasing sensation and every pleasing emotion declare the benevolence of God. They proclaim his name and nature to be LOVE.

2. *Instinct a source of enjoyment.*

Allied to the enjoyments just named there are the various pleasurable instincts of animated Nature, some of which belong to man, and many others are widely distributed among the diversified tribes of the animal kingdom. Nor is there any instinct or appetite but may be regarded as involving a capacity for enjoyment, and as furnishing a stimulus to seek for it in some appropriate object or pursuit. Many of these instincts are infallibly directed to the continuance and preservation of the species, and all combine, in some form, utility with individual gratification. Whether we carefully study or cursorily survey the history and habits of the animal creation, we meet at every turn with proofs of the creatures' happiness. We see it in their sportive diversions and their cheerful mien; we hear it in the songs of melody they pour, and the varied sounds, harsh or harmonious, by which they spontaneously utter their delight. When, therefore, in the *first* place, we see the creature endowed with a capacity for enjoyment; in the *second* place, actuated by instincts prompting to that enjoyment; in the *third* place, Nature abounding with sources to afford that enjoyment; in the *fourth* place, that enjoyment itself made subservient to utility; and *lastly*, an organization adapted to the whole, can we fail to see a benevolent intention? Is not the goodness of the Creator as conspicuous as his wisdom and his power?

3. *The faculties of mind afford higher enjoyments.*

The higher the nature of the creature, the more diversified and refined its enjoyments, and the larger its capacities for those enjoyments. Human beings, standing as they do on an eminent position far above the brutal tribes, have faculties of a higher order superadded to animal instincts and propensities. We have reason and moral sentiment; we have the faculties of reflection, of voluntary recollection, association, combination, and hope. The pleasures of sense and instinct are heightened by the mental perceptions of beauty and taste, and multiplied a thousandfold by imagination, by memory of the past, and hope of the future: and all the enjoyments arising from the social principle are heightened by the faculty of speech—of thus reciprocating affection; of uttering the softest, tenderest sympathies; of expressing and exciting the most refined emotions; of blending thought with thought, spirit with spirit; of assimilating mind with mind, and producing and perpetuating the most sacred and endearing associations. We have a faculty for the perception of truth, and a relish for its attainment prompting to the acquisition of knowledge, and enriching the mind with treasures more durable than the material universe. We have a faculty for communing with the Invisible; for realizing the personal existence of the all-glorious Creator; for ascertaining our relation to him as our Father and Friend; for exchanging thoughts, sentiments, and affections with this exalted Being; and for deriving enjoyments from him of a nature infinitely surpassing all created good. The soul has desires which nothing sensual can satisfy, and capacities which nothing earthly can fill. It roams among the infinite and the eternal, looks forward to perpetual existence, and feels that whatever is limited in space or duration is too narrow for the powers and the capabilities of its being. It longs and pants for the Infinite, and cannot be satisfied with less. It is evidently formed to know, love, and enjoy the Deity, and he alone is the adequate source of possession and enjoyment to the immortal mind. The Bible assures us that God is accessible to the human soul. This is in harmony with reason; for if the Deity has created beings with such powers and capacities, the existence of those

powers is a pledge they shall be gratified from their appropriate source; if he has provided for every exigency of instinct, reason tells us he has also provided for every exigency of mind. The goodness so profusely bestowed on the faculties of the lowest orders of creatures, argues the bestowment of every good which the highest capacities of the highest nature are competent to receive. The *experience* of the good man verifies the statements of Scripture, and answers to the deductions of reason. We simply attest a fact of experience when we affirm that the Christian does enjoy God, finds he has access to the Father of spirits, is conscious of holy and transporting fellowship with him, exults in the endearments of his personal favour, and draws from him streams of enjoyment which satisfy and replenish the mind: he rejoices in God with joy unspeakable and full of glory. We cannot deny the bestowment of higher capacities for happiness upon a higher nature, for the fact meets us at every turn, and the slightest consideration of our own nature attests it; the opening of sources of happiness adequate to fill, and thus to meet, all the instincts and faculties of the highest nature with which we are familiar, is equally obvious to every candid inquirer. There is but one motive to which such an economy can be attributed—that is, benevolence. Thus, in every department of the Creator's works, we see wisdom and power fulfilling the purposes of love.

SECTION V.—BENEVOLENCE IS DISPLAYED IN THE PRINCIPLES
OF JEHOVAH'S GOVERNMENT.

1. *Man is under law and government.*

The benevolence so conspicuous in the work of creation and the economy of providence, is manifest also in the principles of God's moral government. The Scriptures declare that we are subjects of Divine government, and reason cannot but admit the truth. If our Creator is an intelligent Being, and if some of his creatures are intelligent, endued with moral sense, and capable of exercising moral affections and performing moral actions, it is an evidence that they are subjects of moral government, are

under law and obligation, and amenable for their conduct. Men acknowledge a social and political accountability to one another as members of a social or political community; and if this loose and adventitious relation to one another involves mutual obligation and accountability, the intimate and essential relationship of a creature to the Creator must involve far weightier obligations and more solemn accountability. It may, therefore, be inquired, Have the principles of the Divine government over his creatures a benevolent aspect? We aver that they have; for—

2. *Obedience yields happiness.*

The principles of mere justice required that the laws imposed upon the creature should be such as he is competent to fulfil, and that his obedience should be compatible with his well-being; but they required nothing more. If any arrangement be made to connect reward and happiness with obedience, it must spring not from mere justice, but from benevolence. Now, in the moral government of God, we see equity at the foundation, and benevolence erecting a superstructure of happiness thereon. The laws enjoined upon the creature for the government of his moral conduct are not merely just—they are benevolent and kind. They are not only suitable to the creature's ability, and in harmony with his mental and moral constitution, but are calculated to excite delightful emotions, and constitute the happiness of the creature in the very act of obedience.

3. *The exercise of benevolence yields happiness.*

We have seen that the lower orders of animated beings find happiness in obeying their instincts, or, in other words, in fulfilling the laws of their being; and the same principle pervades the moral economy. A rational being, in doing good and not evil to his fellow-creatures—in exercising benevolent affections and actions towards them—is acting in conformity with the law of his being, and thereby rendering obedience to God. The exercise of this benign affection yields personal happiness, and diffuses it to all around. Thus duty and enjoyment are united. It is the same with regard to the more direct homage we render to God. The sum of all our duties to God may be com-

pendiously expressed in the word *love*. It is the summary of all mental and moral obedience. Is there anything unreasonable in loving our Creator and Benefactor? Do not Nature and reason dictate this duty? Does it not necessarily spring from our relation to him? If it be reasonable for one man to love another from whom, perhaps, he has received no benefit, is it not reasonable that man should love the Author of his existence and the Source of all his blessings? Is not the duty delightful as well as reasonable? There is no affection which yields enjoyment equal to love. When exercised towards an equal, or even an inferior, it affords a corresponding degree of happiness to our own minds; but when the affection embraces a nobler object—the very Author and Essence of all natural and moral excellence—must it not afford a higher degree of enjoyment? If the sympathetic blending of our souls with an intelligent, benevolent, and excellent fellow-creature yields a refined and ennobling delight, how much more an affectionate union with the mind of Deity, the source of all perfection, excellence, and happiness? The experience of the good man attests that this is the case. The Christian finds that in the keeping of God's commandments there is a great reward.

4. *In connecting duty with happiness, God evinces a benevolent purpose.*

We can conceive of an economy perfectly equitable and yet widely different from the one we are now contemplating. Obedience to God is a duty we owe him. It is just in him to require it, and it is only just in us to render it. To render him obedience is not to acquire merit, but to pay a debt. Obedience has no desert—it is a debt which it would be unjust to withhold; and, therefore, the performance of a mere duty can no more give us an equitable claim to the Divine favour or to happiness, than the discharge of a just debt gives a man a claim to the property of his neighbour. God could in equity demand our obedience and punish our disobedience, without either adding present pleasure to duty, or rewarding us with future happiness. All we could justly require from God would be simply ability to obey—power to do what he commands. The

conjunction, therefore, of positive and immediate enjoyment with obedience—the rendering of duty a source of happiness—is what justice did not require; it is a gratuity bestowed by pure benevolence. It is an economy designed to allure us to duty through the medium of enjoyment. It is making the claims of justice the basis on which to construct a kind and gracious economy. Such a procedure speaks forth abundantly the goodness of God. It proves that his proceedings in the administration of his moral government over his creatures, spring from the same principle as that which gave the creatures their existence, their faculties, and the place they hold in the scale of being; and that principle is benevolence or love.

SECTION VI.—THE BENEVOLENCE OF GOD UNFOLDED IN THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

EVEN the unbeliever may feel an interest in knowing what the Bible says on such a theme, especially when the sacred book confirms the testimony of Nature, and extends the view by the development of more recondite facts. The goodness of God is a theme on which the sacred writers delight to expatiate, and on which they rise to the highest flights of eloquence. The Apostle John not only affirms that God is good, but that he is love. He declares "God is love."* It is remarkable that he employs not an adjective to express a quality, but uses the noun itself, LOVE. This peculiar phraseology, too, occurs *twice* in the same discourse; we have it in the eighth verse, and again in the sixteenth of the same chapter—"God is love." We do not think with some divines that this form of expression is intended to denote that love is the essence of God, for how can an affection be the essence of a substantive existence? At the same time, it must be admitted by all who venerate and understand the Scriptures, that phraseology of so peculiar a nature must be intended to convey an important and peculiar meaning—a meaning in which this extraordinary assertion can be applied to no other being but God. To us it appears designed

* 1 John iv. 8, 16.

to express, not that love is the essence of God, but that love is essential to him—that love is not an adventitious affection, but one inseparable from his being, and eternally existing in him; an affection not called into existence by the creation of objects, or by the contemplation of any objects intended to be created, but an affection which exists in the Divine mind essentially and eternally, irrespectively of the existence of any created being; so that, had no creature existed, love would have had the same place in the nature of the Deity. The peculiar phrase was intended also to express the infinite intensity of God's love; an intensity which could not be so clearly and fully indicated by any other form of speech as the one employed—"God is love."

The demonstrations of Jehovah's benevolence unfolded in the sacred volume fully sustain this expressive appellation; for, rich and diversified as are the manifestations of goodness presented in the economy of Nature, they are far exceeded in the book of Revelation. Here, indeed, while every evidence which reason itself can adduce of the benevolence of God is abundantly corroborated, we are furnished with an additional class of facts, quite distinct in their character, and far more impressive in their effects. Here the scene of goodness is greatly expanded; here, new relations to the Deity are unfolded, and facts of the most thrilling interest attest the benevolence of his nature.

1. The Bible assures us that God has imparted to man an immortal nature—that the thinking principle within us is destined to live for ever. Reason may, indeed, infer that a being endowed with such an exalted intellectual and moral nature, with faculties and capacities for such high attainments, was not destined to perish with the dissolution of the material fabric; but this rational inference required the emphatic decision of some higher authority than what the philosophy of a Plato, an Aristotle, a Socrates, or a Seneca could give. Here we have that confirmation. "Life and immortality are brought to light through the Gospel." Men may kill the body, but they cannot destroy the soul. Like its glorious Author, it is imperishable. This life, then, is but the bud of being, the feeble

and imperfect embryo of our existence—a mere introduction to an eternal and unchangeable state. The body which the soul now inhabits will soon return to the dust; worms and meanest reptiles may riot and fatten on the putrid carcase; the laws of chemistry, assuming absolute control over the lifeless clay, will soon reduce it to the impalpable elements; but the soul will retain its vitality and consciousness, unimpaired by the lapse of time, and put forth its energies without restraint and without end.

With what ineffable importance and grandeur does this fact impress our nature; and in what eloquent terms does it proclaim the benevolence of our Creator! If the admirable mechanism of the human frame, perishable and short-lived though it be, speaks forth God's goodness, how much more the gift of a soul resembling himself in the spirituality of its nature, and endowed with an existence durable as his own being! In the creation of a human soul there is more grandeur and sublimity than there is in the existence of the whole material universe; and in impressing the soul with his own eternity, there is a richer exhibition of his love to man, than if he had laid all the treasures of Nature at his feet. It is this which confers true dignity on man, renders him capable of appreciating the Divine goodness, and enjoying it for ever and ever.

2. The Scriptures reveal to us the doctrine of a Divine providence superintending the affairs of individual man. Reason itself suggests that the goodness which originated a creature would be extended to its general history. Yet rational as this seems, a widely-prevailing philosophy taught that it was incompatible with the dignity and perfect happiness of the Deity to be concerned with the affairs of men—that the character and condition of his creatures had no place in the Divine regards. Not so, however, the teachings of the sacred Scriptures. They bring God near to man; they show that the paternal instincts which bind our affections to our offspring are but faint types of the tender regard which Jehovah has for his intelligent creatures, especially for those who are walking in obedience to his laws. They abound with precious promises, which assure

us that as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; that the very hairs of our head are numbered; that he is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother; that he will never leave us nor forsake us. They bid us to dismiss our fears, and trust in him with unwavering confidence; assuring us that it is both our duty and our privilege to cast all our care on him, for he careth for us; and that we are under a benign economy, in which all things work together for good to them that love God.* If, then, the kindest affections of the best earthly parent indicate a benevolent nature, such is the benevolent disposition of the Deity, heightened and intensified by the infinity of his being.

3. The Sacred Volume assures us that Jehovah's favour is exercised towards all who love and serve him. It represents this glorious Being as declaring, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me." "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father." "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." "Come out from among the ungodly, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."† These passages, and a hundred others of similar character, are as expressive as human language can be of the benevolent character of God—that he loveth the work of his hand.

It is in conformity with this benevolence that the Divine Being promises pardon to the penitent, and tenderly invites the sinner to lay down the weapons of his rebellion, and return to him for salvation. Hence he declares, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and

* Psalm ciii. 13; Matt. x. 30; Prov. xviii. 24; Heb. xiii. 5; 1 Peter v. 7; Rom. viii. 28.

† Prov. viii. 17; John xiv. 21; xv. 9, 10; 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* He tenderly expostulates with wicked men, saying, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."† In the person of the Redeemer, we see the arms of mercy outstretched to receive the poor returning sinner, and hear him welcomed with the gracious words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."‡ "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."§ To meet the very last objection, and to dispel the last desponding doubt from the penitent's bosom, he declares and reiterates the declaration with an oath, that he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner; and, because he could swear by no greater, he hath sworn by himself—"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel!"¶ Surely these tender expostulations and solemn asseverations are sufficient to prove to the most desponding soul that Jehovah is not a malignant being, but the God of boundless compassion and love.

4. God has made the exercise of love to himself and mankind an imperative duty, and the essence of all religion. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Nor is our love to be confined to friends, but to be extended to our enemies and persecutors. Malice and revenge are everywhere forbidden; benignity, tenderness, and forgiveness are everywhere enjoined. Even the worst of men are not to be excluded from our sympathies and good-will; and in expressing these benevolent dispositions, we are said to be imitating the great Father of mankind. "I say

* Isa. lv. 7.

† Isa. i. 18.

‡ Matt. xi. 28.

§ John vi. 37.

|| Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.* “Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.” † “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you. Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.” ‡ “He that loveth not his brother abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” §

Thus this benevolent affection is not merely sentimental, but *practical*, carrying us out to works of self-denial and deeds of charity for the children of affliction, sorrow, and distress. Yea, it is declared that “pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” || “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.” ¶

Such a religion proclaims its Divine paternity, and, in proclaiming its paternity, declares the infinite benignity of its glorious Author—the God of love. Argument on this subject is superseded by the most frequent and explicit declarations, and by the oft-repeated assertion that these benign dispositions

* Matt. v. 44, 45.

† Luke vi. 36.

‡ Eph. iv. 31, 32; v. 1, 2.

§ 1 John iii. 14, 15.

|| Jas. i. 27.

¶ 1 John iii. 16—18.

are required to be cultivated after the example of our heavenly Father, and by the fact that it is just in proportion as we cherish the benevolent affections that we approach his Divine likeness. "Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."*

5. God has connected innumerable blessings with obedience to himself; and in this economy we have another manifestation of his benevolent nature. The Psalmist, speaking of God's ordinances and commandments, says that they rejoice the heart, that they are more to be desired than gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb; that by them the servant of God is instructed and warned, and that in keeping of them there is great reward.† The sum of the whole passage is this—that duty to God leads to the happiness of man. This truth stands prominent in the sacred page, and it will bear the severest test of philosophical analysis and practical experiment. Whether we investigate the laws of God, comparing them with the laws of man's mental and moral constitution, or with the interests of his physical nature or his social existence, the fact is uniformly elicited that obedience conduces to happiness. Every prohibition is convertible into a positive precept, which says, "Do thyself no harm." Every restraint put upon our desires or our gratifications is a restraint upon that in which indulgence and excess are hurtful. Every command is an ordinance vocal with a benevolent intention of guiding us to the attainment of real good. Moral precepts are all in harmony with natural laws, and present the most direct, simple, and effectual mode of fulfilling them. Temperance, chastity, and industry are rewarded with health, prosperity, and long life. Honesty, truthfulness, sincerity, and benevolence are rewarded by serenity and tranquillity of mind, by the confidence and

* 1 John iv. 7, 8, 16.

† Psalm xix. 8—11.

esteem of society. Repentance, faith, and personal holiness are connected with a moral transformation of our nature, in which numerous evils and sources of misery are purged away, and blessings brought to our bosoms which yield sterling happiness. The mind is delivered from the agonies of a guilty conscience, from the dominion of sin, from the displeasure of God, and the dreadful forebodings of future punishment. It is blest with a sense of the Divine favour, with a peaceful conscience, fellowship with God, and the consolations and joys of religion. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, by whom also we have access by faith into the grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Nor is there any restraint put upon our spiritual desires and attainments. In God there is a fulness which man's necessities can never exhaust, and a bountiful goodness which is never weary in bestowing blessings upon the prayerful, believing, and obedient mind. On the contrary, there is an exuberant kindness, which delights to impart the richest blessings in the greatest abundance, which challenges our expectation, which mildly reproves our scanty desires, and bids us ask largely at his hand. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full."* Here, then, is an economy which seeks to deliver our nature from every form of evil, and to crown our existence with the enjoyment of all possible good, and which stimulates and encourages our desires for that good in its utmost fulness. Such an economy proclaims at once the inexhaustible opulence of God's resources, and the unbounded extent and activity of his benevolence.

6. The Gospel offers to mankind the glories of eternal blessedness. The gift of God is eternal life. We have before noticed that the Bible affirms that God has endowed us with an

* Luke xi. 13; Matt. vii. 7; John xvi. 24.

immortal soul, and provided in the Gospel for its happiness; but we have the further proof of God's goodness in his providing for us an eternity of bliss, so that our nature, through all the periods of its being, may be rendered happy. Numerous are the representations in Holy Scripture of the state of future blessedness, but they all combine to show that it will comprise at least the following elements:—1. It will be a state of complete freedom from suffering and danger. 2. It will be a state in which our whole nature shall be glorified, body and soul. The body, being raised from the dead, shall be immortal like the soul, and made a fit vehicle for its activity, and a medium of its blessedness. 3. It will be a state in which we shall enjoy the most refined and dignified society—the society of angels and of sanctified human beings. 4. It will be a state in which we shall be engaged in the most delightful and ennobling employments. 5. It will be a state in which the presence and favour of God shall be continually realized. 6. It will be a state in which our nature shall be progressive in its attainments and enjoyments. 7. All the elements of happiness shall be permanent and eternal, full above measure, lasting beyond bound; so that, added to the possession of complete blessedness, there will be the consciousness of security and eternity. The ghastly thought of danger as to the present, or of a termination in the future, can never be entertained. “I give unto them eternal life,” says the blessed Redeemer, “and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” “There remaineth, therefore, a rest to the people of God”—a rest of complete enjoyment and endless blessedness. In the Gospel this blessed state is held out to our acceptance, and we are urged and entreated to secure it for ourselves. To each the exhortation is given, “Lay hold on eternal life.”*

If, then, the provision made for the creature's welfare during this short life be a manifestation of benevolence, a provision which extends the gift of happiness through eternal ages aug-

* John x. 28; Heb. iv. 9; 1 Tim. vi. 12.

ments that evidence to an infinite degree. Here are goodness and love which literally have no bounds.

7. We have a further evidence of the Divine benevolence when we take into account the unworthy objects to whom all these blessings and glories are offered—a world of sinners. We need no proof that we have sinned; our consciousness attests it, and this attestation is but an echo of what the Bible emphatically declares. Now, if mankind had never sinned—if they had remained innocent, holy, and obedient—even then the bestowment of the Divine favour to us on earth, and a state of eternal felicity in heaven, would have evinced an astonishing degree of goodness. But our state and character are just the reverse. Though bound by the most sacred ties and obligations to love and obey God, we have rebelled against him. Instead of revering his authority as our Creator and Governor, we have resisted him; instead of rendering to him the warmest gratitude and love for his abundant goodness, we have cherished enmity against him. It has been our element to sin. We have lived habitually under the influence of dispositions and affections hostile to God—to his righteous laws and holy purposes. While all inanimate Nature, and all the inferior tribes of sentient existence, have constantly honoured and glorified God by fulfilling the end of their being, mankind—the intelligent portion of his creation—beings the most exalted in nature, and the most signally favoured with his goodness—have exhibited the sad spectacle of decided and malignant rebellion against him. Our conscience bears witness that this is true.

Such, then, are the beings to whom God offers the blessings of salvation and everlasting life. Instead of eternally excluding us from his favour; instead of hurling his vengeance against us; instead of striking this apostate world from the page of creation; instead of blotting out our guilty species from existence, or perpetuating our rebellious race as hopeless monuments of his eternal displeasure against sin, he offers to pardon us, to receive us into his favour, to purify and ennoble our polluted nature by restoring us to his image, and finally to admit us to the joys of his everlasting kingdom in heaven.

Such are the clemency and unbounded goodness of God! Words are too poor to express our conceptions of such love, and our utmost conceptions fall infinitely short of its immensity. In the view of it our minds are lost in astonishment, and, overpowered with the view, we exclaim with the Apostle John—“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.”*

8. In the gift of Christ and the Holy Spirit we have a further evidence of the goodness of God. These gifts were essential to the salvation of our fallen world. Without the atoning sacrifice of Christ, our guilt could never have been forgiven; and without the operation of the Holy Spirit, our depraved nature could never have been renewed. The former was necessary to remove every legal barrier to our pardon, and the latter was equally necessary to subdue the hostility and enmity of our hearts, and restore us to the image of God we had lost. In the Scriptures of truth we learn that both these gifts have been bestowed. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” For us, then, the Son of God became incarnate and dwelt amongst men; for us he fulfilled and honoured the violated law by his personal obedience; for us he endured poverty, reproach, temptation, and persecution; for us he groaned in Gethsemane, and sustained an agony which caused him to sweat, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground; for us he was crucified, and expired in shame and anguish, employing his dying breath in prayers for his murderers; for us he rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, and now lives to intercede at the Father’s right hand; for us the Holy Spirit strives, imparts his light to convince and his power to awaken the conscience, to soften the heart, to subdue our rebellious dispositions, and bring us to repentance—and though resisted, slighted, and grieved by our hardness of heart, he still follows us with loving importunity, entreating and urging us to yield to God and be

* 1 John iii. 1.

saved. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*

9. We cannot conclude our remarks on the goodness and love of God towards man, without observing that the conditions of our salvation are such as proclaim his benevolent disposition. However hard the conditions of salvation had been made, yet had they only been practicable, and placed eternal happiness within the range of possibility, the greatness of the boon to be attained would have rendered even the hardest conditions as nothing. Yet it was not enough for Divine goodness to render salvation attainable, but to render the conditions *easy*—just adapted to our weak and helpless condition. Instead of imposing upon man some tremendous task or dreadful sufferings, like the penances and tortures of heathenism, God has rendered the conditions of salvation both easy to be comprehended, and by his assistance, easy to be performed. He has imposed no requirements but such as the moral necessity of the case demanded, as much for the welfare of the sinner as for the honour and consistency of his moral administration. He simply requires us to repent of our sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. "Repent ye, and believe the Gospel."† God has thus removed every obstacle out of the way of the sinner's happiness, and done everything necessary to facilitate his attainment of that unspeakable boon; and in this, as well as in every other feature of the Gospel economy, he has evinced his tender compassion, his unbounded mercy and love.

The redemption of man is described in the sacred writings as the greatest display of love which the Deity has exhibited towards mankind. Unquestionably, the love set forth in the

* 1 John iv. 10; John xv. 13; Rom. v. 8.

† Mark i. 16.

Gospel has no parallel in the displays of Nature. Great as is the goodness manifested in creation, providence, and in such proceedings of the Divine government as are cognizable to man, there is in these no parallel to that peculiar form in which the love of God is exhibited in the economy of redemption. It is above all comparison, and transcends all conception and all prior expectation. The loftiest intelligence in creation, we believe, could never have conceived the thought *a priori* that such a manifestation of love would have been displayed at any period in the history of God's moral government. Yet, since the event has become a matter of history, we can see that there is nothing in it repugnant to the Divine nature, or contrary to any aspect of the Divine character, as presented before us in the other proceedings of the Creator. On the contrary, it is in good keeping and in perfect harmony therewith. Creation unfolds the fact that God, out of pure disinterested love, has brought into existence innumerable beings; and providence shows the Divine Being taking care of these creatures, supplying their wants, giving them capacities for enjoyment, endowing them with instincts which stimulate them to seek for that enjoyment, and laying all inanimate Nature under contribution to afford them that enjoyment. Having left these impressions of his love on all the works of his hand, we cannot regard redemption as a departure from the principle here exhibited. It is rather a further development, a richer manifestation of the same principle. We grant it is astonishing; but not astonishing as involving inconsistency in the conduct of the Divine Being, or a departure from any previous development of his nature; but astonishing, simply in the same manner as many of the displays of his wisdom and power and other perfections are astounding—that is, by their vastness and overpowering magnitude, in the contemplation of which our feeble minds seem to stagger with amazement, and our bewildered feelings seek relief in exclamations of wonder. Though the Scriptural account, therefore, of human redemption involves a display of love vastly transcending all others in its imposing magnitude and grandeur, it is in perfect harmony with the more

limited manifestations of the same benevolent principle. It is the last disclosure of the Divine goodness, which, excels and transcends all others, as the splendour of noon exceeds the dim twilight of morn, and it involves complicated germs of Divine truth and goodness to be unfolded for ever—affording to intelligent minds an everlasting and a perpetually brightening comment on the declaration that “God is love.”

CHAPTER XI.

OBJECTIONS TO DIVINE WISDOM AND GOODNESS ANSWERED.

TRUTH does not require us either to exaggerate the existence of good (if that were possible), or blindly to disregard the existence of evil. We wish to contemplate facts just as they are, assured that God hath placed them before us for investigation with a design to afford us a proper view of himself. The existence of evil is admitted, and for the sake of order it may be contemplated under the two aspects in which it is commonly described—namely, physical and moral evil.

Irrespective of the teachings of revelation, the existence of moral evil is obvious to every one. The evil dispositions and wrong doings of mankind are everywhere apparent. The numerous laws framed by all nations for their suppression afford abundant attestation of the awful prevalence of sin in our world. Such being the fact, we ask, Is it reasonable to expect the enjoyment of unmixed good in this world? If there is an awful amount of moral evil among men, is it not natural that it should entail upon them some amount of physical evil? If a righteous God be the Governor of our world, is it not reasonable to suppose, *à priori*, that he would connect suffering with sin? If God is wise as well as good, and holy as well as benevolent, such must be the case. For as the love of God is not a blind affection, but an intelligent and discriminating

regard—a love directed in its exercise by wisdom and justice—a righteous love, never setting aside the claims of truth and rectitude, but unchangeably harmonizing with both—such a love is perfectly compatible with the punishment of sin; and in a world where moral evil is acknowledged to abound, it is vain and irrational to expect the displays of benevolence unmixed with the manifestations of punitive justice. The introduction of moral evil does, indeed, render man often the voluntary agent of his own misery; and must variously modify the economy of God's providence towards his rebellious creatures, as certainly as that truth and justice are immutable principles of his administration. If, therefore, sufferings are blended with enjoyments, it is a result to be expected as inseparable from the existence of moral evil; and to afford a complete vindication of the Divine goodness, it is enough if, amid much that is painful, there be among sinful creatures the continuance of positive indications of tender regard, of clemency, and good-will. If, however, in addition to these positive displays of goodness, we find that many natural evils may be averted by human wisdom, prudence, and virtue; and that other evils are converted into means of moral discipline, aiming at the improvement and ultimate good of the erring creature, our views of the Creator's love will be greatly enhanced. This we shall abundantly find in our subsequent inquiries.

SECTION I.—ON THE EXISTENCE OF NOXIOUS PLANTS AND ANIMALS.

1. *Noxious Plants.*

It is alleged that there are numerous plants which are hurtful to man; that thistles, and other useless weeds, encumber the ground; and henbane, hemlock, and many other poisonous plants, abound.

We reply, As to weeds and plants commonly supposed to be useless, the objection is founded, for the most part, in error; for we do not know of any plants entirely useless. Some, indeed, are not edible for man, but they form a nutritious aliment for

inferior animals and insects; and if they were unfit for food to any creatures, it does not follow that they are useless. On the contrary, they perform important functions, both in purifying the atmosphere, and in increasing the amount of that vegetable mould which renders the earth so abundantly fertile. Weeds and non-edible plants are, for the most part, hardy in their nature, and capable of growing in scanty and rocky soils, where esculent plants could not exist. Here they perform many important offices. They fill up a blank in Nature, and cover an otherwise barren surface with vegetation. In this situation they imbibe the unwholesome properties of the atmosphere, and give out oxygen—that vitalizing and salubrious property which renders the atmosphere fit to support life and promote the health of mankind; and with all the varieties of plants that abound in the earth, we are not aware that there is any excess for the purposes required. All seem to be requisite for fulfilling the salutary offices assigned to them.

Inferior plants, too, are often the pioneers of other vegetable races of a higher class. Absorbing a scanty nourishment from a rocky, barren surface, each generation, as it dies off, yields a deposit, which goes on to accumulate and form a stratum of soil, which in time becomes adequate to sustain higher classes of vegetable existence. It is thus that the dreary desert is changed “into a fruitful field,” and the prairie and the wilderness are prepared for the sustenance of a crowded population.

As to *poisonous plants*, they are few compared with the immense number that are esculent and nutritious. The lower animals, guided by instinct, avoid them, and man soon learns by experience that they are not fit for food; so that very seldom does the least evil arise from their growth. Besides, the most noxious plants are ascertained to possess important medicinal virtues, which render their existence promotive of the health and welfare of mankind. Moreover, the growth of both weeds and poisonous plants is under the control of man. They may, indeed, flourish and luxuriate in the solitary desert, and there their influence is beneficial; but if they flourish and abound to excess within the sphere of man’s influence, it is generally a

just rebuke for his indolence. He has the power almost to extirpate them utterly; and where that is impossible, he may limit and subordinate their growth to his necessities and welfare. Weeds seldom flourish and luxuriate unbidden, except in the regions of dreary solitude, or in the untenanted wilderness, or on the grave of industry.

Here an economy of benevolence is evidently predominant; and if man is destined to endure some inconvenience and toil, and even suffering, from the prevalence of noxious weeds, it is only what might be expected in a world where so much sin and moral evil abound. Reason itself tells us that a perfect paradise is not a fitting abode for a world of transgressors; that so long as man continues to violate both the moral and the physical laws, he may expect to realize various physical evils. Such, indeed, is the fact; and while it accords with reason, it agrees with the teachings of inspiration, which tell us that sin has abstracted much original good from our world, and brought down a punitive visitation upon its soil and its produce. "Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground."*

2. *Noxious Animals.*

It is alleged that there are various reptiles and predaceous animals which are hurtful to mankind. We reply—*First.* These creatures are extremely few compared with the immense numbers that are useful to man, either as beasts of burden, or as yielding him a supply of food and raiment. Now, what has rendered the useful abundant and the injurious few, but a benevolent purpose actuating the Creator? *Secondly.* Feroocious and dangerous creatures have an instinctive dread of man, and flee from his presence, making the forest, the wilderness, and untenanted parts of the earth their favourite haunts. *Thirdly.* They seldom attack man but when pressed with

* Gen. iii. 17—19.

hunger or irritated by man. *Fourthly.* Man has power to destroy them when they invade the domain of civilized life, or when their numbers multiply to any dangerous extent. *Fifthly.* They perform important service by acting as the scavengers of Nature, and by preventing the too rapid multiplication of other races on which they feed.

Here, then, the evil of their existence is but incidental, and connected with much positive and actual good, and the economy, as a whole, is evidently one of benevolence—one in which the welfare of man is consulted and provided for. The myriads of microscopic animalcules were formerly regarded by many as either useless or detrimental; but modern science has discovered that these diminutive creatures, thousands of which may be contained in one drop of water, answer a most important and beneficent purpose in evolving a large portion of oxygen gas, and thus contributing to replenish the atmosphere with those vital properties so essential to our existence. In a very interesting paper by Messrs. August and Morren * it is shown that water, abounding with animalcules, evolved a gas containing sixty-one per cent. of oxygen. The distinguished Liebig confirms this fact by an experiment of his own. In his "Chemistry" he remarks:—"The author took an opportunity of convincing himself of the accuracy of this long-observed fact, by means of some water out of a trough in his garden, the water being coloured strongly green by different kinds of infusoria. The water was freed, by means of a sieve, from all particles of vegetable matter, and, being placed in a jar inverted in a porcelain vessel containing the same water, was exposed for several weeks to the action of solar light. During this time a continual accumulation of gas took place in the upper part of this jar. After fourteen days, one-third of the water in the jar had been pressed out of it, and the gas, which had taken its place, ignited a glowing mass of wood, and in all respects behaved like pure oxygen gas." These facts show that the minutest organisms of Nature subserve some highly important

* "Transactions of the Academy at Brussels for 1841."

purposes, elaborating and evolving that principle which is essential to the support of our existence. We may rest assured that there is not a creature in being—whether great or small, whether it inhabit earth, or ocean, or air, and however noxious it may be in some of its properties—but what performs a beneficent part in the economy of Nature.

SECTION II.—THE CALAMITIES TO WHICH GOD'S CREATURES, ESPECIALLY HUMAN BEINGS, ARE EXPOSED.

1. It is alleged that sentient existence is exposed to various calamities, such as arise from earthquakes, pestilence, famine, and war. We reply, that such calamities are few and far between, compared with our blessings and enjoyments. Millions upon millions—indeed, the vast majority of our world—seldom, if ever, experience these calamities; and the question may justly be proposed, What disposition is it that has caused so great a disproportion between our enjoyments and our calamities? Is it a malignant or a benign disposition that has ordained this remarkable difference? God had the power to reverse this proportion, had he delighted in the creature's misery; and the only reason why he did not, must be found in the pure and exalted benevolence of his nature.

Besides, we know that many calamities may be averted, and all may be diminished, by man himself.

1. *As to war.*—This can scarcely be classed among calamities. It is a misery of man's own creating, a misery growing out of man's ambition and cruelty, and can no more be chargeable on God than theft and murder can be laid to his charge. And although it is true that often the innocent suffer with the guilty in the ravages of war, yet their sufferings are chargeable on man's conduct, just as the death of a murdered victim lies on the soul of the assassin. Wars come from men's lusts. God commands all men to love one another, and love worketh no ill to our neighbour. If all men obeyed this command, the din of war would be hushed for ever.

2. *As to destruction by earthquakes.*—These catastrophes arise from those forces of Nature which, in earlier ages, performed an important part in preparing the world for man's habitation, and they are still working out a benevolent purpose. Earthquakes of a dangerous kind but seldom transpire, and when they do occur, they take place, for the most part, in those districts of country which are contiguous to volcanoes, where Nature herself warns man not to erect his habitation; and if man neglect Nature's admonitions, his presumption is the parent of his destruction.

3. *Pestilence* is generally the result of neglect, or filthiness, or some violation of physical law. Filthiness is a neglect of the law of cleanliness—a law suggested by a regard to our own comfort and convenience, and exemplified by the habits of many brute animals. From filthiness spring putrid fevers and divers pestilences; and when these scourges do arise, their victims among the temperate, the chaste, the prudent, and the cleanly are comparatively few. As nations become cleanly in their habits, virtuous and temperate in their conduct, and construct their cities and their dwellings in conformity with sanitary principles, pestilential epidemics become less frequent. It is a remarkable fact that the plague has never visited London since the streets were widened and increased attention has been paid to cleanliness; and now that destroyer finds his victims almost exclusively in those parts of the world where the inhabitants wallow in disgusting filthiness. It is true that another scourge, under the name of cholera, has visited our land; but this is undoubtedly engendered by neglecting or violating the laws of Nature, and even amidst its ravages the power of the destroyer is abated and often averted by cleanliness, sobriety, and virtue. Universal cleanliness and virtue, combined with the benevolent aid which man might render in improving the condition and augmenting the comforts of his fellow-man, would probably banish even this fell destroyer from our world.

It is admitted that pestilence has often been sent as a special judgment upon a people; but a judgment for what? For

violating God's laws, his physical as well as his moral laws; and, indeed, God's moral laws are for the most part the comprehensive philosophical exponents of his physical laws. Pestilence, rightly interpreted, is a rebuke upon man's licentiousness, filthiness, and neglect, as well as a denunciation of Heaven's displeasure against his unbelief and evil dispositions; and if all men lived in conformity with God's physical and moral laws, pestilence would cease.

4. *Famine* is a calamity which seldom occurs. For one scanty harvest which fails to supply our need, how many have we that are abundant! Again, we ask, What is it that makes the proportion so great on the side of plenty? Is it not the benevolent disposition of our Maker, which causes him to delight to do his needy creatures good? How easily he might withhold his bounty! But instead of withholding, he is constantly bestowing, so that scarcity and want are seldom felt. Besides, when famine occurs, it is never universal, but generally confined to a few localities. If there be scarcity in one nation, there is plenty in another, so that God's bounties have only to be distributed in order to supply the need of all. Viewed in this aspect, an occasional dearth seems like a call to the nations to have intercourse one with another, to reciprocate their help, and cultivate commercial and friendly relations; and surely, if the great Parent of all confers his benefits and blessings on his creatures, the children of the same great family ought to minister to each other's aid in the hour of need. In proportion as commerce extends, and nations reciprocate friendly offices, the evils of famine become diminished.

Moreover, if man were to avail himself of all the resources which Providence places at his disposal, the evils of famine in any land would scarcely ever be experienced. Let seed-time be properly improved; let the land everywhere be brought under proper cultivation; let the right kind of crops be grown—those which minister not to baneful luxuries, but to man's comforts and necessities; let nothing be wasted or misapplied; let the surplus of one year be saved for the scarcity of another; let desolating wars cease, and grinding oppressions come to an end;

let nations abroad and neighbours at home live in peace and reciprocate mutual help, and the gaunt demon of famine would be banished from our world.

It is true that famine, as well as pestilence, has sometimes been judicially sent; but for what? For man's sins; and sins consist in a great degree in violating or neglecting the laws of Nature, which are the laws of God. If his laws assume the form of a moral code, that code embodies duties which comprise the fulfilment of physical laws. An enlightened, proper, uniform, and practical regard to the moral laws of God would secure a fulfilment of the laws of Nature; and in fulfilling these laws, Nature would reward obedience with such plenty, that famine as well as pestilence would be driven from the world.

5. It should here be remarked that this reasoning is abundantly sustained by explicit declarations of Holy Scripture; for peace, plenty, health, and long life are promised to the obedient, and the day is expressly foretold when the nations shall learn war no more, but shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; when the earth shall yield her increase; when the curse of sin shall be done away, and God, even our own God, shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

It is evident, then, that these calamities shall be done away from our world when its inhabitants become obedient; and if so, the existence of these evils *now* is the fruit of disobedience; and, if the fruit of disobedience, they are not chargeable upon God, but upon man himself; and, however clearly they may manifest the punitive justice of God, they do not impeach his goodness. It is indeed of his love and mercy that, amidst so much sin, our present calamities are so few, and God's blessings and bounties so abundant.

SECTION III.—BODILY PAIN.

It is true that we are liable to pain, but it is equally true that our pains bear but a small proportion to our pleasures and enjoyments. The very highest average amount of sickness or loss of health in this country, as furnished by one of the most eminent actuaries* of the present day, is the following:—

At the age of 20	the sickness is	5 days	21 hours	per annum.		
”	30 ”	”	6 ”	9 ”	”	”
”	40 ”	”	8 ”	6 ”	”	”
”	50 ”	”	13 ”	17 ”	”	”
”	60 ”	”	29 ”	4 ”	”	”

These statistics are taken with reference to the liabilities of friendly societies, and, therefore, represent the loss of time occasioned by sickness; but it would be very erroneous to suppose all that time passed in pain. During a considerable portion of the respective periods the invalids are ordinarily free from pain, and during another portion in a state of convalescence or returning health, in which life has many of its usual enjoyments.

It is rational to inquire how it is that our health and our pleasures are so abundant, and our pains and sufferings so few. Surely it was not a malignant but a benevolent disposition which determined this ratio.

It must also be remembered, that though we are exposed to pain, that exposure arises from a mere *susceptibility* to pain, not from any *propensity* to pain, or from any constitutional contrivance framed to produce pain.

1. Pain, like remorse, is a sensation which does not spring from instinct, as our social emotions and pleasurable feelings do. Pleasurable emotions spring up instinctively; they are natural sallies of physical and mental enjoyment; but pain is a sensation to which we are merely *liable*, and which rarely

* “Observations on Friendly Societies,” by F. G. Neison.

occurs, except when some natural law has been neglected or transgressed, and even then it seems intended and directed to produce some ulterior good.

2. It is worthy of our notice, that while bodily pain is not an instinctive emotion, neither is there any part of our physical organization formed with any intention to inflict pain and suffering. As Dr. Paley remarks:—"Evil no doubt exists, but it is never, that we can perceive, the object of the contrivance. Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache; their aching now and then is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it, but it is not the object. This is a distinction which well deserves to be attended to. In describing implements of husbandry, one would hardly say of a sickle that it was made to cut the reaper's fingers; though, from the construction of this instrument and the manner of using it, this mischief often happens. But if he had occasion to describe instruments of torture or execution, 'This,' he would say, 'is to extend the sinews; this, to dislocate the joints; this, to break the bones; this, to scorch the soles of the feet.' Here pain and misery are the very objects of the contrivance. Now, nothing of this sort is to be found in the works of Nature. We never discover a train of contrivances to bring about an evil purpose. No anatomist ever discovered a system of organization calculated to produce pain and disease; or, in explaining the parts of the human body, ever said 'This is to irritate, this to inflame, this duct is to convey gravel to the kidneys, this gland to secrete the humour which forms the gout.' If by chance he came to a part of which he knew not the use, the most that he can say is, that it appears to him to be useless: no one ever suspects that it is put there to incommode, to annoy, or to torment. If God had wished our misery, he might have made sure of his purpose, by forming our senses to be as many sores and pains to us, as they are now instruments of gratification and enjoyment; or by placing us among objects so ill suited to our perceptions, as to have continually offended us, instead of ministering to our refreshment and delight."

3. The preceding arguments dispense with any objection

grounded on the creature's instincts and organization, and prove that no purpose but that of benevolence dictated the creature's constitution. We have still, however, to admit the fact, that the creature is unquestionably *susceptible* of pain, and that pain is often realized by us. This fact has then to be accounted for.

It is impossible for us to determine with precision how much our susceptibility of suffering has been augmented as a punitive result of sin. That such a consequence would result, to some extent, from the introduction of moral evil, is as reasonable to suppose as it is to suppose that Jehovah governs the world in righteousness, and that intelligent beings are accountable for their conduct. But whatever extent of physical suffering may be attributable to punitive justice, the prevalence of clemency and love in tempering those sufferings, and giving them a salutary tendency, is very conspicuous; for pains and sufferings are seldom experienced, except when some physical or moral law is either transgressed or neglected; and even then, the suffering is directed to a wise and beneficent end. A few examples will illustrate this truth.

(a) *Excess* in eating, in drinking, or in any other indulgence, is a transgression of the law of temperance and self-government, and a variety of physical evils result therefrom. Gluttony produces plethora and gout; drunkenness generates dropsy, *delirium tremens*, and a host of miseries; luxury produces effeminacy, and often brings on destitution and want.

(b) *Injustice, fraud, and oppression* are transgressions of the law of love to our neighbour; and all the cruelties, wars, and murders which afflict mankind spring from the indulgence of these depraved principles.

(c) *Lasciviousness* is a violation of the law of continence and chastity. Debility, consumption, loathsome diseases, premature death, and hereditary infirmities and pollutions stream forth from this degrading vice.

(d) *Indolence*.—The law of activity and industry is legibly inscribed upon man's nature, and enforced by his own interests, and by the instinctive habits of the animal creation. Idleness

is a neglect of this law, and its consequences are squalid wretchedness and want, which, in their turn, produce other vices, and these vices, again, give birth to other miseries.

We need not multiply examples; they will suggest themselves to every reflecting mind. It is clearly an established principle, that man can violate or neglect no law, whether moral or physical, without entailing upon himself pain, suffering, or some evil consequence; and it is a truth almost equally conspicuous, that if he were to live in uniform obedience to the laws of his moral and physical constitution, which are the laws of God, there would be such an abridgment of his miseries as would leave but few behind. The faithful discharge of his duties to God, to himself, and his fellow-creatures, uniformly and universally persevered in, would immensely diminish the number and intensity of his woes, and augment, in the same proportion, the sum both of his temporal and spiritual enjoyments. The facts before us, then, so far from impugning, accumulate the proofs of the benevolence of God. For—

In the *first place*, the miseries in question are self-sought and self-inflicted; man is his own tormentor. Whatever evidence, therefore, there may be here of man's folly and depravity, there is nothing in the consequence thereof which reflects upon the character of his Maker. To the sins now under our notice, surely men are scarcely prepared to add that of attributing the consequences of their own evil conduct to a malignant disposition in the Most High!

Secondly.—After all the good which man ignorantly and wilfully throws away, a vast number of comforts and blessings are continued to him, vile as he is. This is the effect of clemency and goodness.

Thirdly.—After all the miseries which man voluntarily and impiously brings upon his own head, many others are warded off, and almost all are mitigated by mercy.

Fourthly.—In connection with the diseases brought by man upon himself, there is a restoring process in which Nature, by her own efforts, seeks the recovery of man from the injuries inflicted upon himself. Thus, when the drunkard fractures a

limb, Nature at once commences a process of reuniting it; and when the libertine debilitates and pollutes his constitution by excesses, Nature at once labours to expel the poison infused, and to replenish the energies which have been wantonly exhausted. Indeed, the suffering experienced in most diseases arises from the struggle of Nature to rectify human disorders, and restore the victims of intemperance, of lust, and vice, to a state of health and soundness. Surely no mind can be so blinded as not to perceive a benevolent intention in such an economy. It is a laborious and protracted effort to do the sinner good in spite of himself, and it presents the clearest evidence of a presiding Mind, having infinitely more tender regard for man than man has for himself.

Fifthly.—The connection of pains with the violation of moral and physical law is as distinguished by clemency as by justice, for they are intended to subserve a benevolent purpose. If the abuse of a blessing were followed by its immediate withdrawal, the goodness which originated the gift at first could not be impugned; and if the connection of pain with the violation of law were merely punitive and not restorative, the justice of God could not be impugned; but when, throughout the whole economy of God, sufferings are intended to produce a reformation of habits, and the prevention of greater evils, we have evidence of astonishing clemency and goodness; and such an intention pervades the whole process of Divine Providence towards man during his present state. Thus the nausea, the headache, and sickness which follow the first drunken surfeit, are gentle warnings to avoid that course in the future; and the debility, the *delirium tremens*, and the dropsy, which attend a more advanced stage of intemperance, are still louder tones of admonition to escape from the disgusting vice. Thus the squalid wretchedness, disease, and woe resulting from idleness, filthiness, and prodigality, are rebukes and admonitions to their miserable victims. The sufferings of the obscene libertine utter a loud and intelligible warning, calling upon him to abandon his depraved course. Indeed, all the physical evils springing from sin are so many merciful admonitions to repentance and

reformation. They are so many appeals to man's self-love, even when he is lost to every higher principle, declaiming against his vicious habits, and summoning him to the path of virtue and obedience, lest iniquity be his utter ruin. And generally, this appeal of Nature, though gentle at first, becomes louder and louder as the danger becomes more imminent—the tones of admonition, uttered by suffering and woe consequent on vice, assume a more startling and terrific cry as the rebel steps nearer the precipice of irrecoverable ruin. We ask, What principle could dictate this economy? The sinner's recovery to virtue and happiness is obviously the object, and that surely is the object of clemency and love. Punitive justice may, indeed, be manifested, but evidently in harmonious connection with tender compassion—with unbounded goodness and love.

SECTION IV.—PHYSICAL EVILS NOT ARISING FROM VICIOUS HABITS.

It is alleged, however, that there are sufferings not immediately arising from sin or moral evil, so far as their causes can be traced. We very much question, however, whether such pains and sufferings ought to be placed in the category of evils. Thus, if by accident a man or any other animal receive a bruise, a burn, or a cut, pain is instantly felt. But though in such cases pain is indeed experienced, and is unavoidable with our present constitution, the pain we regard as no evil, but a benefit, and an indication of a benevolent purpose. It is obvious the suffering, in such cases, is not punitive in its object, nor permitted for any object but a beneficial one—namely, the preservation of the creature. If no pain were felt from a bruise, we should have no warning to escape from danger; if no smart were felt from fire, we might be fatally burned before we were conscious of having received injury; if no pain were experienced from a wound, a limb might be amputated or a vital part be pierced before we were aware of any harm being done. The connection, therefore, of pain with any injury done to the body

is a benevolent provision made for our preservation. The goodness of God is further manifested in having given the greatest sensibility to the outer surface of the body, by his having distributed an immense number of nerves, like net-work, immediately under the skin, which, as so many watchful sentinels, in a moment give the alarm when danger is near, and our instinctive aversion to pain prompts us at the same moment to escape. The same provision is made for the inferior animals as well as for the human species. Though devoid of reason, they are commonly as susceptible of approaching evil as ourselves. Philosophy may answer many important purposes to rational beings, but sense and instinct are instrumentally the great preservatives of life, especially from immediate danger. Such an economy indicates the benevolent disposition of our Creator, and constrains us to regard pain itself as being a benefit and a blessing to creatures having a physical organization.

If it be asked, Why did not God secure our protection without the susceptibility of pain and suffering? we may reply to this question by proposing another: Why did God form any creatures with a physical organization? Why did he not create all beings of one nature, and absolutely perfect? If there must be a gradation and a variety of existence, and if that variety must include a material organization, the conditions of that existence exclude the supposition involved in the inquiry; nor can the multiform manifestations of benevolence in the actual condition of the creature be set aside by any visionary scheme of optimism of which our imagination may dream. A state of real existence is before us, and it is fraught with proofs that God is good.

SECTION V.—THE INEQUALITIES OF MAN'S CONDITION.

It is alleged that there is a wide disparity in the circumstances and conditions of mankind; some are born to affluence, while others are doomed to poverty; some have a full measure

of prosperity, while others have to wade through adversity and sorrow. We reply—

1. It is not obligatory upon benevolence to render all men equal—to place all men on the same perfect level. If a certain rich man should provide for the necessities of a hundred poor families, we should justly deem him benevolent; and if the same rich man should also elevate another family above poverty to a degree of affluence, we should not regard him as the less benevolent on that account. The second act of goodness to one family does not negative the first act of charity to a hundred. Thus it is with God's gifts, and the disposition from which they flow. He gives nothing but what is absolutely his own, and the fact that he may bestow more on some does not neutralize the goodness that every day provides for millions.

It is manifestly the design of a gracious God that all men should have food to eat and raiment to wear, and he amply provides for these; and if they be not realized by some, the cause is to be ascribed, not to God, but to man—either to the conduct of the sufferer himself, or to injustice or oppression, or to a want of charity in others. If there be any cases of want not referable to these causes, they are few indeed, and if the true causes were known, they would be found to involve no impeachment of the Divine goodness. The unceasing bounty of God's providence for man meets every charge against his kindness and love.

2. Perfect equality among men is a Utopian idea, which can never be realized. If all men were now placed in equal circumstances, their diversity of talent, habit, and character would soon produce an inequality as wide as that which exists in society. Men are to a great extent the architects of their own condition. Moreover, the mutual dependence of man upon man, of talent upon capital, and of labour upon both, and of both upon labour, renders it necessary to the well-being of every part of the social structure, that there should be variety in the condition of mankind; just as the various members of the human body are mutually dependent one upon another, and their various positions and offices subserve the good of the

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whole, so that the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of thee," nor the hand to the eye, "I have no need of thee." It is even so in the social fabric—the rich subserve the welfare of the poor, and the poor promote the interests of the rich, and all in their appropriate sphere minister to the good of the body politic. Talent, capital, and labour are mutually dependent and subservient; one cannot do without the other, and it is the design of Providence that every man should be honourable, useful, and happy in his own sphere.

3. Riches are among the least gifts that Providence has to bestow, and all the higher endowments and blessings of human nature are imparted to the poor as well as the rich, and often with more abundant bounty. For instance—

(a) *Health of body* is unspeakably more important than wealth, and Providence places the boon of health before the poor as well as the rich; and observation shows, that among the families of the cleanly, temperate, and industrious poor, there is quite as large a share of health as in the families of the rich. Indeed, riches present a constant temptation to indulgence and excess, which impair the constitution, and produce among the higher classes of society multitudes of languishing, dyspeptic, and complaining invalids; while humble fare and the exercise of labour, when not excessive, are conducive to health and robustness of constitution. The vigour of the parent, too, is generally inherited by the children, which is a far better legacy than the patrimony of a thousand a-year.

(b) *The organs of sense*.—How important our bodily senses! What a poor substitute would any amount of wealth be for the enjoyment of sight or hearing! Yet these invaluable boons, so essential to our comfort and welfare, are imparted to men by the Giver of all good, without respect of persons or conditions in life.

(c) *Mental faculties*.—There is no comparison between the blessing of a sound and vigorous mind and heaps of glittering gold; but wealth cannot purchase those mental qualities, nor can the noble and the great claim either a monopoly or an undue share of them. There is no aristocracy of mind. God

has given mental power as largely to the poorest as to the wealthiest of the land. Indeed, the most distinguished scholars and philosophers have risen from the humbler walks of life.

(d) *Usefulness*.—It is an honour and a blessing to be useful; but the path of usefulness is as open to the poor as it is to the rich. All usefulness resolves itself into something *done*—it is the effect of activity and labour either of body or mind, or of both. The rich may give largely of their wealth, and it is well when they do so; but wealth without labour would leave no wants supplied, no sorrows soothed, no misery relieved. Men cannot eat money; it is the articles which money purchases that supply men's wants; and those articles cannot be produced without labour. The poor man has, then, the privilege of the highest kind of usefulness. He is daily useful to his fellow men by the toils that earn his bread; and he may be useful, too, by mitigating the sorrows, removing the ignorance, and promoting the welfare of his fellow-men in a thousand ways. One of the poorest of men was the most useful that ever trod our earth; it was He who went about doing good, yet had not where to lay his head!

(e) *Happiness*.—Men measure the value of any good by the amount of happiness it yields; but wealth cannot purchase happiness. It may, if properly used, supply some of our temporal wants, but it often creates more artificial wants than it supplies. As for the real wants of Nature, they are few and soon supplied.

“Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long.”

Plain food is admitted by the wisest physicians to be the most nutritious and most conducive to health; and plain raiment is just as good as the most splendid robes for the comfort of the body; and what secures the health and comfort of the body secures physical enjoyment. It may be that ignorance and indolence on the one hand, and injustice and oppression on the other, or something wrong and artificial in the social system, may prevent these blessings from being sufficiently enjoyed by

some of our fellow-creatures; but that is the fault of man, and cannot be ascribed to God. The fact that God has given Nature the capacity to produce abundance for all, and the fact that he always approves of mutual assistance and kindness, are abundant indications of his benevolent character.

But it must be remembered, that happiness is a mental possession, and not mere physical or sensual enjoyment. Is mental happiness, then, the exclusive companion of wealth? Can wealth buy mental happiness? Does happiness always flee from the bosom of the honest and industrious poor? Or is the balance of mental enjoyment, on the whole, in favour of riches? We think a negative reply is sustained by experience and facts. It is as true that riches increase *cares* as that they multiply wants. Damocles soon discovered that the wealth and pageantry of Dionysius did not render him happy, and his envy of the tyrant's riches and honours was soon exchanged for pity of his anxieties and cares. Many a crowned head is pierced with thorns. Many an aching heart palpitates beneath the silken robe. Monarchs have sometimes resigned their honours to be relieved from their cares, and some of the greatest minds have preferred the simple regimen, the plain attire, and humble habits of the poor, as most conducive to serenity and mental happiness.

The *Summum Bonum*, or the greatest happiness of man, was a question much debated in the ancient schools, but the distinguished and prevailing philosophy pronounced it to be an inward possession superior to external things, and an attainment accessible to man in the humblest conditions of life. A higher authority has declared that "a man's life (happiness) consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth." Apart from religious emotions and influences, it may be affirmed that the sum of human happiness is more nearly balanced than what most men imagine; and without endangering our reputation, we may hazard the opinion that, if all the facts of personal history could be developed and compared, it would be found that the amount of happiness is as largely shared by the humble poor as by the rich, and that if the scale

preponderates on any side, it is not with either excessive wealth or extreme poverty, but with the class where honest labour, temperate habits, and frugal management secure a supply of the real wants of Nature. These wants would certainly be universally supplied if all men lived in conformity with the laws of Nature, which are the laws of God; and, therefore, incidental want, and the sufferings arising from it, do not impugn the benevolence of the Creator.

In concluding this part of the argument, it may be observed that it is evident there is a great amount of suffering in our world, but it is equally true that there is a far greater amount of enjoyment; so that mankind in general regard existence as a boon. The amount of suffering might be indefinitely mitigated by man's universally conforming to the laws of Nature, and by the practice of justice and benevolence; and if all sufferings were reduced to the lowest minimum, the residuum would be as nothing compared with what it is at present. On the other hand, the amount of enjoyment might be indefinitely augmented by man's ceasing to do evil, practising virtue, and fully bringing out the resources of Nature. Thus, while the actual state of things proves the benevolence of God, the possible state of things unfolds it in a still higher degree.

SECTION VI.—THE TESTIMONY OF THE SCRIPTURE AS TO THE TRIALS AND SUFFERINGS OF LIFE.

WE are free to admit that our views of Divine providence, and our vindication of Divine goodness, would be imperfect without the light of Revelation. Here, however, the horizon is at once extended and brightened, and the proceedings of the Divine Being are seen not only to harmonize with Divine goodness, but our estimate of that goodness is indefinitely exalted; and it cannot be uninteresting to an inquirer after truth to know what light the Bible sheds on this subject.

While sin is shown to be the parent of innumerable sufferings and woes, we learn that this life is but a probationary

state—that man is placed under a gracious and restorative economy, in which he is favoured with consolation under his various afflictions and sorrows; an economy, too, in which the Holy Spirit's help is afforded, to enable him to endure sufferings with fortitude and patience; in which all his pains, privations, and sorrows, are sanctified to his present and eternal good—made a means of moral discipline to subdue evil dispositions and promote the growth of holy principles and affections; and which economy holds out a blessed hope not only of final deliverance, but of everlasting reward and felicity in heaven. It contains such declarations and promises as these: “Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.” “Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.” “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” “My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.” “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” “Behold, we count them happy which endure.” “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life.” *

These, and hundreds of other gracious promises, are the utterances of love. Supported by the consolations they afford, by the comforts and joys of the Holy Spirit, and by the

* Psalm lv. 22; Psalm l. 15; Isaiah xliii. 2; 2 Cor. xii. 9; Rom. viii. 28, 35—39; James v. 11, i. 12.

prospects of eternal happiness, the Christian is enabled to endure the trials of life with patience and fortitude; yea, to rejoice in tribulation, knowing that ere long the sufferings of the present life will terminate in the fruition of uninterrupted and eternal blessedness, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."*

SECTION VII.—DEATH.

THE fact that all visible creatures are doomed to die, has often been adduced as an argument against the benevolent character of God. It is confessedly a fact invested with a sombre aspect, and well fitted to engender grave reflections. Indeed, viewed *personally*, it is repugnant to our selfish instincts and desires; but that it is repugnant to the Divine benevolence, we are not prepared to admit.

1. *The death of the vegetable part of creation.*

Plants and all vegetables die. Is this an economy repugnant to Divine goodness? On the contrary, death in the vegetable creation formed the grand platform of all subsequent manifestations of Divine goodness in the existence of animal creation. If the first vegetable races had been deathless, no vegetable mould could have been formed, no fertile soil could have been produced such as we now have, adapted to all forms of vegetable existence. It was the death of the first generation of plants that deposited a mould which, mixed with clays, sands, and various earthy particles, sustained and enriched the second. It was the death of successive generations that provided a soil for the sustenance of higher orders, as the creative fiat brought them forth. It was the existence of higher races of vegetable life that formed the chief sustenance of animal existences, as the eternal God spoke them into being. Thus

* 2 Cor. iv. 17.

the highest forms of organized life, with all the enjoyments of sentient existence, are, in a subordinate sense, owing to the successive ravages of death. Who, then, will deny that the introduction of death, in the vegetable kingdom at least, is an essential part of a benevolent economy?

2. *Death, in the animal kingdom, is also a beneficent economy.*

If there were no death among the animal tribes of creation (we shall speak of man hereafter), there would have been but a limited scope for the exercise of Divine benevolence, compared with the present economy. This will be soon apparent if we contemplate the effects of imparting immortality to the animal creation. The first effect would be to exclude the existence of all creatures that live by prey, and thus both the number and the variety of existence must have been greatly diminished. The second effect would be the impossibility of successive generations, or if generation proceeded for a time, it must soon necessarily have come to an end, as the earth would quickly have been filled. Thus, instead of having life and all its enjoyments diffused amongst an infinite number of creatures, and transmitted through innumerable successions of generations, those blessings must have been confined to one fixed number; and few, indeed, would have been that number compared with the countless millions amongst which these enjoyments are now diffused from age to age. The third effect would have been to divest the aspect of created animal existence of all those interesting varieties of age which now delight the eye. The distinction of playful youth from sober age would have been soon blotted from creation to return no more. The fourth effect would have been the destruction or cessation of all those agreeable instincts, sympathies, and affections which grow out of the propagation of the species and the relations of parent and offspring; for immortality to an existing race would have excluded continued replenishment by generation, and consequently all the instinctive affections, sympathies, and enjoyments growing out of the present economy.

It is easy to see that the general effect would be a vast

abridgment of the creature's happiness, and a limitation of the sphere of Divine benevolence.

If, indeed, there were no economy of generation, then death might be pleaded as a proof of limited, imperfect, short-lived, or fluctuating goodness. But when we see that death produces no abridgment of the total amount of life or happiness, but is simply a mode of transferring life from one creature to another—an essential part of an economy in which a boon is handed from one being to another; in which existence is infinitely diversified and multiplied; in which a class of joyful instincts are brought into activity which otherwise could not exist, or, if they did once exist, must soon have ceased; in which new capacities for enjoyment are brought into being; in which generation succeeds generation, and new existences run the same perpetual round of enjoyment; in which the amount of happiness is swelled and enlarged from a shallow rill to an overflowing ocean—we have certainly in this economy a striking proof that God is good. It is because he is good, and delights to evince and communicate his goodness, that he cannot be satisfied with one generation alone participating in its enjoyment, but he must multiply his creatures to infinity, and cause them to exist in every possible variety, in order that his goodness may have an unbounded scope for its exercise and display.

3. *Death by prey.*

The organization of existing animals shows that death by prey was an event contemplated by the Divine mind; and the characteristics of geological strata show that it has prevailed through every period in the history of our planet, from the first dawn of animal being until now. It was the characteristic of those geological periods anterior to the introduction of moral evil, as well as since; indeed, the existence of predatory animals is attested in many of the earliest strata of our world. We have already seen that the death of animals affords more ample scope for the exercise of benevolence than the immortality of the species; and death by prey, so far from diminishing, exalts

our view of that benevolence. This statement may shock the feelings of some who have been accustomed to regard death by prey as a formidable objection to the Divine goodness. But let us examine the subject. Animal existence must be sustained by food of some kind, and as mere earths and minerals are not adapted for this purpose, the food must consist of either animal or vegetable material. Animal life is accompanied with enjoyment; vegetable life is incapable of sensation or emotion. Whether, then, is it the more expressive of goodness, "that a certain portion of that food should be animated and filled with pleasure until it is wanted,"* or that it should be inanimate and incapable of enjoyment? We can have no hesitation in replying. The former is an arrangement providing for, and actually securing, the greatest amount of happiness, and consequently the most expressive of benevolence. But might it not have been provided that carnivorous animals should feed upon others after they had died a natural death? We ask, in return, Why should this arrangement be preferred? Is it in order to avoid the suffering of pain? Then the present arrangement is doubtless the most conducive to such a result. When creatures die by accident, by disease, or by old age, there must in general be the endurance of much more pain than is felt in undergoing a sudden destruction by some predatory animal. Myriads of smaller creatures perish in an instant as prey for larger animals; and others which, from their size and strength, are capable of struggling for a time against their antagonist, yet commonly are soon dispatched, for Nature has furnished their destroyers with weapons for effecting sudden destruction, and has directed them to attack those parts which produce almost instantaneous death. Dr. Livingstone was once seized and shaken by a lion, and he tells us he immediately sunk into a state of stupor; and he gives it as his opinion that the attacks of a predaceous animal generally produce a state of stupor, in which the victim feels but little pain.† Add to this the con-

* Dr. Harris.

† Livingstone's "Travels in South Africa."

sideration, that animals have no idea of death, and consequently can have no fear of it. They enjoy life without being once interrupted by the thought of death. From the most obvious facts, it appears that, in a vast majority of cases, the death of animals preyed upon is instantaneous; in others, it is effected with the least degree of pain possible; and in all, without the animal having any conception of ceasing to live. Such being the case, the system of one animal preying upon another is an arrangement worthy of God; for it displays his benevolence by providing for the greatest amount of animal enjoyment, and the least degree of animal suffering.

4. *The death of the human race.*

Just views in relation to the death of mankind cannot be had without having recourse to the light of Revelation. In the Holy Scriptures we are expressly informed that the death of the human race is the penalty of sin. Here the solemn fact is stated that "the wages of sin is death;" and that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."*

Seeing, then, that the death of man is a *punitive* effect of sin, it is implied that perfect obedience would have secured immortality—that had man retained his innocence and holiness, he would not have been doomed to dissolution. In that case, the purposes of Divine benevolence would have been realized in some other mode. Man would undoubtedly have multiplied and replenished the earth in accordance with the original blessing pronounced at his creation; but to make way for the continuance of successive generations of happy beings, there must, we humbly presume, have been a continued succession of translations, like that of Enoch and Elijah, in which our happy species would have been removed from earth, body and soul, to some more exalted region of blessedness, without the pain and degradation of mortality. Translations then would have been as numerous as funerals now are.

Seeing, then, that death is the effect of sin, it impugns

* Romans v. 12.

neither the justice nor the benevolence of God. In the economy of human governments it is not deemed unjust to inflict the penalty of death for the violation of human laws. Nor does the infliction of death argue a want of benevolence in the sovereign who administers our laws. It is rather the dictate of benevolence toward the living and the obedient, that the murderer is removed by the extreme penalty of the law.

Moreover, as God gave life, he had a right to take it away if he pleased, even if man had never sinned. The mere cessation of life does not neutralize the goodness displayed in giving life for a time, and in providing for its enjoyments while it is permitted to continue. But when, in taking away that life from one, it is under an economy which affords scope for imparting life to thousands and millions of others through successive generations, there is plainly a manifestation of unbounded goodness, even in connection with the infliction of a dreadful penalty. To each sinner death is a punishment, because it removes him from earth under circumstances of pain and degradation; but, after all, Divine goodness is not defeated in its purpose, for death itself creates room and scope for multiplying existence to countless millions. Thus, death merely shortens the period of God's goodness in relation to the physical existence of each generation, but at the same time it affords scope for extending the blessing of life to others, who, in their turn, share the same tokens of Divine clemency and regard. Without death man must have been either removed from this sphere while alive, or his species must have ceased to be multiplied. Sin has deprived him of the privilege of being removed by translation. He is taken away by death; this is punitive; but seeing this punitive removal affords room for multiplying existence to countless myriads, and seeing Divine goodness immediately replenishes the vacancy by new generations of the same race, on whom God continues successively to heap the proofs of his regard, we see in this economy multiplying evidences that God is good.

Nor is this all. Revelation unfolds a display of still greater goodness in affirming that, though the body is doomed to die,

the spirit may live for ever in a state of felicity and glory ; and further, that the body itself shall be raised again, and together with the soul, shall be eternally glorified. Thus, though "the wages of sin is death," the "gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." *

SECTION VIII.—THE EXISTENCE OF MORAL EVIL.

THE existence of moral evil is alleged as an objection to the goodness of God. To which we reply—

1. Moral evil is sin, and sin is a voluntary transgression. Therefore, moral evil is not the act of God. He neither sins himself, nor forces any creature to sin. Holy and loving in his own nature, all his proceedings are in harmony with the moral laws he has prescribed for the government of intelligent beings. God, therefore, not being the Author of sin, its existence is no impeachment of his goodness. If it be alleged that, as sin is hurtful to the creature, a benevolent Creator ought to have prevented its existence, we reply—

2. To have prevented the existence of sin by an absolute determination, would have prevented the freedom of all intelligent beings. As a consequence, this would have prevented the existence of moral excellence, and converted intelligent beings into mere machines. No voluntary action could have been performed, no deliberate acquiescence in the Divine will could have been felt, no intelligent elective preference of an obedient course could have been adopted; motives, mental determinations, moral sentiments, affections, principles, and all the conduct flowing therefrom, would have been irresistibly forced, and man have been as incapable of moral excellence as of moral pravity, and as incapable of both as is the solar system. In such a state of things God could have had no moral empire, no mental obedience, no intellectual servants and subjects, nor could the creature have realized any moral development or excellency: the mind would have been as passive as

* Romans vi. 23.

matter, and God the only agent and operator in the universe of being. The exclusion of free agency would thus exclude from Jehovah's empire all moral government, and the development of all those moral excellencies which reflect so much real dignity, worth, and happiness on the creature. If, therefore, God must have a moral empire at all, if moral obedience must be rendered to him, and moral excellence with its attendant glories and enjoyments must be developed, intelligent beings must be free; and if free, they must be liable to sin. It is true they need not sin; their freedom excludes all necessity of departing from the right way; but the *possibility* of their doing so is certainly involved in a capacity for obedience and moral excellence. Such a constitution, therefore, as renders the intelligent being free, with all its attendant possibilities, is undoubtedly wise and good, and is every way worthy of God.

SECTION IX.—REMORSE AND MENTAL ANGUISH.

OUR susceptibility of remorse and mental anguish does not impugn the benevolence of the Divine Being. The very existence of remorse and mental anguish implies the existence of sin, and flows from it as its punishment. Unless, therefore, this impugns the Divine justice, it is in perfect harmony with his benevolence. That it is not unjust for the sinner to suffer these emotions, will be admitted; and if so, the capacity for such emotions involves no injustice. If intelligent beings were without such a capacity, they would have no moral sense, no conscience, and be incompetent for moral obedience.

So far from our moral sense, or, in other words, our susceptibility of remorse, impugning the Divine goodness, we are prepared to say that such a constitution affords an additional proof of that goodness. In considering this subject, however, it must be carefully observed that a constitutional *susceptibility* is widely different from a constitutional *propensity*. A propensity is a disposition actively operating and stimulating the creature to a certain course. Such are all instinctive pro-

pensities and passions; but a susceptibility implies a passive state—a mere liability to be subject to certain influences. Now, it is remarkable that such is the constitution of our nature, that, while we are *stimulated* to enjoyments, we are merely *susceptible* of pains, whether of body or mind. We have instincts and propensities *actively* prompting to what yields gratification and delight, but are merely *liable* to sufferings; we are never instinctively prompted to them. Thus, we are merely susceptible of remorse and mental anguish. These emotions do not intrinsically or instinctively arise in our minds, like the salient and spontaneous springs of joyous emotions. They are never experienced but when excited by some course of moral action. In a well-ordered mind they are never excited by good actions, nor are they excited by actions that are indifferent in their character. They are never excited by seeking happiness in any lawful object, or within a lawful extent. In fact, they are never excited except by the exercise of bad affections and the practice of bad actions. Thus, remorse and mental anguish are only the associates of vicious conduct—the attendants and the scourge of moral evil. Such a constitution, therefore, instead of impugning the Divine goodness, affords an additional demonstration of it. For why are remorse and mental anguish merely susceptibilities and not active instincts? Because God is good, and is averse to our suffering unnecessarily. Why are these painful emotions not excited by actions good in their nature or indifferent in their quality? Because God is good, and delights in our virtue and happiness. Why are these painful emotions connected only with evil dispositions and habits? Because God is good; he knows that sin is more hurtful and injurious to our nature than suffering is; he knows that sin is a moral poison, deteriorating and corrupting our principles, and that remorse and anguish are necessary to deter us from the commission of sin; and therefore he inflicts the pain, that he may rescue us from the more deadly evil. In this economy, which connects misery with nothing but sin, the aim of the Creator is seen—it is our welfare, our best interest, the elevation and perfection of our moral nature, that he seeks; and

while the aim of the Deity is visible, his motive is equally conspicuous. It is love. A procedure so obviously directed to the creature's holiness and happiness proclaims the Creator's goodness.

SECTION X.—HEREDITARY DEPRAVITY AND FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

NOR can the doctrine of hereditary depravity and future punishment be made to impugn the benevolence of Deity; for human depravity is but the natural consequence of sin, and future punishment is the continuation of the consequences of our own conduct. These awful truths do not, indeed, furnish any weapons to the mere rationalist; they are purely subjects of revelation; and if any opponent cross the threshold of revelation in quest of objections, we may enter the same domain of sacred truth for weapons wherewith to repel his assaults. The doctrines of human depravity and future retribution, as revealed in the sacred oracles, must be contemplated in sober and thoughtful connection with the doctrine of human redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ; and if so, we become acquainted with the most stupendous and overpowering manifestations of Divine mercy and love. Revelation declares, that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord."* It is true that mankind are involuntarily the subjects of inherent depravity; but it is equally true that mankind are involuntarily placed in a state of grace and salvation.† The remedy is co-extensive with the disease.

As to the final destiny of those who die in infancy, we are assured of their salvation through Him who in the days of his earthly sojourn said, "Suffer the little children to come unto

* Rom. v. 20, 21.

† Rom. v. 15.

me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God." * And as to the final condition of those who have never heard the Gospel, we must leave it to the righteous Governor of all, assured that their final state will harmonize with both the justice and the mercy of God. The Judge of all the earth will do right, † and his decision, when made known, will command the assent of all holy intelligences.

It is, indeed, a solemn truth that many human beings will perish eternally; but it will be the result of their wilful rebellion, their obstinate resistance of Divine mercy and goodness. The future punishment of the wicked may be regarded as a necessary result of a sinful existence. Sin carries with it its own punishment to a certain extent, while men exist on earth; and if their existence be perpetuated in the world to come, that existence must be miserable. For the society and employments of heaven there is neither relish nor sympathy in their moral nature; and severed from God and heaven they must be, even if they had their choice. Heaven itself would be a hell to the wicked. The elements of misery are essentially and inseparably connected with sin. Divine mercy has provided a remedy, and if men reject that remedy, their doom is the result of their own conduct, and impugns not either the benevolence or the justice of God.

Moreover, the connection of misery with sin springs not from a malignant or revengeful disposition in the mind of Deity. It is a necessary element in his moral government. Without it, there could be no effective manifestation of the evil nature of sin, of its injustice and moral turpitude. Without it, there would be no public vindication of the holiness of the Divine nature, and the inflexible rectitude of Jehovah's administration. Without it, sin would be viewed as harmless, and universal anarchy and rebellion be encouraged. The connection, therefore, of misery with sin is as essential to the creature's good as to the Creator's glory; it is as essential to the well-being of our moral and spiritual nature as the connection

* Mark x. 14; Matt. xix. 14.

† Gen. xviii. 25; Rom. ii. 12.

of bodily pain with the violation of natural law is essential to the welfare of our physical nature. This economy, then, arises not from a malign or revengeful temper on the part of God, but from his love of truth, of holiness, of goodness, and his desire to conserve the holiness and happiness of the intelligent universe; and the awful doom of the finally impenitent is an essential part of this wise and beneficent economy, and shall be made subservient to the good of intellectual and moral beings through all eternity.

When this fact is soberly considered, and viewed in connection with the free agency of man, the reasonableness of God's laws, the claims he has upon our obedience, and the wonderful economy of redeeming mercy, we cannot regard the doctrine of future punishment itself as repugnant to the benevolence of God. It proclaims his holiness, his justice, his truth; and it manifests the awful malignity of sin; but it impugns not his mercy and love. Further evidence on this subject will be adduced in the chapter on the holiness of God.

GENERAL SUMMARY.—In contemplating the attribute of benevolence or love, we have seen it displayed in the creation of various orders of animated existence—in providing for the supply of the necessities of these creatures—in endowing them with instincts and capacities for diversified enjoyment—in rendering all Nature subservient to that enjoyment—in implanting in the nature of sentient beings a principle of love one for another—in causing obedience to consist in the exercise of agreeable emotions and affections, and in connecting happiness with obedience. We have extended our view of Divine goodness to the display afforded in the economy of redemption, which provides for man's pardon, sanctification, consolation, and immortal blessedness. We have examined sundry objections derived from the existence of natural and moral evil, and shown that even here punitive justice is mixed and tempered with kindness and love, and that in the elements of our moral constitution—in our susceptibility of remorse, in our

bodily sufferings, and in death itself—there are evidences of goodness and love.

What an amiable and glorious Being is God, when contemplated as invested with the attribute of love! Did we know him only as a self-existent and independent Being, of almighty power and infinite majesty, he would be an object of terror, and the contemplation of his existence and character would only be adapted to fill us with dismay. We should be overpowered with his greatness, instead of being attracted by his goodness. Our souls would not dare to approach him, nor could they feel any sympathy with him. We should deem him inaccessible and inexorable. The thought of him would be a burden, and the anxious mind would seek repose by excluding him from its meditations. But the perfection of love softens down the stern and awe-inspiring attributes of his character, and throws a mild and benignant splendour around him, which the soul looks upon with complacency. We behold in him a Father as well as a Creator, and can think of him with delight as well as with wonder. Instead of being repelled, we are attracted by the beams of his glory; instead of trembling with dismay, we are inspired with filial confidence; instead of seeking a refuge from him, we draw near, and our language is, "My Father, thou art my Lord and my God."

Impressed with his benevolent character, we see the obligation of loving him in return, and recognizing him as our Creator; we perceive that our love towards him should be supreme—that he justly claims our undivided and our highest affections. From the same aspect of his character, we see also the duty of loving one another, and feel assured that in so far as we thus imitate his example we fulfil his pleasure, realize his favour, answer the end of our being, and secure the happiness we are thus fitted to enjoy. "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

CHAPTER XII.

THE HOLINESS OF GOD.

HOLINESS is an assemblage of all moral excellencies, to the exclusion of all opposite properties. Holiness of nature implies the indwelling of all moral excellencies, and holiness of character is the practical exemplification of these excellencies. Absolute holiness implies the possession and exemplification of these moral excellencies in absolute perfection. Such is the holiness of God, and this truth is sustained by a logical consideration of the Divine nature.

SECTION I.—THE DIVINE NATURE NECESSARILY 'PRECLUDES THE EXISTENCE OF ANY QUALITIES CONTRARY TO HOLINESS.

IF there were any qualities in the mind of the Deity repugnant to holiness, those qualities must exist either essentially, adventitiously, or voluntarily.

1. They cannot be *essential* to God, for various reasons. All the qualities repugnant to holiness are sources of uneasiness and misery; but God is perfectly happy, because infinitely benevolent; and, therefore, such malign qualities can have no place in his nature.

Those qualities involve also the absence or want of something. Thus envy, malignity, injustice, and all other evil properties, imply a sense of uneasiness on account of not possessing some supposed good. But God is totally independent and self-sufficient, and has been so from eternity; and, therefore, no quality indicative of want, weakness, or dependence can have place in him. All malign qualities are the marks of imperfection; they exist only in an imperfect nature. But

Jehovah is, and always was, absolutely perfect; and, therefore no malign property or tendency can exist in him.

2. Neither can any disposition or habit contrary to holiness be induced *adventitiously*. The Deity has no adventitious attributes. They are all essential and eternal. Independent in his existence, he is infinitely above the influence of all created beings and all external circumstances. Immutable in his attributes, he is liable to no change. Therefore, as he was free from all malign properties for an eternity prior to all creation, he must remain so for ever; for no extraneous events can change the nature or character of an independent and absolutely perfect Being.

3. Nor can any disposition or habit repugnant to holiness be *voluntarily* assumed. The assumption of any such quality would involve the loss of some attribute and a degeneracy of nature, which in the Divine Being is impossible. The same perfections which have precluded all degeneracy in ages past preclude it now, and must do so through all ages to come. As wisdom, in the abstract, excludes folly; as veracity excludes falsehood; as love excludes every disposition to injustice; and as immutability excludes change, so the truth that God possesses absolute perfection excludes the possibility of all decay in his nature, and all deterioration in principle or character. Nor can God be susceptible of any motive inducing him to change his moral character. His own wisdom is the rule of equity based on the fitness of things; and his will is the standard of holiness, based on the goodness and perfection of his nature. What motive, then, can induce him to deny himself, to imbibe a sentiment, cherish a disposition, or perform an action contrary to his own nature? No such cause can possibly be conceived. Not any in his nature, for that is the source and standard of perfection. Not any in his creatures, for he is infinitely superior to the reach of their influence. He can be imposed upon by no deceit, swayed by no bias, and awed by no power. While thus incapable of being influenced by any motive to deterioration, he is influenced by the most powerful motives to

retain his perfections in their untarnished glory for ever. As an absolutely perfect Being, he must delight in what is good, and, therefore, must supremely and eternally delight in what he is. He rejoices in the possession of all his attributes. He delights in his wisdom, in his benevolence, in his veracity, in his holiness, and in his all-sufficiency; and what he infinitely delights to possess, he must infinitely delight to retain; and, therefore, through all eternity, he must be absolutely free from any quality opposed to holiness.

SECTION II.—THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE DEITY NECESSARILY INVOLVE THE POSSESSION OF ABSOLUTE HOLINESS.

1. As the moral attributes of God are not mere capacities, but, for the most part, properties and dispositions essentially *active*, so holiness is not a negative quality; it is not mere purity, or the absence of evil and aversion to it, but an assemblage of excellent qualities and dispositions energetically operating in the Divine mind. The possession of infinite wisdom and love appears to us necessarily to involve the possession and exercise of perfect holiness. Without love, wisdom might be associated with malignity and injustice; and without wisdom, love would be a blind, indiscriminating fondness, unworthy of the Deity, and incompatible with absolute rectitude and moral excellence. It is the possession of both in infinite perfection which renders Jehovah a Being of absolute rectitude in his views, his will, his dispositions and affections.

2. Perfect holiness requires an infallible estimate of all beings and all things—in their nature, their relation, and character. Without this, objects abhorrent to holiness might be approved and loved; while others, amiable and holy, might be objects of aversion and punishment. Without absolute rectitude of judgment, there could not always be a righteous direction given to the dispositions and affections. An infallible estimate of all things, therefore, lies at the foundation of absolute

holiness. Jehovah has this estimate, for he is infinite in wisdom. He cannot mistake truth for error, right for wrong, justice for injustice, good for evil. He sees all things as they are, with a view so comprehensive, a precision so minute, and an estimate so absolutely infallible, that his judgment is the standard of truth or falsehood, right or wrong, good or evil.

3. Absolute holiness requires the dispositions, the affections and the will to co-operate in perfect and undeviating harmony with the estimate in which all things are held by an unerring judgment—choosing, approving, and delighting in what is true and good, and eschewing and abhorring what is false and evil. Any discord or discrepancy between the judgment and the moral dispositions would involve a tarnish upon the character. To know what is right, and approve and choose what is wrong, or to be conscious of any bias to evil, would be evidence of a diseased and tainted nature. That no such discrepancy can ever be in the attributes of the Divine Being we have already shown from his absolute independence, perfection, and all-sufficiency. Such being his nature, he cannot approve of evil, and what he cannot approve can have no existence in himself. On the contrary, having an absolutely perfect nature and infinite knowledge, his will must approve and his affections embrace with delight whatever is good, and be averse to all that is evil.

4. While the independence, the all-sufficiency, and absolute perfection of his nature preclude the existence of any motive or inducement to evil, his boundless love is an affection incessantly attracting him to all that is good. He cannot be indifferent to moral excellence; wherever it may exist, it is a quality which resembles himself, and he delights in it. In the possession of infinite love, there is a consciousness of benevolent emotion, with all those dispositions to veracity, kindness, justice, and faithfulness which love inspires. These dispositions are inseparable from love, and love not only excludes all the contrary dispositions, but gives activity to all these principles with an intensity corresponding with the intensity of love itself.

Veracity is an element of holiness, and it must exist in the Deity in absolute perfection; for as by his unerring wisdom he knows what is true and right, and as by his love he delights in the same, there must be undeviating veracity in all his statements and proceedings.

Faithfulness is an element of holiness, and it must exist in the Deity in absolute perfection; for as he both knows and loves the truth, he must delight in conforming all his conduct thereto. Hence the disposition which prompts to unchanging fidelity, and secures the fulfilment of all his promises and covenant engagements.

Benignity is an element of holiness, and this, as we have shown at length, dwells in infinite measure in the bosom of the Deity. The boundless love of God, the overflowing fountain of his goodness, is a full security that benignity will never be withheld wherever it can be righteously placed.

Justice is an element of holiness, and this perfection must essentially characterize Jehovah. As from his wisdom he cannot err, and from his love he cannot be unkind, so from both it is impossible he can be unjust. The disposition which prompts him to do more for the creature than justice requires certainly cannot allow him to do less. Infinite wisdom and goodness conjoined secure the observance of unchanging rectitude and equity in every part of his moral administration. Justice involves the punishment of sin, and this is only saying that his benevolence is not a blind and indiscriminate affection, but is regulated by wisdom. He loves and delights in all whom it is wise to love and delight in. But he cannot delight in the perpetrators of evil, for that would be to act contrary to his wisdom, and to deny his own nature. Though his love has no respect to *persons*, it must have respect to *character*. To love the wicked and be averse to the righteous would be unjust in the highest sense; to love both alike would be to make folly, not wisdom, his rule. A Being infinitely wise, just, and good must be averse to evil beings, for their conduct is opposed to every decision of his judgment and every affection of his nature. He can no more confound good with evil than he can mistake

truth for falsehood. His heart can no more approve of a wicked being than his understanding can believe a lie. Between the dictates of his infallible understanding and the dispositions of his perfect nature there is an essential harmony; and because there is such an essential harmony, the righteous cannot but be approved and loved, and the wicked cannot but be abhorred and rejected.

The Being in whom there is no taint of moral evil, and in whom veracity, faithfulness, love, and justice exist in absolute perfection, must be perfectly holy in his nature, dispositions, and character. This Being is God.

SECTION III.—THE CONCLUSIONS TO WHICH WE ARE THUS LED BY AN À PRIORI ARGUMENT ARE ABUNDANTLY CONFIRMED AND ILLUSTRATED BY À POSTERIORI FACTS.

THE various objective manifestations of the Deity presented in his works afford indications of his holiness.

1. *Creation.*

The construction of the universe, the exquisite symmetry of all organized beings, the laws which obtain in both; the combination of means and ends, of adaptations, uses, and harmonies which pervade all Nature, evince that the love of truth and order is an essential property of the Divine mind, and is a guiding principle in his operations. Such a love of truth and order in the natural world involves, in an infinitely perfect Being, a corresponding love of truth and order in the moral world; and the mind which essentially possesses this property must be holy, for sin is but another name for confusion and disorder.

2. *Providence.*

In the economy of providence we see a general sequence of evil and painful results flowing from the violation of physical and moral laws, and a general sequence of good and happy results flowing from the observance of those laws. In this economy we see the disposition of its Author. It presents a

visible expression of Jehovah's love of truth and order, both in the natural and moral world, and of his disapproval of any infringement of that truth and order. Now, as moral goodness consists in obedience to those laws, and moral evil consists in the transgression or neglect of them, we see in the sufferings inflicted God's aversion to evil, and in the enjoyment bestowed we see his approval of virtue and holiness. It is thus Jehovah has left the impression of his nature on the works of his hand.

But it is alleged that there are exceptions to the principle we have laid down. We believe, however, that there are no absolute exceptions to the principle. There are, indeed, many instances in which the evils and sufferings resulting from sin are not immediately and strikingly apparent, nor the blessings resulting from obedience at once very conspicuous to human observation; but yet evils in the one case, and blessings in the other, are assuredly and universally consequent upon certain courses of conduct.

It is admitted, indeed, that in the present life the distribution of sufferings and enjoyments is not in exact proportion to the character of men—the righteous often passing through scenes of calamity and pain, and the wicked revelling in gratifications and pleasures; but two important truths must be remembered.

First.—That no man in this life sustains a character either absolutely good or absolutely evil, but a mixture of both; no man being so absolutely vile, but that some remnant of good may be found in him, at least in some part of his history; and no man is so perfectly holy but that sin has, at some period, stained his character. This being undeniable, it follows that the dispensations of Providence may justly assign to every man a mixed portion of enjoyment and suffering, especially when it is a fact that no man's sufferings equal his deserts; while the enjoyments of all men vastly surpass any claim arising from their own goodness.

Secondly.—There is no rational ground for supposing that this life is a scene of complete retribution. The wisest men in all ages and countries have seen grounds for believing that

there is a future state, where all men will be rewarded according to their character and condition on earth. This is a rational conclusion apart from the teachings of revelation; such being the case, this life may be viewed as one of probation.

This doctrine accords with existing facts, and while on this ground it is entitled to our rational assent, it satisfactorily accounts for any apparent anomalies which the aspect of God's dispensations may present in this transient life. We admit, then, that the amount of temporal enjoyment or suffering is not in exact proportion to the character of men, and account for it by the reasons stated; yet we maintain, at the same time, that there is such a constant and obvious connection between vice and misery on the one hand, and between virtue and happiness on the other, as distinctly and loudly to proclaim that the Creator and Governor of the universe has an aversion to sin and a love to holiness; and that, therefore, he is himself a holy Being. Falsehood, treachery, pride, injustice, idleness, lust, intemperance, and all other sins combined, are the sources of the complicated forms of misery which abound in our world; indeed, there is scarcely an instance of suffering to which flesh is heir, but which may be traced to the violation of some physical or moral law. On the other hand, veracity, justice, faithfulness, benevolence, continence, temperance, industry, piety, and obedience to physical and moral law, are productive of good to both body and mind—of happiness to the individual and to society in general. This general connection of sin and woe, of virtue and enjoyment, is not fortuitous and accidental, but fixed and irrevocable: no ingenuity can evade, no force can destroy this connection. It is an established ordinance of God, and, like all laws of matter and of mind, it exists independently of the human will, and is universal and unchangeable. This ordinance, like all other laws of Nature, originated in the will of God, and originated in his will because it is in harmony with his nature. He has an aversion to evil, and expresses that aversion by connecting it with misery. He has a love for virtue and holiness, and expresses that love by connecting them with happiness. He is perfectly happy himself because

he is absolutely holy, and men participate in his happiness in proportion as they participate in his holiness—just as they conform to his moral image.

SECTION IV.—OUR MENTAL AND MORAL SENTIMENTS AND EMOTIONS ARE EXPRESSIVE OF THE CREATOR'S HOLINESS.

1. **THOUGH** man is not endued with innate ideas, yet such is his mental constitution, that he is formed to distinguish between the moral qualities of actions—to distinguish right from wrong, as well as truth from error. However diversified the intellect and varied the education of mankind, yet wherever there is reason there is a moral faculty which has only to be enlightened to give it, at least, some degree of activity and to develop its sensibility. It may be said by theologians that the development of this faculty, in every instance, is owing to the agency of the Holy Spirit. It is not our intention or province at present to inquire into the truth of this sentiment: we have to do with the mere fact that all men have such a faculty. Take the most untutored savage, and pour the rays of truth upon his mind, and he becomes sensible of the distinction between right and wrong, and the subject of corresponding moral emotions. An inherent principle is excited which answers to the essential distinction in moral actions, approving the good and condemning the evil. All men, whose mental faculties are at all exercised by reflection, know the difference between falsehood and truth, deceit and sincerity, treachery and generosity, fraud and equity, cruelty and kindness; and such is their mental constitution, that they condemn the one as evil and approve of the other as good.

This determination of the mind as to the moral quality of human actions is not voluntary, but constitutional. It is a sort of moral instinct which, to a certain extent, is irresistible. Let a man labour ever so hard to believe that an act of treachery is as good as an act of generosity, and he will find it impossible.

The difference between good and bad is an essential and an eternal difference, and the human mind is constitutionally fitted to perceive this distinction; and all the efforts of men to make the quality of these actions change places, or to suppose them to be equally indifferent, must be totally abortive. Men may become so perverse and desperately wicked in their habits, that they uniformly practise evil; yet still they are compelled to pronounce and confess that their course is an evil one.

2. The essential difference in the quality of moral actions is *felt* as well as seen by the human mind. We can no more contemplate good and evil with the same emotions, than we can think them to possess the same quality. We approve the good, we condemn the evil. There is commonly a sense of uneasiness in the contemplation of a wicked action. When that action is committed by another, we feel displeasure, sometimes abhorrence and horror—the kind and intensity of the emotion depending upon the complexion and character of the action; but when the action is our own, the feeling is one of remorse, and sometimes of shame and anguish. This sensation is not voluntary, but forced upon us by nature. If it were voluntary, wicked men would speedily banish it from their minds. But, however unwelcome the sensation may be, it clings to the wicked in spite of himself. It comes unsought, and fastens upon his heart as with the talons of a vulture upon its prey, and inflicts a torture which often renders existence miserable. A wicked action may be secret, but secrecy cannot turn aside the shafts of conscience. The perpetrator of crime may be so high in station and power that no human law can reach him, yet he cannot escape the self-inflicted condemnation and punishment which chafe his guilty spirit. There is a poniard in his breast which no power can withdraw. It strikes the victim with unerring aim and relentless justice. Although sycophants may flatter him in his vices, or the trumpet of fame sound his hollow applause, and no human voice dare to charge him with wrong, still his own conscience sternly frowns upon him, and compels him both to abhor himself and despise his flatterers. Oh, what would the wicked man give to deceive

himself as easily as he could deceive others—that he could evade the tribunal of his own heart as easily as he could evade the power of human law! Oh that he could but forget some dark deeds in his history, and sink them into everlasting oblivion! But he cannot. They are registered in his memory, and, like so many grim spectres, they haunt him by night and by day, and pierce his bosom with insufferable anguish. Under the influence of remorse, some have slowly pined away even unto death; some have confessed, and voluntarily surrendered themselves to public justice; and others, unable to bear the self-reproach and anguish of their own conscience, have madly sought to escape by putting an end to their existence.

Good actions, on the other hand, are contemplated with complacency. When beheld in the conduct of others, we cannot withhold our approval; and when conscious of them ourselves, we are the subjects of agreeable emotions. Conscience pronounces her approval, and we feel satisfaction and delight. We cannot cherish a good disposition but it yields us pleasure; we cannot perform a good action but it affords complacency; and we cannot reflect upon such without approval and satisfaction. When memory recalls them, they are welcome; like kind and friendly visitors, their presence is hailed, and they yield us refined and hallowed delight. Whether we recognize them by observation, by consciousness, by reflection, or by memory, they afford satisfaction and peace—they foster the principles of virtue, and they discountenance vice.

3. So essential is the difference between good and evil, and so inherent is our approval of the one and our condemnation of the other, that the malign passions themselves corroborate the truth under our consideration. It is a remarkable fact that a wicked man cannot justify the exercise of his own malice, hatred, or any malign passion towards a fellow-creature, without supposing his victim to be evil.

Why is the human mind thus constituted? How is it that man is formed with a faculty for determining the quality of moral actions? How is it that he approves and justifies the

good, and condemns the wicked? How is it that his mental determinations on all moral subjects are associated with moral sensibilities? How is it that complacency and satisfaction are uniformly united with a consciousness of good dispositions and actions, and remorse and anguish are associated with evil dispositions and actions? How is it, finally, that even the malign passions themselves cannot be justified when exercised towards a being confessed to be good, and that we are compelled, at least, to imagine a being to be evil ere we can justify our hatred towards him? Why are the malign passions themselves thus compelled to do homage to virtue and goodness? It is not sufficient to reply, such is the constitution of the human mind. It is possible to suppose man might have had a different constitution, and therefore, there must be a reason for giving him *this* constitution. It is not sufficient to say that God thus made man, because it was his will, for still the question returns—Why is it God's will? The only philosophical reply is—Because it expresses God's nature; and if such be his nature, then he is a righteous and holy Being. Throughout the wide universe of mind, the Creator has left the brand of his aversion upon all evil dispositions and actions, by rendering them so many sources of uneasiness and misery; and has impressed the seal of his approval upon every good disposition and action, by rendering such productive of satisfaction and happiness; and thus has he published to all intelligent beings the great truth, that their Creator is a Being of absolute rectitude, of essential and unchanging holiness.

SECTION V.—THE HOLINESS OF GOD IS ATTESTED IN THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

1. WE have the holiness of God attested by emphatic declaration. Jehovah is represented as saying to his ancient people, "Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy." Moses declares, "He is the Rock, his

work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." In the heavenly world the seraphim veil their faces before his majesty, and in profound adoration exclaim, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory."*

2. The holiness thus ascribed to God by express declaration is exhibited in those facts of his moral government which are unfolded to us in the sacred volume. In the objective manifestations of holiness which have already been considered, the general principles of God's moral government are developed, and to some extent illustrated; but there are some aspects of that government which are more fully set forth in the Holy Scriptures.

Absolute holiness admits of no compromise of principle or character. The principles of holiness are as immutable as the Divine nature itself, and they must regulate the Divine conduct towards the creature under all circumstances, in all states of being, and through all periods of duration. Those principles cannot change, because the Divine nature is absolutely unchangeable; from which it follows, that the conduct of God towards moral agents will always have respect to their character.

If the conduct of the creature exhibit uniform obedience and holiness, the tokens of Divine benignity and favour will be uniform and uninterrupted, unaccompanied with any mark of displeasure or punishment.

If the conduct of the creature be one of unmixed evil and absolute disobedience, the benignity and approval of God must be totally withdrawn, and punitive justice must inflict suffering and pain as the penalty of sin.

If the character of the creature be one presenting a mixture of good and evil, of obedience and disobedience, it will follow that the treatment of God will present a mixed character of clemency and punitive justice.

If pardon should ever be bestowed upon an offender, the

* Lev. xix. 2; Deut. xxxii. 4; Isa. vi. 3.

bestowment must be on conditions which harmonize with the strictest justice, and afford an equal manifestation of the holiness and rectitude of the Divine character.

If these principles were reversed or neglected in the administration of the Divine government, the proceedings of God would be no exposition of his character. But we are sure that such a supposition can be entertained by no rational mind. The operations of our Creator and Governor must harmonize with his character, and publish that character to all intelligent beings.

Now, the moral government of God, so far as we are able to scan it, either by reason or revelation, exactly coincides with the principles we have stated. Whatever may be the nature of intelligent beings, their history and condition, so far as made known to us, furnish a practical exemplification of the principles now laid down.

1. While Adam retained his innocence, his experience constantly realized unmixed manifestations of Divine benignity and favour. While a stranger to sin, he was a stranger to remorse and death. His state was happy while his life was holy. The favour of the Deity shone resplendent upon him, while the Divine image remained unclouded on his soul. So the holy angels in heaven who have never sinned, and glorified human spirits who are made free from sin, are described as being in uninterrupted enjoyment—in happiness unalloyed by evil—in fruition which fills their capacities and extends through the whole eternity of their being. The bestowment of such unmixed happiness upon holy beings illustrates our first principle, and proclaims aloud the holiness of God.*

2. Apostate angels are described as lost to all goodness—as filled with the principles of evil operating within them with unceasing activity—hating God and his works, and employed incessantly in acts of rebellion and malignity. From such the Divine benignity is absolutely withdrawn, and they are everlastingly consigned to punitive justice.† Divine goodness can-

* Genesis i. 26—28; Rev. v. 11; vii. 13—17. † 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6.

not ally itself with sin, for that were to sanction what is repugnant to the Divine nature, which is impossible; and where only sin exists, its consequent punishment must be inflicted without mixture. So with regard to lost human souls in the eternal world. Their probation being ended, and the merciful influences of grace being withdrawn, they, like devils, are become absolutely evil, and, like them, are described as excluded for ever from the Divine clemency, and given over to retributive justice. The eternity of their punishment is the just and the necessary consequence of their evil nature, and the holiness of God, which invariably connects misery with sin. Thus eternal punishment is nothing more than the continued application of a principle which connects a just proportion of suffering with sin.*

3. Human beings in the present life present a mixed character—neither absolutely evil, nor absolutely good. In a probationary state, and under a restorative economy, we see in them the elements of both good and evil—virtue and vice, benevolence and malignity, obedience and disobedience, being strangely mixed together in the same individuals. Consequently, the Divine government presents a mixture of clemency and retributive punishment. This mixture is everywhere apparent in our world, as we have already proved. Amid profuse displays of benevolence we continually meet with indications of a punitive character, and amid numerous physical evils we find continual manifestations of clemency and goodness. Thus, the history of man is an instructive and ample comment on the principle, that the government of a holy Being must have respect to the character of moral agents. Distinguished from holy angels by a mixture of sin, we are distinguished from them by our sufferings and punishment. Distinguished from devils by a mixture of goodness, we are distinguished from them by our numerous enjoyments and the tempered manifestations of Divine benignity. This distinction necessarily springs from the holiness of our Creator and Judge.

* 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6; Matt. xxv. 46.

4. If ever pardon be granted to sinful creatures, it must be on conditions which perfectly harmonize with the claims of justice, and afford an equal manifestation of the rectitude and holiness of the Divine character. In such a mode is pardon offered and bestowed to guilty man.

First Condition.—An ample atonement is made by the propitiatory sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. In this atonement we see the broken law honoured, its Divine authority upheld, its righteous claims asserted and enforced; we see justice revered and inflexibly maintained; we see the holiness of the Divine character beaming forth with ineffable radiance, and in harmony with the richest exhibitions of love. Mercy attains its object, yet no principle is compromised. Every legal barrier to our salvation is thrown down, yet the majesty of truth, the guards of moral order, and the motives to obedience are unimpaired. Justice and benignity equally secure their object, and Jehovah is glorified in the redemption of a fallen world. In the cross of Christ the righteousness of God is declared—he is just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly.*

Second Condition.—Repentance is required. Thus the rectitude of the law and the justice of the penalty are acknowledged; man justifies his Maker; charges home upon himself his transgressions; renounces his evil ways, and implores forgiveness. Here, again, the holiness of God is manifested and confessed.†

Third Condition.—Faith is required. This act completes the soul's submission to God. It involves an entire surrender of the understanding, the reason, the judgment, the will, the affections, and the person to God. So long as faith is withheld, rebellion is cherished in some form, and for God to pardon a soul in this state would be to connive at sin. But faith renders the submission of an intelligent being complete. It involves the principle of unreserved obedience, and a thankful acqui-

* Rom. iii. 24—26.

† Luke xiii. 9; Acts iii. 19; John iii. 16; Rom. v. 1, 2.

escence in God's revealed method of forgiveness and salvation. Here, again, the holiness of God is acknowledged.

Fourth Condition.—As a condition of our continuance in the Divine favour and final salvation, it is imperatively required that our faith should be productive of practical obedience and personal holiness. Without this, our faith is vain and all our blessings are forfeited. Thus, although the penalties of the law are removed from the faithful believer, its precepts are unrepealed, and its high claims to obedience are enforced.*

Now, why are these the conditions of our pardon? Why did not God pardon by the exercise of his mere prerogative? Why this atonement, repentance, faith, and return to obedience? Why this respect to justice, law, and moral obligation? Why this inflexible determination to connive at no sin, to dispense with no duty, but to maintain and perpetuate all the principles of the Divine government unimpaired? The answer is, Because those principles are founded in the Divine nature, and that nature is absolutely, unchangeably, and eternally holy. The scheme of salvation aims as much at the personal holiness of mankind, as it does at their deliverance from personal misery. It seeks the restoration of the creature to purity, to rectitude, and the moral image of God, and thus proclaims as much the essential holiness as it does the goodness and mercy of God.

In whatever aspect, then, we contemplate the objective manifestations of the Deity—whether in the order and harmony of Nature, in our mental and moral constitution, in the dispensations of providence, or in the characteristics of his moral government—we see the inscription standing out in bold and prominent relief—“Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts;” and from every part of the Divine proceedings we hear the voice of the Eternal addressing us in solemn and impressive majesty, “Be ye holy, for I am holy.” The highest dignity which our intellectual and moral nature can attain is to be like

* James ii. 14—26; Titus iii. 8.

God—to rise complete in his image, which is righteousness and true holiness. “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.”

CHAPTER XIII.

A DISPOSITION FOR COMMUNION IS AN ATTRIBUTE OF DEITY.

SECTION I.—EVIDENCE FROM REASON.

BY communion we mean the affectionate and reciprocal intercourse of one mind with another. That a disposition for such intercourse essentially exists in the mind of the Deity, may be argued from the fact, that it is an excellence which he has implanted in the nature of all intelligent beings. That there does dwell in the mind of man a disposition for communion, all will admit. What, indeed, is society, but the living evidence and development of this disposition? What is speech, but the vehicle through which this disposition puts itself forth in audible words? What is writing, but a more diffusive vehicle by which man pours his thoughts, desires, emotions, and affections into the souls of his fellow-men, with a copiousness, and to an extent, which give a kind of ubiquity to his presence? It is, in fact, the expression of the vehement desire of the mind for fellowship with mind—the disposition for communion breaking through the bounds of limited location, and seeking to gratify itself by intercourse with kindred spirits in every hemisphere and in every age. Were this disposition to become extinct, the whole framework of society would immediately become dissolved: and every man, fleeing from and repelled by his fellow-man, would seek seclusion, and live for no one, care for no one, but himself. It is the existence of this disposition which erects the social structure, which forms every family, and builds up every community. The evidence of man's disposition for communion is too palpable and diversified to require amplification. It connects itself with every instinct,

unites itself with every ennobling affection, gives a complexion to every habit, and is an element in every cup of felicity.

Seeing, then, that this disposition is essentially inherent in the human mind, the same disposition, being an excellence, must dwell in the mind of the Creator. There is no excellence dwells in man, but it is the reflection of a corresponding excellence in God himself. To suppose the contrary would be to suppose that the Creator has endowed the creature with perfections which he himself does not possess. The Creator may be supposed to withhold from the nature of the creature various perfections which he himself possesses, but it cannot be supposed he could give to the creature any measure of an excellence of which himself is destitute. Indeed, the absolute perfection of his nature excludes the possibility of the absence of any excellence. It comprehends every perfection in kind, as well as in unlimited degree. The existence, therefore, of any excellence in the created spirit is an *à posteriori* evidence that it dwells in infinite perfection in the Father of spirits.

The only objection which can be urged against this conclusion is, that the disposition for communion is not a perfection, but the mark of an imperfect and inferior nature. This objection, we think, may be very easily answered; and that answer shall be given when we come to show that the disposition in question is an excellency, a perfection, and evidence of a superior nature.

SECTION II.—THE HOLY SCRIPTURES SUSTAIN THE VERDICT OF REASON AS TO GOD'S DISPOSITION FOR COMMUNION.

1. *The existence of this disposition was manifested in the sacred conference recorded in Genesis i. 26: "And God said, Let us make man."*

In this instance Jehovah is represented in actual intercourse and communion. The passage cannot be intended to set forth merely an act of meditation or soliloquy, for meditation or soliloquy is the act of a mind holding intercourse with itself,

whereas the passage speaks of more than one. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." It is remarkable that the pronoun, used *three* times in this short passage, is *plural* in each case, plainly showing that communion or intercourse of one mind with another is both intended and expressed. A person may in soliloquy say, "I will do so and so;" but he cannot say, "We will effect this or that," unless he is conversing with another. There was here a union of thought and purpose which preceded a union of act, and the union of the thought and purpose which preceded, was as real as the united act which followed in the creation of man.

Some have endeavoured to account for the phraseology by supposing that the plural pronoun is used in conformity with the custom of monarchs and potentates in issuing their decrees and proclamations. This, however, is a mere supposition, gratuitously made—a supposition not only unsupported by proof, but contradicted by the clearest evidence. For, in the first place, no such custom existed at that period from which the phraseology could be borrowed. The language in question was used before kingdoms were formed—indeed, before man existed. In the second place, had the pompous custom of using the plural for the singular existed, it is inconceivable that the holy, true, and faithful Jehovah would have adopted it. It is, indeed, in accordance with the vanity and arrogance of earthly potentates to assume the style of God, but incompatible with all correct views of God to suppose him borrowing his titles from the arrogant assumptions of man. Thirdly, the language in question is not a mandate or a proclamation, but it is the language of converse and communion. This conclusion is so obvious that it has been admitted even by those who oppose the doctrine which it involves, and hence another evasive interpretation has been adopted.

It has been said that the language is certainly expressive of intercourse, but it is the intercourse of God with the holy angels. This notion is, however, easily refuted; for, in the First place, the sacred records never intimate that God makes the angels his counsellors, but they plainly teach the contrary.

The Scriptures demand, "With whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him?"—a challenge which has the force of the strongest negation. Secondly, the angels are never described as the creators of anything, even of the meanest reptile, or of an atom of dust. How, then, can it be supposed that they participate with God in the creation of man, the noblest work of God? Thirdly, we are commanded to render supreme worship and homage to our Creator; and if we had been created by angels, it would have been lawful to worship them; but we are expressly forbidden to worship angels: they are, therefore, not our creators in any sense which can be conceived. From which evidence it is manifest that the communion in question could not have transpired between the Deity and the angels.

But if the Deity did not in this instance commune with angels, with whom, then, did he hold communion? This inquiry has to be answered hereafter. We have at present only to do with the simple fact that the Scriptures represent the Deity as holding communion with some mind or minds, at a period antecedent to the creation of man; and this fact involves a pre-existent disposition for such communion. We would desire the reader to waive, for the present, all difficulties which may naturally suggest themselves to his mind in the consideration of this subject, and solely confine his attention to the fact, that the Scriptures represent God as holding communion at the interesting period referred to—a fact which clearly involves a disposition for such intercourse as an attribute of his nature. We proceed to consider in the next place—

2. *The Scriptural fact, that man is made in God's image, involves in the Creator a disposition for communion.*

We have before briefly called attention to the Scriptural declaration, that God made man in his own image and likeness. There is much implied in such a representation of our spiritual nature. It refers us to every excellency in our own spirit, as a manifestation or type of some corresponding perfection in "the Father of spirits." And, indeed, this appellation, "*the*

Father of spirits," involves the same interesting truth. It is a phraseology never applied to express the relation between God and the inferior animals. God is *their* Creator, but he is "OUR FATHER." He gave the brute species, as well as us, an *existence*; but he has given to our souls his *likeness* and *image*, and is, therefore, emphatically "the Father of spirits." Such language denotes *resemblance*—such a resemblance, in some respects, as exists between beings having a similar nature. God is a Spirit, so is the human soul; and, as that soul was made in the image and likeness of its Author, it must possess many properties and attributes which correspond with the nature of Deity. Hence a certain author asks, "Whence come the conceptions under which we include that august name (God)? Whence do we derive our knowledge of the attributes and perfections which constitute the Supreme Being? I answer, We derive them from our own souls. The Divine attributes are first developed in ourselves, and thence transferred to our Creator. The idea of God, sublime and awful as it is, is the idea of our own spiritual nature purified and enlarged to infinity. In ourselves are the elements of the Divinity. God, then, does not sustain a figurative resemblance to man. It is the resemblance of a parent to a child, the likeness of a kindred nature.

"We call God a Mind. He has revealed himself as a Spirit. But what do we know of mind but through the unfolding of this principle in our own breasts? That unbounded spiritual energy, which we call God, is conceived by us only through consciousness, through the knowledge of ourselves. We ascribe thought or intelligence to the Deity as one of his most glorious attributes. And what means this language? These terms we have framed to express operations or faculties of our own souls. The infinite light would be for ever hidden from us, did not kindred rays dawn and brighten within us.

"The same is true of God's goodness. How do we understand this, but by the principle of love implanted in the human breast? Whence is it that this Divine attribute is so faintly comprehended, but from the feeble development of it in the

multitude of men? Who can understand the strength, purity, fulness, and extent of Divine philanthropy, but he in whom selfishness has been swallowed up in love?

“The same is true of all the moral perfections of the Deity. These are comprehended by us only through our own moral nature. . . . Do we understand, through sympathy, God’s perception of the right, the good, the holy, the just? Then with what propriety is it said, that in his own image he made man!”*

Dr. Wardlaw observes, respecting the constitution of rational beings, that, formed “in the possession of reason and holiness, they were made after God’s own image. In them the principles of moral rectitude, being a transfusion from the fulness of the Deity, were the same in kind as in the fulness from which they were imparted—the same in the created nature as in the uncreated—the same in the stream as in the fountain. . . . His nature was then a fair and faithful indication of the nature of God; the excellence of the Maker being made apparent in the excellence of his work.”†

These remarks are just and appropriate. There is no created object which affords so full and clear a manifestation of the perfections and character of God, as the excellencies which God has implanted in the human soul. If, therefore, a disposition for communion dwells in the mind of the infinite Spirit, we should expect to find a corresponding disposition inherent in the human spirit. Indeed, the truths we are now considering involve correlative propositions. They reflect evidence upon each other; they mutually sustain each other. So that, assume which we may in the premises, it involves the other in conclusion. If, on the one hand, we assume, as the Scriptures teach, that there is, in the Father of spirits, a disposition for communion, it follows that the same disposition should be found in the human spirit, because it was formed in the Creator’s image and likeness. Or if, on the other hand, we

* Channing, on “Likeness to God.”

† Wardlaw’s “Christian Ethics,” p. 217.

assume as a truth that there is in man a disposition for communion, it follows that a similar disposition must dwell in the Deity, for the reason already assigned. Were it otherwise, there would not be likeness, but great dissimilarity. If in God there were this disposition, springing from the fulness of his benevolent nature, but in man there were no such disposition; or, on the other hand, if in man there were this disposition, springing from an inherent affection, but in God there were the total absence of any such disposition, the two natures would be exceedingly unlike, and the assertion that man was created in God's likeness must be given up. We can hardly conceive of two minds more unlike each other than the diverse natures which the possession or non-possession of this disposition would involve. The one complacently delighting to communicate its thoughts and affections; the other averse to all such intercourse. The one relishing the society of a kindred spirit, and loving it with ardent affection; the other averse either to receiving or reciprocating any such affectionate intercourse. It is quite evident that two such minds must be most unlike each other in natural qualities, and that the most opposite moral qualities must spring from these contrary dispositions. The one disposition conforms to the nature of the misanthropist, and the other to the philanthropist. The one is fitted for the greatest development of the malign tempers; the other must delight in the exercise and development of the most benevolent affections. Such a disparity of nature is totally incompatible with intimate resemblance; and, therefore, he who admits man to have been formed in God's image and likeness must admit that, if a disposition for communion dwells in the spirit of the creature, it must dwell in infinite plenitude and perfection in the Creator.

3. *Spiritual religion consists chiefly in the exercise of this disposition.*

Experimental religion is the affectionate communion of saints one with another, and with God their heavenly Father. It is, indeed, the sanctified exercise and development of the principle in question. It is so vitally essential to religion, that

there could be no experimental piety without it. In its absence, men must for ever have remained in a state of alienation from one another and from God.

Church fellowship evinces this disposition for communion. God has ordained church fellowship both as a duty and a privilege. But what is church fellowship, except the religious communion of mind with mind? And why are believers congregated together, but for the exercise of this communion? Church fellowship is founded upon the disposition in question. Had not this disposition been inherent in our nature, church fellowship would never have been ordained; and were it to become extinct, both the duty and the privilege must cease, because the thing would be impracticable.

All spiritual religion is grafted on this principle. The essence of religion is love—love to our fellow-creatures and love to God. Love to a fellow-creature is such affection for him as delights to hold communion with him. Love to God is the same affection, exciting the same disposition in a still higher degree. Under its influence, the affections go out towards him, the thoughts dwell upon him, the soul delights in him; and all the religious exercises of the soul are so many acts of communion with him. What is prayer, but the utterance of the soul's desires after God, its yearnings for more of his presence, his grace, and blessing? What is praise, but the effusion of the soul's gratitude and affection? What is adoration, but the soul's utterance of solemn reverence and devotedness? What is confession, but the soul's contrite acknowledgment of sin and anxious return to him? What is faith, but the exercise of the soul's filial confidence in God's veracity and goodness? What is hope, but the outgoings of its desires and expectations towards God? What is joy, but the soul's exultant delight in him? In all these and every other religious exercise, there is the communion of man's spirit with the spirit of his Maker: it is the fellowship of the created mind with the Eternal and Uncreated Mind. This is religion, and it is the religion which God requires and commands. "My son, give me thine heart." In the absence of this fellowship there is no

religion; and, without it, the profession of religion is but formality and hypocrisy, which God despises and condemns. No external rites, no well-ordered ceremonials, no imposing pageantry, can be a substitute for this. Even morality and good works, apart from this fellowship with God, are of no avail: so essential is communion with God to the very existence of true religion, and so expressive is God's approval of that spiritual exercise in which the soul realizes fellowship with himself.

This intercourse, or fellowship, as the term implies, is reciprocal. This, indeed, is implied in the very terms. God communes with man, as well as man with God. Every one, who understands experimental religion, knows what is meant by fellowship or communion with God; and he knows that, in this holy enjoyment, there is as direct and sensible a communication from the mind of God to the mind of man, as there is between any two human minds when in fellowship one with another. What is the love of God shed abroad in the heart, but such a manifestation of the love and favour of God communicated to our spirits, as fills us with love and joy? It is the Spirit of God speaking to our consciousness that we are accepted and beloved, and imparting the assurance of this estate, by dismissing every fear from our minds, and inspiring them with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Various other phrases indicate the same truth. The presence of God—his dwelling in our hearts—his teaching us his holy will—his enlightening our minds—his shining into our souls—his talking with us—his imparting peace and comfort—his hearing our prayers—his accepting of our praises—his leading, guiding, strengthening, directing, and sanctifying of our souls, with similar phrases, perpetually occurring in the Scriptures, are all indicative of the communion of God's Spirit with the spirit of man. The sacred writings are full of this doctrine—are replete with promises and declarations of God's disposition to commune with man, and fraught with examples which illustrate their truth. When man was in Paradise, communion with God was a privilege daily enjoyed. When the tabernacle was set up under the

Mosaic dispensation, the promise was, "And there will I meet with thee, and there will I COMMUNE with thee, from above the mercy-seat, from between the cherubim." Under the New Testament economy, it is declared to be our privilege to "have our fellowship with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ." So that no one, who receives the Scriptures as the oracles of God, can doubt for a moment the truth, that experimental religion pre-eminently consists in the exercise of fellowship with God—in the reciprocation of direct communion with the Father of spirits. Nor should it be forgotten that the more eminent our piety, the more intimate our fellowship with God. The more nearly we resemble him in holiness—the more completely we are restored to his moral image—the more intense is our desire for this fellowship; and the more rich and abundant are the communications of light, comfort, love, and joy, from God our heavenly Father.

Since, then, this communion is reciprocated by God himself—since the Father of spirits has made experimental religion to consist in our intercourse with him, and since he communes with his people in every act of spiritual worship—what is more evident than the existence of this disposition in the Deity himself? If *our* intercourse with mind evinces the existence of the disposition in *our* nature, does not *his* intercourse with us evince the existence of the same disposition in *his* blessed nature? Could he make religion to consist in that act of mind to which his own nature is averse? Would he commune with us, if his Spirit did not delight in it? Would he make his intercourse with us a cause of purest, serenest, holiest enjoyments, if he had not a propension to this exercise in his own infinite and eternal nature? Only one answer can be furnished to these inquiries, and that answer must be—God does delight in the communion of his Spirit with the spirit of the creature, and the disposition to this is an essential property of his own nature.

4. *The reciprocation of this holy fellowship is not confined to the present state or place of existence.*

As an essential element of our being, the disposition sur-

vives the dissolution of our animal nature, and is perpetuated through all eternity; and the privilege of its gratification is destined to be continued during the whole period of our existence. Indeed, the chief distinction of heaven from earth is our freedom from all those restraints and impediments which, in the present life, interrupt and limit our communion with God. There, our nature being more perfect, and our condition more exalted, our intercourse with God will be more direct, and the manifestations of himself to the soul more immediate and transporting. The chief bliss of heaven will consist in our being constantly with God, dwelling in his immediate presence, favoured with uninterrupted intercourse with him, with perpetual consciousness of his favour and communications of his love. In all the symbolical representations of heaven are those ideas which indicate the most intimate and delightful intercourse between the ransomed soul and the eternal God. As our spirits become more like his Spirit, the nearer their union, the closer their fellowship with him. Thus, the spirit of the sanctified creature, and the Spirit of the all-glorious Creator, are destined to be in contact and communion for ever. It is not an occasional but a perpetual flow of thought, feeling, and intercourse; not a transient, but an eternal communion. There is not to be a moment, through the immeasurable ages of eternity, but in which the mind of Deity is to be in communion with the minds he has created. We ask, then, Would the Deity have imposed upon himself an exercise to which his disposition is repugnant? Would he have established a principle which perpetuates that exercise throughout eternity, had his nature been averse to it? The answer may be confidently anticipated. The economy which imposes upon his own mind an obligation to have eternal intercourse with other minds, is a moral demonstration that the disposition to such intercourse is an essential property or attribute in God. He has thus ordained this communion because he delights in it, and he delights in it because such is his nature.

The argument which conducts us to this conclusion becomes vastly enlarged in its breadth and fulness when we contemplate

another fact which philosophy and religion combine to support—namely, that the human spirit is only one order of mind amongst the universe of intelligent and rational minds, in which the same disposition for communion is inherent. Revelation expressly asserts the existence of countless myriads of other spirits of various orders and rank in creation. And, in looking at the instructions furnished respecting the nature, the employments, and economy of holy intelligences, our attention is arrested by the existence of the same disposition for communion in them as that which dwells in our own minds; and the corresponding truth, that, while their minds delight in fellowship with God, God himself delights also in fellowship and communion with them. Indeed, so far as the economy of other spiritual natures is unfolded to us in the Scriptures, the disposition for communion among holy intelligences seems as universal in the world of mind as gravitation does in the world of matter. Wherever intellect and goodness characterize mind, so does the disposition for communion. The higher the intellectual nature, the holier the moral attributes of spiritual beings, and the more intense is their disposition for fellowship with God, and the more abundantly does God reciprocate this intercourse with them. The disposition for communion invariably increases with the capacity of the creature, and the capacity of the creature is the only limit to the communications imparted by the Creator. What, indeed, are those radiant circles of happy beings around the Divine majesty, beheld in vision by the favoured Apostle, but gradations of holy intelligences? What is their worship but the reciprocation of holy thoughts and affections with the great fountain of purity, knowledge, and happiness? And what is the relative position they occupy, as it is nearer to, or remoter from, the throne, but an indication of the relative perfection of their nature, and their proportionate enjoyments in fellowship with the Uncreated and Eternal Mind?

This reasoning is sustained by the fact, that if any beings lose their disposition for communion with God, it is the consequence of some awful deterioration in moral principle. If ever

they lose this disposition for fellowship one with another, it is because they allow malignant principles to acquire the absolute ascendancy over them. But it may, indeed, be doubted, whether the innate disposition of mind for communion with mind *can* be totally eradicated, even by the deepest, the most virulent and consummate, depravity. When human or angelic spirits become alienated from God, and, therefore, lose all disposition for communion with him, they still seek the fellowship of their kind. The worst of men, and even infernal spirits, band themselves together for the accomplishment of their purposes, and form a kind of society; thus proving, that, amid the complete wreck of every moral excellence, this original element of the mental constitution still survives—the disposition of mind to hold fellowship with mind clings to the wretched spirit even when virtue and holiness have expired. But wherever goodness dwells with intelligence, the mind seeks for fellowship with God. This we see in angels, in cherubim, in seraphim, in the Living Ones next the throne, and in all orders of the heavenly hierarchy; and this we see in man, when restored by grace to his original resemblance to the Divine image. Doubtless, the same disposition exists, in full force and activity, in every part of the intelligent universe, where beings are not tarnished by sin or corrupted by depravity.

We have before us, then, the sublime fact of all intelligent creatures originally formed with a capacity, and endued with a disposition, to hold communion with their Maker for ever; a proof that their Maker himself has a disposition to hold communion with them—a proof that the eternal and uncreated Spirit intends to have intercourse with them through the whole period of their being. This disposition must have existed in his mind ere the creature was formed, and is, of course, an essential attribute of his mind, as it is an element of the creature's mental constitution. It must have supplied the motive for giving the creature the disposition in question. He imparted it to intelligent minds because it existed in his own. Because he had it, and delighted in it as an element of his own perfect nature, he gave it to all intelligent beings, that they

might resemble himself, and that they might thereby be fitted to participate in his eternal beatitude and felicity.

5. *We may now notice the objection to which allusion has already been made.*

The objection anticipated is, that a disposition for communion implies an imperfect and a dependent nature, and cannot, therefore, be reasonably ascribed to Jehovah, who is all-sufficient and independent. This objection cannot, of course, be urged by one who cordially assents to the testimony of Scripture, because the Scriptures, we have seen, directly represent the Deity as holding intercourse with mind at a period prior to the creation of man; and this intercourse he could not have held had he not possessed an inherent disposition for it. The intercourse described is perfectly voluntary; it was uninfluenced and unconstrained by anything *ab extra*. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Thus, the converse, or communion, sprang freely from the Divine volition, and, if from the Divine volition, it must have been from an inherent disposition; and such an inherent disposition was not a casual or adventitious impulse, but an essential property of the Divine nature. This must, we think, be irresistible to every mind which reveres the testimony of the sacred volume. Moreover, that a Being, possessing such an inherent disposition, should give a similar disposition to all intelligent beings, is an act in perfect accordance with his own blessed nature. That he should himself commune with the minds to which he has imparted this disposition, is a part of his providential and moral economy, equally in harmony with his nature; and, further, that he should make fellowship with his own mind a duty incumbent on all intelligent beings, and an essential element of all religion, is an arrangement which might be anticipated, *à priori*, from the nature of the Creator. Thus, facts harmonize with principles, and the testimony of the Scripture we have referred to is corroborated by reason.

Thus, the objection in question not only derives no support from Scripture, but it is contradicted by the sacred records.

We think it will be no difficult task to refute the objection on philosophic grounds.

1. If a disposition for communion be evidence of an imperfect nature, then it follows that the absence of this disposition is a mark of excellence, and is, indeed, essential to the perfection of an intelligent Being. Does not this, at first sight, seem an absurdity? Would the absence of this disposition be a mark of human excellence. Would a man, averse to fellowship with his fellow-man, and averse to fellowship with God, be a more amiable and excellent being on that account? With all his thoughts and affections concentrated only on himself, dwelling in solitude, hating society, and averse to his Creator, would he possess a superior nature, and exhibit more excellence of character, than he would with the contrary disposition urging him to delight in the society of mankind, and to exercise his thoughts, sympathies, and affections towards them and towards God? Would an angel devoid of this disposition evince a higher nature, and manifest superior moral excellence? If so, the Creator must have greatly erred in forming their intellectual and moral constitution. In giving them a disposition for communion, he must, on this principle, have placed an effectual barrier to their superiority and excellence! We may further ask, Can we suppose the Deity himself to be more excellent in his nature if this disposition were absent from him? The absurdity of the notion is so transparent that we blush to pursue the inquiry. Had Jehovah been averse to this communion with intelligent beings, he would never have created them; or, if he had created them, he never would have given them a disposition to which his own nature is repugnant; and to suppose that he would have made their communion with himself a religious duty, and have reciprocated that communion with them for ever, is to suppose that he acted not only without motive, but against motive. It is, indeed, to suppose a tissue of palpable absurdities and contradictions.

2. So far from the absence of this disposition being a perfection, its absence is undoubtedly, in every instance, an evidence of imperfection and inferiority. This truth is con-

firmed by facts issuing from every part of the universe. The absence of the disposition for communion can only be supposed possible from three causes—namely, the absence of intelligence, or the absence of love, or the absence of both. If it arise from the want of intelligence, it argues a mental imperfection, for intelligence is essential to any degree of mental excellence. If it arise from a want of love, it implies a moral imperfection, for a benevolent affection is essential to moral excellence. The Deity is benevolent, and it is only in proportion as the creatures imitate him in this excellence that they can exhibit a superior moral nature. If it arise from the absence of both intelligence and love, it argues both mental and moral imperfection. If we look at the human race, we find men excelling in intellect and moral dignity just in proportion as this disposition for communion is exercised; and in the Christian, who daily holds communion with the Father of spirits, we see the highest developments of moral excellence and dignity adorning human nature. If we contemplate the properties of intelligent beings above us in nature and capacity, we find those exhibiting the highest excellence holding the most intimate fellowship with Deity; and those exhibiting the most consummate depravity, the most virulent malignity, living in a state of alienation from God—averse to the Deity, and as much averse to each other as their nature will admit. It is a remarkable fact that, just in proportion as any nature is excellent, this disposition is predominant; in proportion as any nature is inferior, this disposition is wanting; in proportion as this disposition is cherished, the nature becomes improved and exalted. This disposition is always the associate of excellence, and the more excellent the nature, the more intense and active is its operation. From these facts it follows that the disposition itself is an excellence; and, in ascribing it to the Divine nature, we are ascribing to Deity a glorious attribute and an essential perfection. Without it the Deity himself would not be perfect.

Perhaps the inquiry may be suggested, Does not this disposition involve a state of dependence, and does not depend-

ence argue an imperfect nature? We reply, A disposition for communion does not necessarily imply a state of dependence, any more than love implies a state of dependence. Love to an object implies no dependence upon it. It can be exercised by a higher nature towards a lower, as well as by a lower nature towards a higher. Pure benevolence operates unaccompanied with the least expectation or hope of being benefited thereby. Thus it often operates among men, and thus it always operates in the mind of Deity. Now, the disposition for communion is excited chiefly by love. As John Howe observes, "When looking into ourselves we find there is in us a disposition, often upon no necessity, but sometimes from some sort of benignity of temper, unto conversation with others." Indeed, this disposition is often excited from a pure, benign feeling to communicate something to others, to administer to their welfare and happiness. It is the effect of goodness overflowing its own bounds and extending to others. Such a benign disposition is compatible with the highest dignity and excellence. It is, in fact, not merely compatible therewith, but is an essential element of that excellence. If it be an element of excellence in the creature, where that excellence is limited, it must be an element of the infinite excellence of the Creator. If it flow necessarily from benignity in the creature, though that benignity is finite, it must flow from that infinite ocean of benignity which dwells in the Creator. If the creature, with but a spark of love, has this disposition, the Creator, who is the origin and boundless source of love, must have it in an immeasurable degree. Therefore, so far from being a mark of imperfection and dependence, it is an essential element of perfection.

Thus, an examination of this objection elicits new evidence in support of the doctrine it was intended to overthrow; for, if the absence of this disposition for communion be an evidence of an inferior nature, the presence of this disposition is essential to God's perfection. To deny that it dwells in the Deity, is to deny the perfection and excellency of his nature. If God be a

Spirit of infinite excellence and goodness, he must possess the disposition in a measure proportionate to his infinite excellence and perfection.

SUMMARY.—In reviewing the argument, we find—

1. That the existence of this disposition in man as an excellence involves its existence in God.
2. That the Scriptures ascribe this disposition to the Deity.
3. That it exists as an excellence in the spiritual nature of man, who is said to be created in God's image.
4. That the essence of all spiritual religion consists in the fellowship of saints and communion with God.
5. That this communion is reciprocated by God himself.
6. That this reciprocal intercourse is greater in proportion to our holiness of heart; the more intimately we resemble God, the more intimate our fellowship with him.
7. That this communion is maintained in both worlds—earth and heaven—in time and in eternity.
8. That the same disposition exists in all other holy and intelligent beings; and the higher and holier the nature of any intelligent being, the more intimate and delightful its fellowship with God. Thus all intelligent beings have communion with God, and God with them, for ever and ever.
9. We examined objections, and new evidence was elicited in proof of the general proposition.

Corollary. It thus becomes evident, both from Scripture and reason, that this disposition for communion must exist in the mind of Deity. The Scriptures teach us directly that it does, and reason deduces the same conclusion from obvious facts. God gives to a created mind no excellence but what dwells in his own nature; he could not himself delight to hold fellowship with all created minds, and that for ever, unless the disposition belonged to his own blessed nature.

As this disposition belongs to God, it is an eternal and essential property of his nature. Being absolutely perfect, he acquires no new excellence; and, being immutable, he loses no quality he ever had. As this disposition exists within him

now, it cannot be adventitious, but essential; it always existed in the same intensity and degree, and throughout eternity it will continue the same. Before the universe was created, it dwelt in him; had no intelligent creature even yet existed, it would have dwelt within him; and if the whole intelligent universe were to be destroyed, it would remain with him through all eternity.

In closing our observations on the Divine attributes, it must not be supposed that we have enumerated all Jehovah's perfections, or that any stretch of human thought can conceive adequately of his nature; but it is a pleasing and elevating thought, that our minds are formed to receive eternally brightening and enlarging perceptions of Jehovah's character. As Robert Hall has observed, "The idea of the Supreme Being has this peculiar property—that, as it admits of no substitute, so, from the first moment it is formed, it is capable of continual growth and enlargement. God himself is immutable; but our conception of his character is continually receiving fresh accessions, is continually growing more extended and refulgent, by having transferred to it new elements of beauty and goodness—by attracting to itself, as a centre, whatever bears the impress of dignity, order, or happiness. It borrows splendour from all that is fair, subordinates to itself all that is great, and sits enthroned on the riches of the universe."* Whatever excellencies there may be in existence, they must essentially dwell in God's nature. Absolute perfection includes all possible perfection—in all variety, and in unlimited degree. Such a Being must be infinitely, independently, and eternally happy. All the elements of greatness, goodness, and happiness essentially belong to him, to whom be all honour, and glory, and blessing, evermore. Amen.

* R. Hall's "Modern Infidelity."

BOOK III.

THE HOLY TRINITY.

CHAPTER I.

RATIONAL ARGUMENT ON THE TRINITY.

HAVING examined the evidence which establishes the great fundamental truth of God's existence, and demonstrates the essential attributes and perfections of his nature, it is now our duty to inquire—Is God an absolute unity? or does the Divine nature involve a plurality of persons? This inquiry is essential to the completion of our argument. Whatever may be the truth on this subject, we ought to know it if that knowledge can be attained; because it is an element of knowledge essential to our forming right conceptions of our Creator, and gravely affecting our duty towards him. For the same reasons our inquiries into this profound subject ought to be conducted in a devout and reverential spirit, and with equal patience and candour.

If the Bible be a revelation from God, it will doubtless unfold to us his nature as God, and may be expected to speak with distinctness and decision on the subject of our present inquiry. It does so. In passages too numerous to adduce, we read of a threefold distinction in the Godhead, under the designation of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We never read of more than three; but these three are constantly named and referred to—their designations and operations being blended everywhere with Biblical narrative, doctrine, and worship. All the attributes of distinct personality are ascribed to each, with a plainness and a frequency that place

their actual being beyond doubt; and yet this doctrine of a threefold personality is combined with assertions, equally plain and frequently repeated, that Jehovah is essentially One. Regarding both these averments of revelation as equally authoritative, the conclusion is inevitable, that both are equally true; and that there is a sense in which both truths harmonize. Christians, in general, have agreed that the correct interpretation of the doctrine of the Godhead is, that there is a Trinity of Persons with a Unity of Essence. If it be demanded, What do you mean by a Trinity of Persons, and Oneness of Essence? we mean—distinct consciousness, combined with the united possession of the same nature and attributes. We do not, indeed, profess that this is a full or adequate enunciation of the doctrine, but it doubtless expresses what is sufficient for our present purpose, namely—The existence of unity compatible with plurality, and plurality consistent with unity. We believe it may be shown that this doctrine is in harmony with reason, and is confirmed by the sacred Scriptures.

SECTION I.—THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY IS IN HARMONY WITH REASON.

WE do not suppose the doctrine of the Holy Trinity to have been discoverable by mere human reason, but the doctrine having been revealed to us by God himself, we believe it to be in *harmony* with right reason. For every doctrine that is true itself must be in harmony with all other truths; and, so far as those truths can be clearly and adequately known, their harmony must be perceived by the human mind. This is all that we claim in the present argument. Owen Feltham has justly observed: "I believe there is nothing in religion contrary to reason, if we knew it rightly;" and it may be yet further affirmed, that there is not a single proposition in religion, but to which, "*if we knew it rightly,*" reason would utter an affirmative response. It was an axiom with Bossuet, that "every error is a truth abused;" but it is, we think, more correct to say, that

every error in religion springs from an abuse of reason. There is certainly no discrepancy between the human judgment and the teachings of revelation, except when we draw conclusions without data, or from insufficient data ; or substitute hypothesis for fact ; or, in some way, allow our depraved nature to pervert the exercise of our reasoning faculties.

1. *The doctrine is not repugnant to reason, for it is not opposed to any abstract truth.*

It is an abstract and self-evident truth, that arithmetically one is not three, and that three are not one. It is an abstract and self-evident truth, that no being can be one and three at the same time and in the same sense ; and, therefore, to affirm this, would be to contradict a self-evident proposition, and to maintain a palpable absurdity. But this is not the doctrine of the Trinity, nor does it bear any semblance to it. The doctrine that in the Godhead there are distinctions in personal consciousness, combined with identity of nature and attributes, is nothing more than to affirm that a being may be singular in one sense and plural in another ; and this involves no contradiction. It is perfectly consistent with abstract truth, and is illustrated by actual truth : we have numerous illustrations of it in the phenomena of Nature. In the constitution of a human being, we have a conjunction of unity and plurality. A human being is one, but his nature is twofold. There is a spiritual principle, called the soul, and a material organization, called the body ; yet these two natures, so diverse in their properties, make but one being or person realized by one consciousness. We have here an illustration of the truth in question—that a being may be single in one sense and plural in another ; and it is a demonstration of, at least, the possibility of the truth being exemplified in the Divine nature. If the nature of the creature involves an exemplification of the principle, on what ground can it be excluded from the Creator ? If fact demonstrates that the truth in question is illustrated in the economy of human nature, to deny its applicability to the Divine nature is to reason against analogy and fact. It is, indeed, to assume that the nature of the Creator is more

limited than that of the creature; it is to say that God can illustrate a truth in his works, of which he cannot possibly have any counterpart or correspondence in himself—which is illogical, if not absurd.

Should it be alleged that there is no analogy in the example adduced, because in a human being the personality is one though the nature is two, but in the Trinity the personality is said to be plural while the essence is singular, we reply: The objection thus adduced can have no force; for, if in the constitution of a being plurality and unity are seen harmoniously and consistently conjoined, the *principle* for which we contend is established. It matters not whether the personal consciousness be single and the nature plural, as in the constitution of a human being; or whether the personal consciousness be plural and the nature single, as in the Deity; the principle of plurality, being compatible with unity, is as clearly and obviously exemplified in the one case as in the other. There may be a mystery in each, but, abstractedly considered, it is difficult to say which we should deem the greater mystery, were they both equally new to us, and both proposed together, at the same time, to the mind for its decision. Had we never heard of either until now, and some superior being were to demand from us, "Which do you think is the greater mystery, whether for a being purely spiritual to be *three* in person and *one* in nature; or for a being to be *one* in person and *two* in nature?" we are inclined to think that, supposing the absence of all bias from our past experience, we should regard it as more mysterious for such a heterogeneous compound as mind and matter to form one person, than for a threefold consciousness to reside in one purely spiritual and homogeneous nature. Such is our conviction; but, irrespective of this, the fact itself of our nature presenting a constitution in which plurality consists with unity, shows that the Scriptural doctrine of the Trinity is perfectly compatible both with abstract and actual truth.

Nor can a single *à posteriori* argument against the Trinity be drawn from any part of the economy of Nature. It is true the universal prevalence of law and harmony, the uniform

subservience and adaptation of means to ends, the regularity, order, and certainty everywhere prevalent, argue a unity of purpose and design in the mind of the great Creator, but these manifestations furnish no evidence against a plurality of Persons in the Godhead. As Paley justly observes, in reference to the argument drawn from Nature as to the unity of God—“Certain, however, it is, that the whole argument for the Divine unity goes no farther than to a unity of counsel.” If, indeed, the doctrine of the Trinity taught that there existed three supreme intelligences, co-equal, but separate in nature, and different in disposition and attributes, then the doctrine would both involve a physical impossibility, and be contradicted by the harmony, regularity, and order of Nature. But the doctrine asserts the opposite of this—it proclaims unity of essence and attributes, and, by necessary consequence, the same union of disposition, counsel, purpose, and operation in the Divine Persons as we see demonstrated in the harmonious economy of Nature.

When no further objection against a doctrine can be established, we often hear the murmur of dissent uttered on account of its mysteriousness. Thus it is with respect to the Holy Trinity. When the dissident is disarmed of his arguments one by one, he still urges that he is not able to conceive *how* such a plurality and unity can exist in the Deity. We reply, Sober reason does not require us to explain the “*how*” a thing exists, but to furnish evidence that it “*does*” so exist. The *mode* of a thing’s existence is quite distinct from the evidence which determines the *certainty* of its existence, and a logical reasoner will constantly keep this distinction in mind. He will never reject the evidence which proves a fact, merely because he cannot explain every mode connected with that fact. He will accept clear and satisfactory evidence of a truth, and rest in the certainty of the same, and wait for further light as to its mode. The same principle should guide us in seeking for Divine truth; it is subject to the common laws of evidence, and both logic and candour require its evidence to be treated like that on all ordinary subjects. The duty of any inquirer is,

therefore, not to demand such an explanation of the Godhead as shall unfold to him every mystery respecting the Trinity, but to seek for satisfactory evidence respecting its truth, and allow his judgment to be determined by the character and strength of that evidence. Until that is done, his unbelief is an offence against reason as well as against God. There are multitudes of facts in the economy of Nature which are irresistibly evident, and yet they involve inquiries which no one can answer—mysteries which no philosopher can explain. We know the human mind can act directly upon matter, but who can explain its mode? We are familiar with the facts of nutrition, growth, assimilation, animal and vegetable life, chemical affinity, gravitation, heat, combustion, &c., but inquiries into each phenomenon soon show how short is our sounding-line. We almost immediately get into depths we cannot fathom, and meet with ultimate facts which our reason can no more explain than it can the mode of God's existence, and the mystery of the Trinity. But though we cannot explain the mode of natural phenomena, we never question their reality, for that would be to deny the evidence of reason, and often the evidence of sense. So with regard to the Trinity. It belongs to the category of ultimate facts, and anything inexplicable as to its mode must be regarded as quite distinct from the evidence of its truth. We have already shown that there is nothing in the doctrine incongruous with either abstract or actual truth, and now we submit to calm and candid consideration some evidence in its support.

SECTION II.—WHILE THE DOCTRINE OF A TRINITY IS IN HARMONY WITH TRUTH, IT IS SUSTAINED BY CORRELATIVE TRUTHS.

IN conducting our argument on the direct evidence for a plurality of Persons in the Godhead, it will conduce to order, and facilitate reference, if we arrange the successive steps of the argument into several general propositions.

PROPOSITION I.—*Our first proposition must be merely a compendious summary of truths previously established. The existence of the Deity is a necessary truth, and, if so, all the attributes of Deity must exist necessarily and eternally, even as his essence; they cannot be separated from it even in conception.*

To suppose that any of God's attributes were derived, would be to suppose that he was dependent upon something, which is incompatible with his necessary existence. To suppose that they had a beginning, would be to suppose that there was a prior eternity in which he existed without possessing them, which is the same thing as to undeify him. To suppose that any of his attributes can ever cease to exist is absurd, because it is to suppose him to cease to be what he essentially is—the self-existent, independent, and immutable Jehovah. If his existence be essential and eternal, so must all his attributes be essential and eternal. Whatever may be predicated of the nature of God now, may be predicated as belonging to that nature through all eternity past and to come. Therefore absolute perfection, all-sufficiency, immutability, omnipresence, omniscience, wisdom, omnipotence, infinite goodness and love, perfect holiness, and a disposition for communion, being attributes of the Eternal God now, *always* were his attributes, and for ever will be, without deterioration or change in any respect. The truths embodied in this proposition have been fully established in the Second Book of this work, and are so generally acknowledged by divines of all persuasions that it is unnecessary to do more than to give this brief statement of them as the foundation of our argument.

PROPOSITION II.—*Some of the attributes and perfections of the Deity are active powers or faculties, such as the attributes of intelligence or wisdom, of power, love, holiness, a disposition for communion, &c. These are active now. The Scriptures declare it, and reason corroborates it; and having existed eternally and immutably in God, they must have existed not as latent qualities or mere capacities, but as essentially and eternally active. Their activity is as essential as their existence, and, therefore, eternal.*

Several of the ancient philosophers held the eternal activity of the Divine attributes as a truth so self-evident and so fully established, that they erroneously grounded upon this the eternity of matter. Plato reasons that the world is an eternal effect, proceeding from an eternal Cause; for he says, "The will of God and his power of acting being necessarily as eternal as his essence, the effects of that will and power must be supposed coeval to the will and power themselves; in the same manner as light would eternally proceed from the sun, or a shadow from an interposed body, or an impression from an imposed seal, if the respective causes of these effects are supposed eternal." * On this ground he maintained the eternity of the world. Aristotle, after him, held the same doctrine. He contends that "God, who is an immovable (immutable) nature, whose essence is energy, cannot be supposed to have rested or slept from eternity, doing nothing at all, and then, after infinite ages, to have begun to move the matter, or make the world." † The reasoning of these men is exceedingly like that of powerful minds, without the advantage of the light of the Christian revelation. It is partly true, and partly erroneous; the premises are true, but the conclusions are false. The proposition they laid down, as an established and incontrovertible principle—namely, the eternal activity of the Divine attributes—is true; this was too clear to be doubted; but the eternity of matter does not follow from thence. If there were no other mode in which the Divine attributes could have been exercised than in the creation of matter, or in reference to some extraneous objects, then their reasoning would have some force: but this assumption is not true. There are other modes in which the active powers of the Divine Being can be employed, without the creation of either matter or spirit, without the existence of any extraneous objects whatever, as we shall prove hereafter. Were it not so, indeed, there would be no adequate mode in which the Divine attributes could find their full and appropriate operation, for the attributes are infi-

* "Zachariæ Scholast. Disput." † "Met. Lib.," xiv., c. 6.

nite, and creation, however vast, is but finite and limited. Besides, the eternity of matter, and the eternity, too, of any created mind, has before been disproved. Yet the testimony of the above distinguished philosophers is valuable, as to the fundamental principle contained in our present proposition. It was with them a settled principle, an axiom which lay at the foundation of their reasoning, that the active powers, or attributes, of Deity must have been eternally exercised. This is the doctrine in the proposition now before the reader, and it is sustained by the following argument.

1. Great absurdities and contradictions would be involved in maintaining the contrary. The nature of the argument requires us to notice these absurdities, but let every allusion to the Divine nature be made with modesty, reverence, and awe. Be it observed, then, that to deny the eternal exercise of the Divine attributes, is to suppose that God was eternally in a state of inactivity; for if the exercise of his attributes be not eternal, there must have been a period when they began their action; and if there was a period when their action began, there must have been a prior eternity in which they did not operate; and this involves the most absurd consequences. Thus, if this supposition be applied to his intelligence, it affirms there was an eternity in which the Divine Being knew nothing. If applied to his power, it affirms that there was an eternity in which he did nothing. If applied to his love, it affirms that there was an eternity in which he loved nothing. If applied to his disposition for communion, it affirms that there was an eternity in which he communed with nothing. If applied to his holiness, it affirms that there was an eternity in which this attribute was never exercised. Indeed, the notion involves such absurdities, that the mind recoils from them, as insulting to that glorious Being who is the object of our contemplations.

It avails nothing to plead that infinite faculties were eternally in the Divine Being, and though not eternally exercised, they were inherent in his nature, and ready to be brought into exercise at any period when the Divine Being should determine. The attributes of Jehovah are not mere faculties, or negative

qualities, or latent properties, but are essentially active powers. Omniscience, or infinite wisdom, for instance, implies not a mere capacity, or faculty, to know all things hereafter, but the actual and immediate knowledge of all things—of all things actually comprehended in his own nature, of all things designed to be accomplished by his own operations, and of all things both certain and possible in the creature. Thus, the existence of the faculty necessarily implies its exercise. So love is not a mere capacity to love, but the actual possession of that benign affection, the operation of which is essential to its existence; for a being not to love is to be without love. So of holiness. It is not the mere absence of evil, or any mere negative quality, or a mere faculty for certain moral excellencies, to be hereafter developed, but an assemblage of moral dispositions and excellencies, actually existing in the Divine mind, and their operation is essential to their existence. To deny the eternal activity of these attributes is to deny their eternal existence. To admit their eternal existence, and deny their eternal exercise, is a palpable contradiction. Their exercise is involved in their existence, and, whatever be the duration of their existence, it must be also the duration of their exercise. If, then, there never was a period when these glorious attributes did not exist, there never was a period when they were not exercised.

2. The eternal exercise of the Divine attributes is essential to the infinite and eternal happiness of God. Perfect happiness must be essential to Deity, for it is an element of absolute perfection; so that, if he is absolutely perfect, he must be infinitely happy. But does not the infinite happiness of God essentially flow from the exercise of his attributes? Can we conceive him to have been eternally happy in a state of absolute inactivity? For example, it is declared in Scripture that God is love, and reason proves the declaration to be true. We know that happiness and love are essentially connected in the creature. Can we suppose them separated in the Creator? Can we suppose the Deity to have been eternally happy without love? We may answer the inquiry by demanding, Could we suppose the Deity to continue his happiness now, if he were henceforth to cease to

love? Every rational mind will reply, No. If, then, God could not continue to be happy were he now to cease to exercise his love, neither could he have been happy through a past eternity without the exercise of the attribute of love. If, then, God was always happy, he always exercised his love. The happiness of the Deity and the exercise of his attributes are co-essential and co-eternal.

3. The same conclusion flows from the absolute perfection of the Divine nature. Activity is an element of perfection; hence inactivity is the property of an inferior nature, and activity an essential property of a superior nature. Inanimate matter is the lowest form of existence, and it has no inherent activity. It cannot move unless it be moved, and cannot but move when impelled by another. It is essentially passive. But spirit is superior to matter, and has voluntary activity. This is one element of its transcendent superiority. It moves itself, and it moves material substances. Angelic beings are described as being endued with powers of amazing activity, and so are human spirits in the future world. It seems to be a law pervading the Creator's works, that the activity of both mental and moral powers is correlative with the dignity and excellence of the creature. "Can we recognize this as a perfection in the created spirit and deny its existence in the Deity—the uncreated Spirit from whom it proceeded? This is to contradict analogy, and to reason against that evidence which shines as with a flood of light from every source. Besides, it is to deny Jehovah's absolute perfection. For, what is absolute perfection but the possession of all possible perfections, natural and moral, and the possession of all perfections in infinite measure and degree, so as to exclude the possibility of any perfection being added numerically, or augmented in its measure? But to affirm that for an eternity, the faculties of intelligence, power, love, holiness, &c., were not exercised, is to exclude them from the category of proper attributes, and reduce them to mere latent powers, waiting for future development. This is to affirm a contradiction and an impossibility, as we have already shown; and, indeed, were this conceivable as an abstract possibility, it would rob the Divine Being not only of absolute perfection.

but even of such limited perfection as exists in the creature. The excellency and perfection of a created spirit consist not in its possessing latent powers, to be developed in future, but in its present active exercise of those powers. All moral excellence especially appears in the creature's exercise of its moral powers. Its veracity, love, and holiness consist in the true, benevolent, and holy exercise of its powers. If we abstract activity from the creature, we abstract all these excellencies at once. Their essence consists in the activity of the creature. Now, in no other way can we conceive the Deity to possess any moral excellence or perfection than by supposing his attributes to be active. Deny their activity, and we deny the natural perfection and moral excellence of the Divine Being. The exercise of the Divine attributes is the characteristic of the Divine Being now. Scripture, reason, and fact abundantly prove this truth; it is as evident as God's existence. We may, then, simply ask, that, seeing Jehovah is absolutely perfect now in the exercise of his attributes or active powers, could we conceive him to remain absolutely perfect if he were to cease their exercise, and cease their exercise for ever? We feel assured that such an eternal cessation would be incompatible with his absolute perfection in future; and, if incompatible with it for the future eternity, it was equally incompatible with it during the past eternity. The exercise of the Divine attributes now—of his wisdom, power, love, holiness, &c.—is an essential element of his absolute perfection now. This is admitted. But, if the exercise of these attributes be essential now, it will be essential to that perfection for all eternity to come; and, if essential for all eternity to come, it must have been essential for all eternity past. Therefore, for so long a period as we suppose the Deity to have been inactive, we suppose him to have been imperfect; and, for so long a period as we suppose him to have been absolutely perfect, we must suppose him to have been active. If, then, we suppose him to have been absolutely perfect from all eternity, he must have been eternally and essentially active in the exercise of his glorious attributes.

4. The same conclusion flows from the attribute of im-

mutability. If we contemplate the Divine Being as exhibited to us in the volume of Inspiration and of Nature, we behold him constantly active—exercising all the attributes of his blessed nature—exercising wisdom, power, love, and perfect holiness, and communing with all the holy intelligences his hands have made. But to suppose these attributes to have been eternally inactive, or existing as mere latent qualities, is to contemplate the Divine Being as essentially different from what he is now. To suppose him eternally (we would speak with reverence) as knowing nothing, doing nothing, communing with nothing, and loving nothing, is to contemplate him in a state perfectly contrasting with those present characteristics of the Divine Being, which are unfolded to us both in the volume of Revelation and of Nature. We cannot conceive a greater disparity or unlikeness than what is here presented. Of course such a notion is perfectly incompatible with the unchangeable nature of the blessed God. Only a very brief process of reasoning seems requisite to decide the argument before us. We have only to inquire—As the attributes of the Deity are actively exercised now, would the entire suspension of their exercise henceforth and for ever be compatible with his immutability? If the exercise of the wisdom, power, love, and holiness of God were at once to cease, would that accord with his unchangeable nature and character? Every one will admit it would not; even a momentary suspension of them, or any of them, is inconceivable. How, then, can we conceive a suspension of them for an eternity past to be compatible with their present activity and the immutability of the Divine nature? The only answer is, The conception is impossible—it is an absolute contradiction. If Jehovah exercise his attributes now, and his nature be immutable, then he must have exercised them from all eternity. Thus, the same conclusion flows from his immutability as from his absolute perfection—*both* necessarily involve the truth, that the eternally blessed and eternally glorious Deity is essentially and eternally active.

Scholium.—Although the eternal activity of the Divine Being is a necessary truth, it does not follow that his acts must

be absolutely and eternally *uniform*, to the exclusion of variety in his operations. Such a notion is contradicted by his intelligence and freedom. He does not act from necessity or constraint, but intelligently and voluntarily. It is true that his absolute perfection, happiness, and immutability involve the eternal exercise of his attributes, but the mode of exercising them is spontaneous and free. This truth the nature of the Deity implies; this truth the preceding arguments admit; and this truth is illustrated by facts. Creation and providence present *some particular modes* in which the Divine attributes have been exercised in time, but it does not follow that creation and providence are essential to the exercise of the Divine attributes, or that they are the principal modes in which they are exercised now. Prior to either creation or providence they were appropriately exercised, and that as freely and voluntarily as they are now. Our argument leads us to such an eternal exercise of the Divine attributes as his immutability and absolute perfection require; but this leaves the *modes* of Jehovah's operations freely under the direction of his intelligence and goodness, and, therefore, open to boundless variety. The several modes in which the Divine perfections have been exercised through past eternity, in which they are exercised at the present period, and will continue to be exercised through all eternity to come, will hereafter be considered. We have at present to fix our attention solely upon the truth that the active powers involved in Jehovah's attributes must have been eternally exercised in some mode.

PROPOSITION III.—*The exercise of the Divine attributes necessarily implies both an Agent and an Object.*

If intelligence be exercised, there must be an object known, as well as the agent who knows. If power be exercised, there must be both agent and object in its exercise. If love be exercised, there must be an object beloved as well as the agent who loves. If the disposition for communion be exercised, there must be both agent and object, and such reciprocity in the exercise as involves their being mutually agent and object to each other. If holiness be exercised, those excellent dispositions

and moral affections which constitute holiness necessarily imply both agent and object. We cannot conceive the possibility of an attribute being exercised without, at the same time, conceiving of both agent by whom, and the object in reference to whom, the attribute is exercised. This is too plain to require further argument or illustration. It requires only to be stated in order to its being admitted as a self-evident proposition.

PROPOSITION IV.—*The Agent and Object cannot be numerically, identically, personally, and in every respect, the same. They involve such different relations to each other as cannot be sustained by an absolute unity.*

We may, perhaps, admit one exception to this general proposition. In reference to knowledge, the agent and the object may be numerically and personally the same. An intellectual being may know himself, may be the object on which his own intellect is exercised, and thus be agent and object at the same time and in the same act. But, in reference to the exercise of other attributes, the distinction between agent and object is at once apparent. Thus, in reference to goodness or benevolence, the being who exercises this affection is distinct from him towards whom it is exercised. In reference to holiness, the being who exercises the principles of truth, justice, kindness, &c., and all the dispositions and principles involved in holiness, must be distinct from him towards whom these dispositions and principles are exercised. So of communion, the reciprocity of minds conscious of mutual sentiments and affections involves a distinction of agent and object mutually sustained. These examples indicate that, in reference to some attributes, agent and object cannot be identically and numerically the same—such a distinction in relation is involved, as cannot be sustained by one absolutely solitary existence. To many minds this important truth will appear to be self-evident; but the following considerations will, we think, render it obvious to every candid mind.

1. Let us suppose a created spirit, possessing the ordinary attributes of mind, so isolated from the universe as to exist in absolute solitude, and be unconscious of the existence of any being but itself, without any idea of either creature or Creator.

Such a supposed state would be to the spirit thus isolated equivalent to *actual* and absolute solitude. Let us now ask, How could this being exercise the attributes of power, of love, of holiness, and of a disposition for communion? We will not say that the faculty of knowledge might not be exercised to a very limited extent. This spirit would certainly be conscious of its own existence, but beyond this, we conceive, there could be but little intelligence even of its own nature. But leaving the attribute of intelligence, we ask, How could the other active powers, with the affections and dispositions of its nature, be exercised without one single object in existence towards whom they could have any relation? For example, How could this spirit exercise the amiable affection of love or benevolence without the knowledge of any being towards whom it could be benevolent? To say that this isolated being might love himself, is to evade the question; for self-love is not benevolence. When it is said in Scripture that God is love, it is not meant that God loves himself. It is a love which he has exhibited towards others, and a love which we are required to imitate. Love is, therefore, an amiable, benevolent affection which inclines one mind towards another, and causes it to delight therein with a benevolent complacency and regard. If there were but one being in existence besides itself, it might love that being; but without the existence of that one being, the amiable affection of love could not be exercised by it at all. As the exercise of love necessarily implies an object as well as an agent, so it is self-evident the agent and object cannot be numerically and personally the same, but must, in some respects, be distinct.

2. We ask again, How could this spirit, thus isolated from all existence but itself, exercise the sentiments and dispositions comprehended under the term holiness? We can conceive of it as absolutely free from sin; but mere freedom from sin is a negative quality. Holiness includes not only freedom from sin, but much more than that. It is not made up of negative qualities or latent properties, waiting for an occasion to be developed, but it consists of the actual possession and exercise of holy sentiments, dispositions, affections, and principles, such as truth,

goodness, justice, faithfulness, &c. This is the holiness ascribed to God in the Bible, and this is the holiness of man, and of all other intelligent beings who are holy. The principles of holiness, indeed, are essentially the same in all beings. Now, the exercise of these holy sentiments, dispositions, and principles, involves certain moral relations to others; and those relations involve the actual existence of others as well as ourselves, together with our knowledge of their existence, and our consciousness of the relations subsisting between us and them. It is evident, therefore, that a spirit supposed to exist in absolute solitude could not exercise these moral sentiments, dispositions, and principles, because, not knowing of any being in existence but himself, he could not be conscious of any moral relations; if not conscious of any moral relations, he could not be the subject of any moral sentiments or emotions. A being in absolute solitude, and unconscious of any existence but his own, could neither be just nor unjust, good nor evil, true nor false, holy nor unholy. Whatever latent powers and faculties there might be inherent in his nature, they could never be exercised or developed without being directed towards an object or objects in some sense distinct from himself. As, therefore, it is evident that the exercise of holy sentiments, affections, and principles, implies an object as well as an agent, and as the object and agent cannot be numerically and personally the same, the exercise of the attribute of holiness involves the existence of others distinct from self or individual consciousness. We speak reverently when we say—The argument thus applicable to man, or to any intelligent spirit in a state of absolute solitude, is applicable to the Eternal Spirit, so far as we have any rational conception of his nature and attributes.

3. The disposition to communion, which both Scripture and reason ascribe to Jehovah, involves a distinction between agent and object, or, rather, necessarily implies the reciprocal intercourse of minds in which each is mutually agent and object. This disposition, therefore, could not be exercised by a spirit existing in that absolute solitude before described, and conscious of the existence of nothing but himself. To say that he might

hold communion with himself is to assert what is irrelevant, for self-communion is mere meditation or soliloquy. Communion properly implies the affectionate intercourse of mind with mind, in which there is a reciprocation of thought, sentiment, will, purpose, and a loving disposition. Such is the intercourse of one human mind with another, and of the human soul with God; and such must be the communion of any holy intelligent being with another. Such was the communion of the Divine Being when he said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." It was not soliloquy, but intercourse—the reciprocation of thought, sentiment, will, purpose, with a view to a *united* act in the production of a most important event—the creation of an intelligent and moral being. There was here as really a union of thought, will, and purpose, as there was a union of act. Now, to suppose a spirit existing in such absolute solitude as renders it unconscious of the existence of any being but itself, is to suppose it placed in a condition in which the disposition for communion could not be exercised. As, therefore, the exercise of this disposition involves the act of minds, which are reciprocally object as well as agent to each other, and as it is evident that the object and agent cannot be numerically and identically the same, it follows that the exercise of this disposition involves the existence of others distinct from self and individual consciousness. We would speak reverently, when we say—The argument thus applicable to man, or to any intelligent being, is applicable to the Eternal Spirit, so far as we have any rational conception of his nature and attributes.

PROPOSITION V.—*In the exercise of some of the Divine attributes, it is essential that the object as well as the agent should be a conscious and intelligent existence.*

This truth is demonstrative, especially as it applies to the moral attributes, such as truth, holiness, love, and the disposition for communion. The establishment of the preceding proposition will render this so evident as to require but a brief consideration. Power may, indeed, be exerted upon a material and inanimate object, and goodness may be exercised towards sentient beings who are without reason, but the moral attributes

suppose a moral relation, and can only have their appropriate exercise when their object, or objects, possess an intelligent and moral nature. If we thus exercise veracity, or holiness, towards any being, that being must be capable of understanding and appreciating veracity, or holiness; and, as such, must be intelligent, must possess intellect, moral sentiments and affections, and, therefore, have a real personal existence. So the love of any intelligent being can only have for its appropriate object an intelligent existence. There may, indeed, be admiration, approval, and a certain kind of fondness, exercised by us towards objects which are irrational, but what we understand by love—proper, and in its highest sense, whether as a natural or moral affection—requires, we think, an intelligent nature for its object. Thus, natural affection is the love of one person towards another—a person is its agent, and a person its object. We may admire a rose, a landscape, a painting, or a poem, but this is not to be confounded with love, which, as a natural affection, and in its highest sense, can only have a person for its proper object. We may be fondly attached to a brute animal, but this is not to be confounded with natural affection, or love in its highest sense. It does not appear to us that such an affection can be appropriately exercised except toward objects capable of reciprocating the affection. But, be this as it may, religious love, as a moral affection, is always the love of a person; not the mere approbation of certain principles, and the admiration of certain facts, but the affections ardently cleaving to a conscious, intelligent, moral being. Such is the Christian's love to God, and to his brother. Such, too, is the love of God. As a Being of infinite intelligence and excellence, his affection of love could not be satisfied without having a conscious, intelligent, moral being for its object—capable of appreciating and reciprocating the affection.

The disposition for communion could be reciprocated with no other than an intelligent existence. As before stated, it is the intercourse of mind with mind—the interchange of thought, purpose, benign and affectionate complacency. Such reciprocation proves, beyond dispute, that the object, as well as the agent, must be a conscious, intelligent existence.

Summary of the five Propositions.—We have seen, then, by the First proposition, that the attributes of God are as essential as his existence; by the Second proposition, that the exercise of his active powers has been eternal; by the Third proposition, that the exercise of an attribute requires an object as well as an agent; by the Fourth proposition, that the object and agent are not identically, and in all respects, the same, but have a real distinction, one from another; and by the Fifth proposition, we have seen, that, in reference to the exercise of the moral attributes, the object must be an intelligent, conscious, personal existence. We have now to ascertain who or what the object, or objects, must be in reference to which the attributes are exercised. God himself, we know, is the agent, but who or what is the object, or the objects, in question? To answer this inquiry, we must pass on to other propositions.

PROPOSITION VI.—*Created existence presents a vast collection of objects in reference to which the Divine attributes have been, and still are, exercised; but, vast as is the aggregate of these objects, the whole are not sufficient, either in duration or extent, for the full, eternal, and infinite exercise of the Divine perfections.*

Every active attribute of Deity with which either Scripture or reason makes us acquainted, finds a *limited* sphere of operation in the vast universe. We have already seen numerous evidences of this truth in the chapters composing the Second Book of this work. We have seen power exerted in the creation of matter and mind, and in the mighty operations of Nature and Providence. We have seen intelligence and wisdom in the manifestations of contrivance and design, in the constitution of law, order, adaptation, and harmony in the economy of the universe. We have seen goodness and love in the ample provision made to supply the wants, and provide for the happiness, of sentient existence, and especially of intelligent and moral creatures. We have seen holiness displayed in the constitution of our moral nature, and in the law which connects happiness with goodness, and suffering with sin. We have seen God's disposition for communion abundantly manifested by his im-

parting this disposition to all intelligent beings, by making fellowship with himself a religious duty, and his own reciprocation of that fellowship or communion with upright intelligences their common privilege, both in a state of probation and of reward. And when we look at the vastness of the universe, and the countless myriads of beings, of various orders, which fill the great temple of Nature, we are lost and overpowered with the view we thus obtain of the energy there must be in the Divine Being in order to the creation and preservation of the whole universe of matter and of mind. Yet, after all, when we contemplate God, the Almighty Agent—the duration of his being, and the infinitude of his perfections—we are forced to the exclamation of Job, “Lo, these are parts of his ways.” They are but “*parts*” of his ways—only a limited portion of the boundless operations of the active attributes of his infinite nature. The universe is not, cannot be, the adequate sphere for the full exercise of the Divine perfections. This is the truth embodied in the proposition before us, and may be demonstrated as follows:—

1. The universe is only of finite duration. There was a period when it did not exist; when, neither in its present form nor in its primordial elements, it had any being; when, indeed, there was neither matter nor mind in existence. But as Jehovah's existence is eternal, so are his attributes eternal; and as his active powers are exercised now, so have they always been from all eternity. This was proved under our Second Proposition. Seeing, then, that the universe is only of finite, and Jehovah of infinite, duration, and the exercise of his attributes has been coeval with his being, it is impossible that the universe can be the adequate sphere for the exercise of his active attributes. It does not obviate this conclusion to give to created existence a vast antiquity. We may extend its duration into the past as remotely as we please; we may multiply its ages by millions of millions, and then again by trillions; we may suppose its antiquity expressed by a line of figures so extensive as to reach from hence to the remotest nebula; but, after all, this period is only finite, and bears no proportion to

the infinite. There was still a prior eternity ere creation was brought forth, and during that period the active attributes of Jehovah were exercised. His wisdom, his power, his goodness, his love, his holiness, his disposition for communion, were adequately exercised during those awful ages, the vastness of which makes our spirits almost faint when we ponder them. Compared with the duration of Jehovah's being, creation is but of yesterday, and, therefore, cannot be the adequate or only sphere for the exercise of Jehovah's attributes.

2. The existence of the universe was a contingent event, but the exercise of the Divine attributes is essential. A contingent event is one which may be or may not be; the non-existence of which may be conceived as possible. Thus, the universe not being self-existent, but dependent upon the will of the Creator, it is conceivable that it might not have existed. As there was an eternity in which it had no being, it might have had no being at this period; it might have had no being for myriads of ages to come; indeed, it might not have had to exist through all future ages. Its existence was a contingent event. To suppose the exercise of the Divine attributes, therefore, to be confined to the creation, preservation, and government of the universe, is to make their exercise to depend upon a contingent event. It is to make the exercise of Jehovah's attributes not only to be limited to the short duration of the universe, but to be dependent upon the contingent conditions of its existence. It is, in fact, to affirm positively, that for the eternity prior to creation, they were not exercised at all; that possibly they might not have begun to be exercised even yet; that possibly they might not have had to be exercised for millions of ages to come; and, further, that possibly they might never have had to be exercised through all eternity to come; which is to say, that the wisdom, the power, the goodness, the love, and the holiness of the Deity might possibly never have had any exercise at all; and, therefore, that his moral perfections might possibly never have had any actual existence. For, to make their exercise depend upon a contingency, is to make them subject to all the conditions involved in that contingency. The contingency of

the universe being such as we have stated, such must have been the contingency of the exercise of the Divine attributes in the case supposed. Such a supposition, however, is too absurd to find a place for a moment in our convictions. It must be immediately rejected, and the contrary proposition be the decision of our judgment. The exercise of the Divine attributes, therefore, being essential and eternal, and Nature being a contingent event, it cannot be the adequate or only sphere for the exercise of the Divine attributes.

3. Nature cannot be the adequate and only sphere for the exercise of the Divine attributes, because God is independent of the creature. As God's existence is independent, so are his attributes; and, as the existence of his attributes is independent, so is their exercise. To maintain that the universe is the only sphere for the exercise of his attributes is to deny God's independence, and to make him dependent upon the creature. His happiness, his holiness, and absolute perfection are essentially connected with the exercise of his attributes. This has been proved under the Second Proposition; therefore, to confine the exercise of the Divine attributes to the creatures is to deny this important truth, and to make God dependent upon them for his happiness, holiness, and perfection, which is absurd. What God is, he is of himself, and by himself, and cannot be dependent upon anything created—upon anything extraneous to his own essence.

Cicero represents Velleius as proposing to his opponents the strange inquiry, "What was it that induced God to adorn the heavens with stars and bright luminaries? whether he was previously like one who lived in a dark and comfortless habitation, and desired a better residence? If so, why was he so long a period without the gratification of his desire?"* An ir-

* "Quid autem erat, quod concupisceret Deus, mundum signis et luminibus, tanquam Ædilis, ornare? Si; ut Deus ipse melius habitaret? antea videlicet tempore infinito in tenebris, tanquam in gurgustio, habitaverat. Post autem varietatene eum delectari putamus, qua cælum et terras exornatas videmus? Quæ ista potest esse oblectatio Deo? Quæ si esset, non ea tamdiu carere potuisset."—*De Natura Deorum*, lib. i., c. 9.

reverent inquiry : but the notion which confines the exercise of the Divine attributes to the universe, lies open to this profane and sarcastic inquiry of the Epicurean, and is incapable of answering it. If, as we have before proved, the exercise of God's attributes was essential to his happiness, holiness, and absolute perfection, and if that exercise had no object or sphere but the universe, then the Divine Being could not have been perfect or happy until the universe was formed ; but both reason and Scripture abundantly declare that he is the blessed God, absolutely blessed, and blessed for ever—blessed in himself ; infinitely and independently blessed from all eternity, and to all eternity—absolutely perfect, and infinitely all-sufficient, needing nothing that he has made. From all eternity he was as happy and perfect as he is now. Had the universe been yet unborn, he would have been equally perfect and happy ; had the first act of creation been postponed millions of years beyond the present date, he would have been absolutely happy in the exercise of all his perfections ; and, if it had been determined that creation should never take place through all eternity to come, still would the Divine nature have been essentially active and infinitely happy for ever. To deny this is to deny the independence of the everlasting God, and contradict one of the essential characteristics of the Deity. To admit the absolute independence and all-sufficiency of God is to admit that the activity of his eternal energy and the source of his infinite happiness were prior to, and independent of, all created existence.

4. The universe is finite, and, therefore, cannot be the adequate and only sphere for the exercise of the Divine attributes. The extent of the universe, like its duration, however vast it may be, is limited ; but the attributes of Jehovah are infinite and unlimited. It is evident, therefore, that the universe, vast as it is, is not adequate to fill the capacities of the Deity, nor to afford scope for the full and boundless exercise of his attributes. If the active faculties of Jehovah are at any period exerted to an extent corresponding with their natural infinity, the objects on which they are exerted, or in reference to which

they are exercised, must be characterized by a corresponding infinitude. Thus, respecting his infinite intelligence, the object or objects answering to that attribute must have no limits; but the universe of matter and of mind has limits, and, therefore, the universe, in all its magnitude, cannot be that object. It is too diminutive. So with respect to love. This attribute is infinite, and if it be exercised in a degree proportioned to its infinitude, the object it embraces must be infinite. But every created mind is finite, and the entire aggregate of created mind in the universe is finite, and, consequently, inadequate to the reception of infinite love. So with regard to the disposition for communion, so clearly ascribed to Deity both by reason and Scripture. This disposition, to be exercised in a degree proportioned to the capacity of the agent, requires an infinite capacity in the object. But, seeing all the created minds in the universe are but finite, what created intelligence is fully adequate to reciprocate the sublime intercourse of Deity? If communion involve reciprocity of intercourse, to render it perfect there should be corresponding faculties and capacities, as well as corresponding dispositions. If the minds engaged in communion are mutually agent and object to each other, there should be proportionate powers and capabilities in each. If the one be infinite, so should the other, or the intercourse can be but partial and limited. To comprehend the thoughts, purposes, will, affections, and moral dispositions of an infinite mind, and perfectly to reciprocate them, requires infinite mental and moral faculties and capacities. If, then, the disposition of the Deity for communion be exercised perfectly, or to its fullest extent, it is obvious there is no created mind adequate for this exercise. So with regard to the infinite holiness of God. It is impossible that the profound sentiments, the affections, and dispositions, involved in perfect and absolute holiness, can have an adequate object in the creature.

5. An argument, leading to the same conclusion, may be deduced from the analogy of the human mind. The soul of a human being, though finite, can be satisfied with nothing less than the infinite. Vast as creation is, it is not adequate to the

capacities of the human mind. The whole universe is not sufficient for it. Nothing that has limitation or bounds seems adequate to its aspirations, to its ever-growing powers, and its interminable existence. If a human spirit were informed that it was permitted for ever to have access to all created objects, but that *created* beings alone were to be the objects of its thoughts, its contemplations, its affections, its fellowship, and its sources of happiness, and that it could not be allowed to have the infinite Being for its object, it would feel itself restrained and confined, and long to emerge into the infinite. Though finite itself, it would feel that its powers of reflection, its faculties, formed for endless development, and its immortal duration, fitted it for something greater than the whole universe. God alone is the proper object of a being having a rational, moral, and immortal nature. In the Deity there is an abyss of knowledge, of love, of perfection, of blessedness, which a created mind cannot fathom; and, because it cannot fathom that abyss, it enjoys the consciousness of sufficiency, of satisfaction, of perpetuity, of sources inexhaustible and eternal. A spirit, whose existence is endless, and whose mental and moral faculties are formed for boundless expansion, feels that it cannot rest unless in the possession of God, for no other object is suited to its nature. Now, it is in harmony with our mental constitution and requirements, that God has graciously rendered himself accessible to all intelligent beings. But, if finite objects are not adequate to the faculties of a finite mind, how can they be adequate to the faculties or attributes of an infinite mind? If the mind of *man* feels the whole universe too little for its capacities, how can it be sufficient for the infinite capacities of the mind of Deity? If man, or angel, can rest in nothing but in the infinite, how can the mind of Jehovah rest in less? Thus, analogy carries us to the same conclusion—The universe, being finite, cannot be the adequate sphere for the full exercise of the Divine attributes and perfections.

The sum of the whole argument sustaining our present proposition is this:—Jehovah's attributes have been exercised eternally, but the universe has existed for only a limited

duration ; therefore God must have exercised his attributes before any creature existed. The exercise of the Divine attributes is essential, but the existence of the universe was contingent ; and that which, in itself, is essential, cannot be based upon a contingency. The exercise of the Divine attributes must be independent, because essential and eternal, and, therefore, cannot depend upon the existence of a creature. The attributes of Deity are infinite, but the whole assemblage of creation is only finite, and, therefore, cannot be the adequate and only object for the full exercise of the Divine perfections. If we select any one of these reasons, it will, of itself, sustain our conclusion ; but, when the whole are put together and combined, they furnish a four-fold argument, sustaining the proposition which stands at the head of this argument. Created existence cannot be the adequate and only object for the exercise of Jehovah's infinite perfections. We must, therefore, look for something infinitely anterior and infinitely superior to all creation.

PROPOSITION VII.—*The mental archetypes of created existence could not be the adequate objects for the exercise of the Divine attributes.*

By mental archetypes we mean the ideas of the various objects of which the universe consists, as they existed in the mind of God before he gave them *actual* being. Though the actual universe be of only limited existence, yet, we must admit those archetypes to have been eternally in the mind of Deity ; for, to deny this would be to deny the infinite knowledge of God, and to suppose him to have gradually received accessions to his intelligence, which is incompatible with his infinite knowledge and absolute perfection. Those archetypes, however, cannot be an adequate sphere for the full exercise of Jehovah's infinite attributes. Some of the reasons stated in support of the preceding proposition apply with equal, nay, with augmented force, in sustaining our present proposition. Though those archetypes were eternal, they were finite, and, therefore, insufficient. If the objects, when actually existing, are inadequate, the mere

ideas of those objects must be equally insufficient, and, therefore, eternally insufficient. Besides, having proved that God is independent of the objects when they actually exist, he must have been equally independent of the ideas, or archetypes, prior to creation, and, therefore, eternally independent. The notion of God being eternally dependent upon mere ideas for the exercise of his attributes, is too absurd to be held for a moment. God is not dependent upon anything, but is absolutely and eternally independent. Moreover, mere ideas, or archetypes, having no substantive or personal existence, are not objects on which all the Divine attributes can be exercised. The mind of Deity would indeed contemplate them, and thus they would be objects of his perfect intelligence; and his certain prospect of creatures who were to be brought into being might give exercise to some of his moral attributes; but those archetypes could not be objects of his actual power, his actual personal love and communion; and if they could, yet being finite, they must necessarily be inadequate. When power is actually exerted, it must have a substantive existence for its object. When a moral affection is exercised, it must have a personal existence for its object. When the disposition for communion is exercised, it must have a mind for its object, capable of reciprocating thought, sentiment, purpose, and benign affection. It must, in fact, not be a mere idea, but a conscious, intelligent, moral being, or mind. Whether, therefore, we look at the absolute independence and infinitude of the Divine nature, or the unsubstantial and impersonal existence of the mental archetypes of the created universe, we are rationally carried to the conclusion, that those archetypes could not be the adequate and only sphere for the exercise of the Divine attributes.

If, then, neither created existence itself, nor the archetypes of that creation, though eternally in the mind of Deity, afford an adequate sphere for the exercise of his attributes, we have still to determine what that sphere is. It is evident we must look to the Divine nature itself. This carries us to our next proposition.

PROPOSITION VIII.—*The Divine nature itself is the only sphere in which God's attributes can have adequate scope for their fullest exercise.*

It accords well with the independence and infinite excellence of the Divine Being, to say that all his resources are in himself. This is one fundamental distinction between the Creator and the creature, the perfect and the imperfect nature, the independent and the dependent being. The creature looks for happiness to something out of himself because he has nothing but what is derived. We have seen, too, that his only sufficiency is in God. This accords well with the fact, that he received his being and his all from God. But God himself receives nothing from the creature but his own. He gives all, but receives nothing. It is rational, therefore, to suppose that the Fountain of all being and of all blessing, should find his felicity, and the only adequate sphere for the infinite exercise of his own attributes, in his own nature. To this great truth we are conducted by the preceding arguments. The Creator and the creature comprehend all existence. If, then, the attributes of Deity have been eternally exercised, and neither the creature nor the archetypes of the creature be the adequate sphere of the Divine attributes, then the Divine nature itself must be that adequate sphere. There is nothing infinite but God himself, and that he is infinite and absolutely perfect reason and Scripture abundantly attest. His absolute perfection and infinity are as essential as his existence, and, therefore, his own nature must be adequate to the fullest scope of the exercise of his attributes; and as the eternal exercise of his attributes is as essential as the existence of his attributes, it follows, that not only must his nature afford an ample sphere for the fullest exercise of his attributes, but such must be the peculiar mode of his being, as to admit the possibility of the Divine attributes being exercised within and upon itself. This peculiar mode, too, must be an essential element of the absolute perfection of the Divine nature; for, if in that nature there was no mode of admitting this exercise, then, this exercise of the Divine perfections could not take place, and, consequently, the Divine nature must be

essentially imperfect. Absolute perfection, and infinite all-sufficiency, imply that the nature of God is such, that it is equal in its vastness to afford scope for the fullest exercise of its own powers, and that it has within itself such a peculiar mode as renders that exercise possible. To this conclusion we are conducted, by the preceding train of argumentation.

PROPOSITION IX.—*If the Divine nature be the only adequate sphere of the activity and exercise of the Divine attributes, then the peculiar mode of the Divine nature must include both agent and object within itself.*

Under Proposition II. it was proved that the exercise of the Divine attributes necessarily requires an object as well as an agent, and in Proposition VI. and VII. it was shown that neither the universe, nor the archetypes of the universe, could be the adequate object, and therefore both object and agent must exist in the Divine nature. As we cannot deny that both object and agent are necessarily implied in the exercise of the Divine perfections, and as we can find no adequate object in finite beings, we have no alternative but to conclude that such must be the peculiar mode of the Divine nature, that it possesses both object and agent within itself.

PROPOSITION X.—*If the Divine nature include both agent and object within itself, there must be some plurality in the Godhead.*

Under Proposition IV. it was proved that agent and object cannot be numerically, identically, and in every respect the same, for they involve such different relations to each other, as cannot be sustained by one absolutely solitary existence. There must, therefore, be such a distinction between agent and object, as involves plurality of some sort. We have now to inquire what are the agency and object involved.

PROPOSITION XI.—*If the Divine nature include some plurality, it must be a plurality of the Persons.*

It would be irrational to suppose a plurality of essences, for this the argument does not require; it is contradicted by the testimony of Scripture, and rendered improbable by the harmony, concord, and regularity of Nature; yet the plurality is real, and not nominal, as proved in Proposition IV. It can-

not be a plurality of offices, for mere offices, however distinct, cannot be agent and object to one another. Nor can the plurality consist of the Deity and his attributes, for neither can these be reciprocally agent and object one to another. The plurality must consist of persons—of persons possessing distinct consciousness. This has been proved under the Fourth Proposition, and the following remarks may be added.

In reference to some of the attributes, especially the moral perfections, the agent and the object stand in such relations as can be sustained only by Persons—mutually possessing intelligence, consciousness, and moral agency. Thus the love or moral benignity of God cannot, in its highest character, be exercised towards any but a conscious and intelligent object. The attribute of holiness, including veracity, justice, and faithfulness, cannot be, in its highest character, exercised toward any being but one capable of appreciating truth, justice, faithfulness, and moral excellence. Such an object must be a person.

The act of communion, as before stated, implies the reciprocal intercourse of thought, disposition, will, purpose, and benign affection. Therefore, if the agent be a person, so must the object be a person, for they are reciprocally agent and object to each other. At present we speak not of the dignity, involved in the object as well as the agent, sustaining these relations, and reciprocating this intercourse in its infinite extent. This must be noticed hereafter. At present we call attention merely to the truth, that the object as well as the agent must be a person, and, if so, the plurality in the Divine nature must be a plurality of Persons. Thus, reason conducts us step by step to a conclusion in perfect harmony with the doctrine of revelation, that there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead; and thus the thesis at first propounded becomes established as a rational deduction, and reason and Scripture are seen to harmonize. Nor are we aware that in this argument we have assumed any principle without proof, or taken any proposition for granted. We think each proposition in the series rationally springs from its predecessor. The whole seems to us to be built upon

established and unquestionable data, and the final conclusion to be as logically necessary as the first principle.

The preceding argument does not indeed determine whether there be two or three persons in the Godhead, but merely that there is a distinction of persons in the Deity. The Holy Scriptures, however, determine that the Persons are three—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. It will hereafter be shown that this also is consonant to reason.

PROPOSITION XII.—*Each person existing in the Godhead must exist necessarily and eternally.*

Whatever exists in the Deity must be necessary and eternal. There can be nothing in the Divine nature that is contingent or adventitious. Even every Divine attribute is essential and eternal: see Proposition the First, and our whole argument on the Divine attributes in the Second Book of this work. Now, what applies to attributes must apply with equal force to persons. Thus, if unity be essential to Deity, so is plurality. The plurality is absolutely essential to the Divine nature, and constitutes the Deity; therefore the Persons unitedly possess the Divine nature and essence, and each is necessarily and eternally existent.

PROPOSITION XIII.—*The Persons in the Godhead must possess infinite attributes.*

Each Person existing essentially and eternally must possess the attributes connected with essential being; each Person existing in the Divine essence must possess the perfections of that essence. Therefore, the infinite wisdom, power, goodness, holiness, and the absolute, natural, and moral perfections of the Father must be those of the Son and Holy Spirit. The same truth flows from the *exercise* of the Divine attributes; for, if an infinite agent requires and implies an infinite object, then, the persons in the Godhead being mutually agent and object to one another, each must be infinite: see Propositions VI. and VII.

PROPOSITION XIV.—*The Persons in the Godhead must be co-equal.*

Infinity does not admit of gradations. There is no being

between the finite and the infinite. If one Person in the Godhead were at all inferior to another in dignity and glory, in natural or moral excellence, he must be infinitely inferior. But each Person, as shown in the former proposition, is infinite. Each, possessing the Divine essence, must possess the Divine attributes: each, therefore, must be infinite in all his perfections, and, if infinite in his perfections, there can be no inferiority or superiority; therefore, the Divine Persons must be co-equal in power, glory, and dignity. Nor is this equality incompatible with the relations in which the persons stand to each other, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

PROPOSITION XV.—*As each Person essentially possesses the Divine attributes, so each must have eternally exercised them.*

For it has been demonstrated, that activity is involved in the very existence of the Divine nature, and it follows that this activity belongs to each Person. If it be essential to one Divine Person, it must, for the same reasons, be essential to the others; it cannot be predicated of one, and excluded from another. As an essential perfection, it must be the eternal characteristic of each blessed Person in the Godhead.

PROPOSITION XVI.—*As each Person in the Godhead has eternally exercised the Divine attributes, it follows, that they must have been reciprocally agent and object one to another from all eternity, and must continue such to all eternity.*

The Divine nature is to itself a sphere of infinite activity, and a source of infinite blessedness, independent of the existence of any created being. Benevolence is benignity or goodwill, and it was eternally exercised and reciprocated by the Persons in the Godhead, before any creature was brought into being. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, living eternally in essential union, sustained the most intimate relations, and from these relations, and the mutual possession of the Divine attributes, there must have subsisted the most intimate and endearing affection. Each must be full of benevolence and love to the other. Each loves, and each is loved in return. From all eternity the Father infinitely loved the Son, the Son infinitely loved the Father, and each infinitely loved the Holy Spirit, and

the Holy Spirit infinitely loved both. Infinite delight and blessedness must be associated with the consciousness of this infinite love one for another. The Father complacently sees his own image in the Son, and both see their image in the Holy Spirit, not dimly and imperfectly reflected, as in the creature, but clearly, perfectly, and infinitely — full-orbed in all the transcendent excellency and glories of absolute Divinity. Between infinite minds, thus united to each other, and complacently delighting in each other, there must be the most perfect fellowship and communion. With equal intelligence, the infinite thoughts and conceptions of the one would be comprehended by the others. The holy will of one would harmonize with the will of the others. The vast purposes and designs of one would be approved and delighted in by the others. All the mental operations, all the benevolent affections, and all the moral emotions of the Deity would thus be mutually reciprocated and approved with ineffable complacency. Though we, as finite beings, are unequal in our thoughts and conceptions, diverse in our sentiments, imperfect in our nature, and often inconstant in our affections, yet, the sanctified fellowship of human minds, one with another, is a prolific source of refined and exalted enjoyment. Still more refined and exalted is our enjoyment flowing from fellowship with God. What, then, must be the bliss springing from the communion of the Divine Persons, infinite in their attributes, absolutely perfect in all their qualities, essentially intimate, indissoluble, and eternal in their relations, and identical in all their thoughts, purposes, dispositions, and affections? Here must be harmony, corresponding with absolute perfection of nature. Here must be enjoyment corresponding with infinite capacity. Thus, the attribute of holiness would be exercised and manifested between the Persons of the Godhead. Though existing in ineffable union, yet possessing distinct consciousness, they must sustain moral relations to each other, and hence their intercourse must evince and elicit their moral dispositions, must develop their moral qualities. And, each mind being infinite in its capacity, the absolute rectitude of the Divine nature, all the moral excel-

lencies, and the infinite depths of the Divine perfections, would be unfolded to, and reciprocated by, each Person—the Father towards the Son, the Son towards the Father, and both towards the Holy Ghost. Further specification may not be necessary; nor is it possible for us to conceive all the infinite modes in which the Divine attributes would be eternally exercised by the Persons of the Godhead towards one another. But we may rest assured, that, seeing there are distinct personalities, with infinite attributes and capacities in each, and seeing these Divine Persons exist in eternal relations and essential union, there must be adequate scope for the fullest activity within the boundless sphere of the Divine nature itself, and resources therein of infinite and eternal felicity.

PROPOSITION XVII.—*The works of God—creation, &c.—are the works of each Person in the Godhead.*

In the operations of Deity we have to contemplate the Divine attributes exercised not only eternally and reciprocally and within the sphere of the Divine nature, but in the production of dependent creatures. After existing from eternity without any external manifestation, it pleased God at the pre-determined period, to issue the Almighty fiat in the creation of the material and spiritual universe. Now, if each Person possess and exercise the same attributes, it follows, that these external operations of God must be the works of each Person. The distinction existing between the personal consciousness and relations in the Godhead may, indeed, admit of such a distinction in their operations, *ad extra*, as that one mode of acting may, by the Divine counsel, be more especially assumed by one Person than by another; yet in all operations there must be such a harmonious concurrence of will, purpose, and design, and such a co-operation in the exercise of the Divine attributes, that the works of creation and providence must be the works of each. Thus the material universe, and the universe of mind, the creation and preservation of rational and irrational creatures, is one great effect of the conjoint operation of the three Persons in the Godhead. Revelation abundantly confirms what reason humbly suggests on this subject.

PROPOSITION XVIII.—*All creatures stand in the same relation to each Person in the Godhead.*

As the universe of matter and of mind is the work of each Person, and of all unitedly, it follows, that we stand related to each Divine Person as our Creator and God ; and as we stand in the same relation to each, we owe to each the same duties arising from that relation. Thus, if homage, worship, love, and obedience be due to one, we owe the same duties to each Person in the Godhead. Therefore, to deny the Deity of one Divine Person, is to insult the majesty of the other Persons ; and to present homage to one, while refusing it to another, is to present a sacrifice which cannot be accepted. Though distinct in personality, yet united in essence and attributes, one Divine Person cannot be denied or insulted without an affront being received by the Three.

PROPOSITION XIX.—*The Scriptural doctrine which determines the Divine Persons to be a triad, is consonant to reason.*

It has already been argued, that there must be a plurality of Persons ; revelation explicitly declares that plurality to be three, and this doctrine, though not discoverable by reason, is conformable to its testimony. A plurality is essential, but no reason can be conceived why that plurality should be more or less than Three. While the sacred volume asserts that there are three Persons, we think there are grounds for supposing this truth also is involved in the essential activity of the Divine Persons. The preceding argument, which proved that there must be a plurality of Persons, was based upon the truth, that as the attributes of the Divine Being are essential and eternal, so those which involve activity must have been exercised eternally, their activity being coeval with their existence. It was also argued in Proposition XV., that this activity belongs equally to each Person—that as each Person possesses the Divine nature and attributes, and as activity essentially belongs to one Person, it must belong to each. Now, if activity be essentially the characteristic of each Person contemplated distinctly, it is reasonable to suppose it is their characteristic *conjointly*. Viewing the intimate union and essential relation of the Father

and the Son, it is reasonable to suppose that they would exercise the Divine attributes conjointly. Now, any conjoint infinite act must have an infinite object, which shall stand in the same relation to both; and if an infinite object, it must be something not *ad extra*, but within the Divine nature, as proved in Propositions VI., VII., VIII. This object, too, must be a Person—a conscious intelligent object, as argued in Proposition V. If, then, this object be a Person, an infinite Person, and if this Person exist in the Divine nature, then must the Divine nature be of such a peculiar mode as to possess within itself the existence of a Third Person, which must have the same relation to the other Two Persons, being the object of both. The same reasoning applies equally to the conjoint action of the other Divine Persons respectively as agents and objects to each other. This is unquestionably the doctrine of Holy Scripture, and thus revelation and reason are seen to harmonize in this important truth, as well as in others.

Should it be asked, Does not this reasoning afford ground for rationally supposing that there may be more Persons than three? our reply is, We think not. In the above argument it is shown, that the conjoint activity of two Persons has an infinite object in the third. Thus, Father and Son being conjoint agents, say, in the exercise of infinite love, have the Holy Spirit for an object; the Son and Spirit being conjoint agents, have the adorable Father for an object of their infinite love; and the Father and Spirit being conjoint agents, have the Son as the blessed object of their infinite love. This completes the relations and reciprocity of the Persons, and reason can demand no more. Besides, we do not assume to be capable of affording a rigid *à priori* demonstration in this argument. Our aim is simply to show that the doctrine of revelation, which expressly determines the Persons to be a triad, is consonant to reason. In this, we trust we have succeeded. We clearly see how a conjoint action of two infinite Persons requires an infinite object, and as this completes the reciprocity and the relations between the Persons, reason requires no more, and the Holy Scriptures teach no more. This harmony between the teachings of revelation and the deductions of reason must be satisfactory

to every mind who reveres the sacred truths of the Bible, and restrains the dictates of human reason within their proper province.

PROPOSITION XX.—*The preceding arguments, for a plurality of Persons, combine to sustain the Scriptural doctrine of the unity of the Divine essence.*

It is a fundamental axiom that all truths must agree with one another. Sometimes, indeed, through the feebleness of our faculties and the faint degree of light we have upon a subject, there are paradoxical appearances, and seeming inconsistencies, which somewhat embarrass our judgment. Yet, when two propositions are found to be true, if contemplated in their isolated condition, we are intuitively certain they must be equally true when combined. It is, however, always satisfactory when we find the arguments in support of one truth uniting their strength to support and establish another truth, embodied in a distinct and separate proposition. Thus it happens with regard to the two distinct propositions respecting the Godhead, namely, the plurality of Persons, and the unity of essence; both doctrines are taught in the Scriptures, and, the Scriptures being true, both must be essentially and eternally true. The plurality of Persons we have shown is in accordance with reason, and indeed, as we think, necessarily involved in the eternal exercise of the Divine attributes, and the same general argument leads to the conclusion that the Deity, though three in Person, must be one in essence.

If the Divine Persons are reciprocally and adequately agent and object to one another, it follows, that they must possess absolute equality in intelligence, in love, in holiness, in all dispositions, affections, and powers. It has been shown, that, without this equality in the object, the exercise of the Divine perfections by the agent would be restrained and inadequate. It would not be commensurate with the capacities of the agent; and, from unequal powers and attributes, it must follow that there could be no full or adequate reciprocity. Seeing, however, that the all-sufficiency and absolute perfection of the Divine nature necessarily involve the adequate exercise of the Divine perfections, it follows, that the Persons who are mutually agent

and object to each other must be co-infinite, and therefore co-equal, and this argues unity of essence.

Most theologians, however diverse in their sentiments on other points of doctrine, contend that there can be but one infinite essence in existence. This almost universal agreement of sentiment is a fact which strongly argues how accordant the doctrine of God's essential unity is with man's unsophisticated judgment. In addition to the evidence derivable from the reasoning of these authors, we adduce peculiar reasons springing from the foregoing argument.

1. *Intelligence*.—That the Persons may be reciprocally agent and object to one another, we have shown that each must have infinite intelligence. Now, as truth is essentially and immutably the same, it follows that different degrees of intelligence can only arise from partial ignorance, and difference of judgment from liability to error, and indeed actual error. If such diversity were the characteristics of any one of the Persons, it would be a proof of a different nature; it would involve an essential difference, and be incompatible with identity of essence. But, as the intelligence of each is infinite, there can be no diversity in kind or degree of knowledge, no difference in judgment. Each Person has absolutely the same wisdom; and, therefore, the Divine Three must have the same views and the most perfect unanimity on all subjects. This eternal, unvarying, and immutable unanimity of views and sentiment, on all subjects, is a powerful argument for identity of nature and oneness of essence.

2. *Love*.—We have seen that each Divine Person exercises the same love—the same in its purity, its intensity, and immutability. Now, it is the characteristic of minds, essentially separate and different, to possess a corresponding difference of affection—the difference being one either in the nature, the intensity, or the objects of their affection. Such a variety is incompatible with identity of essence. But an affection of exactly the same nature always exercised toward the same objects, and with the same degree of intensity and constancy, through all eternity, argues an identity of essence. Such, then, is the identity of their love. In it there is not the least

diversity ; there never was, nor can there be for ever, and hence we argue their identity of essence.

3. *The Disposition for Communion.*—We have seen that the disposition for communion is exercised by each Person, and hence their reciprocal and eternal intercourse one with another. This disposition exists in the same intensity in each Person ; and with the same disposition there is the same capacity for its exercise. If either the disposition or the capacity of one exceeded that of the other, the intercourse could not be in the fullest sense reciprocal, and, consequently, could not be perfect ; it would be restrained and imperfect, nor could the essence of the Persons be identical. But we have previously seen the communion is perfect. The thoughts, the will, the purposes, the principles, and the benign affections of the one are identical with and reciprocated by the other. There is no defect, no diversity whatever. The harmony is complete ; the concord uninterrupted and eternal. Such absolute harmony in the three Persons strongly argues an identity of nature or essence.

4. *Holiness.*—We have seen that the dispositions and principles comprehended under the generic term holiness are reciprocally exercised by each Person in the Godhead. Now, the exercise of the attribute of absolute holiness by the several Persons through all eternity, implies the same clear, comprehensive, and immutable views of truth, of all relations, duties, and obligations, without the least obscurity, defect, or diversity in each Person ; it implies also the same unchangeable principles of rectitude in each Person ; the same benign and holy dispositions, and moral affections ; the same moral faculties and capacities in each, without the least diversity, defect, or change. Indeed, difference in moral sentiment, dispositions, or faculties would necessarily imply a different nature. But, seeing there is no diversity at all, either in moral sentiments, moral qualities, or capacities, but eternally and immutably the same, both in their nature and the extent of their exercise, such perfect identity in holiness argues an identity of nature.

Thus the arguments adduced to prove a plurality of Persons

in the Godhead, so far from being incompatible with the unity of the Divine essence, clearly imply that unity. All truths must accord with one another, and because the propositions in our arguments are true, they agree with both doctrines relating to the Godhead—namely, the plurality of Persons and the unity of essence. The decisions of sound reason accord with the teachings of revelation, which exhibit to man his glorious Creator as three in Person and one in essence—Jehovah, our Elohim, who in the clearness and plenitude of the Christian economy, is placed before us under the designation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL ARGUMENT.—A brief recapitulation of the principles established may assist the reader, by presenting before his eye, at one view, the great truths which sustain the doctrine laid down. It was first shown that the doctrine was not repugnant to reason, and then, in the positive argument, the following propositions were established :—

1. That all the attributes of the Divine nature are essential and eternal, equally so with the Divine essence.
2. That the active powers involved in the Divine attributes have been eternally exercised.
3. That the exercise of the Divine attributes implies the existence of object as well as agent.
4. That the object and agent involve such an essential and real distinction, as that they cannot be numerically and identically the same.
5. That the object, as well as the agent, must (at least, with reference to the exercise of the moral attributes) be a conscious, intelligent, and moral Being, because they are reciprocally agent and object to each other.
6. That no adequate object can be found in created existence, because all created existence is limited, both in its duration and its nature.
7. That no adequate object can be found in the archetypes of creation, for although they existed in the mind of Deity prior to creation, they are impersonal and finite.
8. That only in the Divine nature itself can an infinite and adequate object be found.

9. That, therefore, the Divine nature must exist in such a peculiar mode as comprehends within itself both agent and object.
10. That, seeing agent and object are comprehended in the Divine nature, there must be some plurality.
11. That the plurality thus existing in the Godhead must be a plurality of Persons.
12. That each Person must exist in the Godhead necessarily and eternally.
13. That each Person in the Godhead must possess infinite attributes, because nothing finite can exist essentially in the Divine nature.
14. That the Divine Persons, being infinite, must be co-equal in dignity and glory.
15. That each Divine Person must have eternally exercised the Divine attributes.
16. That, as each Divine Person has eternally exercised the Divine attributes, the Persons must have been reciprocally and eternally agent and object to one another.
17. Each person having mutually and eternally exercised the Divine attributes, it follows that all the operations, *ad extra*, must be the works of each Person, and of all conjointly.
18. That all finite beings stand in the same relation to each Person as creature and Creator, and owe to each the same homage, obedience, love, and devotion.
19. That the Persons are three, and three only, is a doctrine in conformity to reason, as well as to the Holy Scriptures.
20. That the arguments which thus sustain a personal plurality are in harmony with the unity of the Divine essence, and rationally support this doctrine.

It is thus made manifest, that neither Sabellianism, which denies the distinction of the Persons; nor Unitarianism, which denies the Divinity of two of the Persons; nor Tritheism, which denies the unity of the Divine essence, has any better foundation in reason than it has in Scripture. Sabellianism cannot be rational, for reason unites with Scripture in proving a plurality of Persons; Unitarianism cannot be rational, for reason unites

with Scripture in proving the Divinity and equality of each Person; and Tritheism cannot be rational, for reason unites with Scripture in establishing the unity of the Divine essence. It thus appears that the orthodox creed of Three Persons in one God, so far from being an enormous tax upon human credulity, is in harmony with the soundest philosophy. If to believe *without* evidence be credulity, then that credulity is justly chargeable upon the opponents of this doctrine. If to disbelieve in the face of the evidence of Scripture, sustained by the deductions of reason, be irrational, then that irrationality belongs to our opponents. But if to believe according to evidence be rational, then the faith of the orthodox Christian is rational.

THE DILEMMA OF AN OBJECTOR.—We know of no objections, of any moment, but what have already been answered, either directly or by implication, in the process of argumentation we have pursued. But if, indeed, there were some tangible difficulties which might be alleged, and which it might be impossible, with our present amount of knowledge, to remove, still no mere difficulty could overturn or set aside a rational conclusion. Such a corollary takes its legitimate place in the category of truths, and remains a truth, notwithstanding the difficulty connected with it. The truth arises from our knowledge, the difficulty arises from our ignorance; and what we know as a truth cannot be set aside by what we do not know. It is the part of a logical mind to retain every established truth, and wait for accessions to our knowledge, by which to remove any existing difficulty. The conclusion of our argument appears to us to flow logically from the premises involved in the preceding propositions. An opponent, who calls in question the correctness of our reasoning, is bound to prove either that our conclusion is false, or that our premises are unsound. If he can do neither, his objections are unreasonable. The propositions from first to last are, we conceive, inseparably connected, and the conclusion is, we think, as logically deduced as the first proposition is established. An attempt to invalidate them must, we think, necessarily involve an objector in inconsistencies and contradictions, as a brief investigation will make apparent.

Let us notice the consequences of an objector denying any of the propositions in this chain of argument.

1. If he deny the first proposition—that the attributes of Jehovah are essential and eternal, his denial implies that for an eternity God was without them. He thus makes the existence of God's attributes contingent, and involves the possibility that he might never have had them at all. Is this rational? Can we indeed conceive a greater absurdity? The notion is incompatible with the immutability and absolute perfection of the Deity, and, indeed, incompatible with his essence. It undeifies Jehovah, and denies the eternity and self-existence of his essence; for if his attributes are adventitious and contingent, so is his essence, as they cannot be separated from it even in conception. The notion, therefore, must be rejected on account of its absurdity.

2. If the objector admit the eternal existence of all the Divine attributes, but deny the eternal exercise of God's active powers and energies, we ask him for proof, but he can give us none. He is denying without any authority, either from Scripture or reason. Moreover, his denial implies that there was an eternity in which God did not exercise his active powers. Is this a rational supposition? His denial involves also a denial of the *existence* of some attributes, because their activity is essential to their very being. Thus, the attribute of omniscience involves the actual knowledge of all things: thus, the attribute of infinite love implies the exercise of love, for, if a being do not love, he is without love: thus, holiness involves the exercise of moral dispositions, and for a being not to exercise them is to be without holiness. To deny the exercise of these and other attributes is, then, to deny their existence, and involves the absurdity before mentioned. The immutability and absolute perfection of the Deity annihilate all such objections.

3. If an opponent admit the eternal exercise of some of Jehovah's active attributes, but deny the activity of others, again we ask him for proof;* but he has no proof to give from

* But if our argument only proved the eternal exercise of *one* Divine

revelation or from reason. We ask, then, Can it be rational to believe without proof? His denial is, indeed, contradictory to reason, for it implies that God is essentially different now from what he was during a prior eternity. This amounts to a denial of his immutability and absolute perfection. For instance, to admit the eternal exercise of wisdom, but to deny the eternal exercise of love, or holiness, or power, or a disposition for communion, is to change the character of God, and, in effect, to undeify him. We cannot conceive of Deity to be immutable and absolutely perfect, and yet to have existed from all eternity without the exercise of love, or holiness, or power; and the objection which involves the supposition must be rejected as untenable.

4. If he admit that the attributes of Deity must have been exercised eternally, but deny that their exercise involves the existence of any object, we reply, His denial implies an impossibility; for, if a being love something, that something loved is the object; if he commune with something, that something is the object, and so of the other attributes. The exercise of each involves the existence of object as well as agent.

5. If he admit that the exercise of an attribute requires an object as well as an agent, but deny that the object is a personal existence, we reply, None but a personal existence, or a conscious, intelligent mind, can be the object with respect to the exercise of some of the Divine attributes. For instance, love or benignity cannot be exercised towards mere unorganized matter, nor, in its highest sense, towards any object, except it be a rational mind. Holiness implies moral relations, such as can exist only between moral agents; it implies dispositions and affections which can only be exercised towards moral agents. So the disposition to communion can be exercised only between conscious and intelligent minds, and such minds must have a

attribute which required an intelligent object, it would be sufficient to establish a plurality of Persons. Thus before an objector can resist our argument, he must be prepared to prove that God, from all eternity, never exercised one attribute which required an object.

real personal existence. The objection, therefore, cannot stand ; it involves a contradiction to reason.

6. If he admit that the object, as well as the agent, must possess a conscious, intelligent, and personal existence, but contend that the objects exist in the created universe, we reply, This cannot be ; for the objects constituting the created universe are not eternal. Besides, if they were eternal, they would be inadequate, because finite and limited. This objection, therefore, falls to the ground.

7. If he admit that no created being can be the object, but contend that the archetypes, or ideas, in the Divine mind were the objects, we reply, These ideas have no personal and substantive existence, which the exercise of the Divine attributes necessarily requires in the objects, as well as in the agent ; and, moreover, if they had, they are inadequate, because finite. This objection, like the former, has no rational foundation.

8. If he admit that the object as well as the agent cannot be either in external Nature or in the archetypes of Nature, then he must admit the existence of a plurality of Persons who, from eternity, have been mutually agent and object to one another in the reciprocal exercise of the Divine perfections.

9. If he contend that this conclusion involves the existence of three separate beings, as distinct from each other in essence as in personal consciousness, we reply, The argument does not sustain this conclusion. It necessarily proves the existence of a plurality in consciousness ; and, in connection with this truth, it affords powerful evidence that there must be a unity of essence. The reciprocal possession and exercise of the same attributes, the same perfections, the same dispositions, and the same affections, involve the possession of an identical nature and essence ; for, where there is no difference, or variety, in any property, it is irrational to suppose a different nature, or essence ; and if the essence be one, the Persons cannot be *separate* beings. They are distinct in personality, yet united in essence.

10. If the objector admit a oneness of essence, but argue for a gradation of dignity in the Persons, he reasons inconsistently ;

for, identity of nature and attributes necessarily implies equality in the Persons. Any inferiority would imply an infinite disparity; but this is impossible, seeing each Person possesses the same attributes in infinite measure.

11. If he finally admit this, as we conceive he must, he admits, with us, the Divine nature to consist of a plurality of Persons, with unity of essence.

12. If he admit this, he will find no difficulty in admitting the truth of the Scriptural doctrine which restricts the plurality to three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, especially as this truth also is sustained by the verdict of reason, as we have shown in Proposition XIX.

13. In admitting this, he recognizes, with us, each Person in the Godhead as sustaining the same relations to mankind, and to the whole intelligent universe, as our Creator and our God, claiming the same homage, adoration, obedience, affection, and devotedness.

14. In the reception of this doctrine, he finds reason and revelation harmonize, and he is able to see how the Divine attributes have been infinitely exercised from eternity, irrespective and independent of all created being. He has no need either to deny the existence and exercise of the Divine attributes; or, like Plato, Aristotle, and other ancient philosophers, to suppose the eternity of the universe, in order to find an object for the exercise of the Divine perfections, for, even if the universe were eternal, it would be inadequate. He sees that the only adequate sphere for the exercise of the Divine attributes is the Divine nature, and the absolute perfection and all-sufficiency of the Divine nature necessarily involve a mode of existence which admits their exercise reciprocally by the Persons in the Godhead.

He sees the faculty of infinite intelligence or wisdom exercised by each, in mutually penetrating the infinite depths and capabilities of the Divine nature, in reciprocally comprehending the thoughts, purposes, will, and operations of an infinite mind. He sees infinite energy in that essential vitality which characterizes each. He sees infinite love, reciprocally

exerted by the Divine persons, existing as they do in essential union, and the most intimate and endearing relations; the Father infinitely delighting in the Son and Spirit, and the Son and Spirit infinitely delighting in the Father and in each other. He sees the disposition to communion exercised without bounds—the intimate union, the endearing relation and infinite love of each, giving infinite intensity to the disposition, and the capacity of each affording infinite scope for its gratification; every thought, however vast; every purpose, however profound; every volition; every affection, however intense, being fully understood, appreciated, and reciprocated by each Person, in eternal harmony and delectation. He sees how infinite holiness can be exercised and manifested. In the eternal relations of the Divine Persons, in their infinite capacities and powers, he sees how truth, faithfulness, justice, benignity, and all moral qualities and affections have an infinite scope, and can be exercised without any limit, either in their duration or extent. He sees that infinite blessedness must be the associate of such a union of the Persons, from such a mode of their existence, and from such a reciprocal exercise of the Divine perfections. If finite happiness flows from the exercise of finite benign affections, from finite and imperfect intercourse, from finite and imperfect holiness, he sees that infinite and eternal happiness must flow from such attributes when exercised without limit, without imperfection, and without interruption. Such, then, must be the essential, eternal, and independent blessedness of the Triune God. Through the infinite ages which preceded the first fiat of creation, he was thus blessed; had creation not yet existed, he would have been thus blessed; had creation been postponed for myriads of ages yet to come, he would have been thus blessed; and had it been determined that creation should never take place at all, he would remain thus infinitely blessed. The Divine nature itself, comprehending a plurality of Persons, with a unity of essence, constitutes an independent sphere of eternal activity, and an independent source of infinite blessedness.

While, in this argument, he sees that the Divine nature

itself, from its eternity, its infinity, and its trinal distinction of persons, is the independent and eternal sphere of its own activity, and the source of its own infinite blessedness, he can perceive no discrepancy with this doctrine in the creation of the universe. The former presents before us the eternal and infinite mode of the exercise of the Divine perfections, but the latter presents us with a particular and finite mode of their exercise. Thus, creation existed not because it was essential to Deity, but because he willed it; not because the exercise of his perfections could not take place without it, but because his wisdom determined it. He determined its mode, its particular limitation, its laws, its arrangements, its operations, its varieties of being, the date of its origin, the duration of its continuance in any particular state, and every other characteristic and property belonging to it. He resolved that there should be other intelligent beings besides himself, not because he needed them, as the only mode of exercising his moral attributes, or was constrained by any internal necessity to create them, but because it was his pleasure to give them existence, and cause them to participate of his love and happiness. At a determined period he gave them their being; he made them capable of knowing, loving, obeying, and enjoying him. He gave them a moral nature, impressed upon them his own likeness, and imparted to them immortality. Creation was intended to be an external manifestation of himself; and rational and moral beings were fitted to perceive that manifestation, so that, looking into the great mirror of Nature, they might see the reflection of the wisdom, power, goodness, and glory of the Creator; and, rightly exercising their own faculties, and living in obedience to his will, they might enjoy his favour, realize perpetual communion with him, and participate of the joys springing from his benignity through time and eternity. Though such a particular manifestation of the Deity could, neither in its duration nor its extent, be an adequate sphere for the exercise of his infinite attributes, nor a source of happiness adequate to his infinite capacities—for the finite cannot fill the infinite—yet, creation was in perfect accordance with his independence, his

absolute perfection, and all-sufficiency. It was, indeed, because his nature and mode of being were eternally such as we have proved them to be, that there could be any external manifestation of the Deity. Had not the Divine attributes been exercised eternally, they never could have commenced their operations in time; had they not been exercised within the Divine nature, they never could have been put forth and displayed in the actual existence of the universe. The wisdom, the power, the benignity, the holiness, and all the active perfections of God we behold in Nature and providence, are so many evidences and manifestations that these active properties existed in the Deity prior to creation and providence, and that they existed in him eternally, essentially, and unchangeably.

The plurality of Persons, conjoined with the unity of essence, presents a mode of existence which harmonizes with universal truth, so far as we can investigate that truth, whether in the nature of the Deity, or in the objective manifestations of his existence and perfections. The *à priori* argument from the Divine nature proves it, and the *à posteriori* argument from created Nature accords with it. We see nothing discordant with the doctrine of the Trinity but what is discordant with truth. We see no way of resisting it but that of perverting our reason, and resisting evidence which has the force of a moral demonstration. Were there no attainable evidence of this doctrine in the present life, it would be our bounden duty to yield it our implicit and unwavering credence on the testimony of God; for our allegiance to him involves the submission of our understanding to his teaching, as well as our will to his absolute control; but when revealed truth is sanctioned and corroborated by reason, the sin of rejecting it becomes aggravated.

CHAPTER II.

THE MODE OF THE ARGUMENT IS SUSTAINED BY THE
TESTIMONY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

WHATEVER doctrine or proposition is revealed from heaven is true, but it is not the fact of its being thus revealed that makes it true. It was absolutely true before it was revealed, and would have been eternally and unchangeably true had it never been revealed to man. Though it should remain for ever unknown to man, it would be known to God, and recognized by his omniscient and infallible mind as absolutely true. All that revelation does, then, in respect to any truth, is to make it known to man, and thus invest it with Divine authority ; and the duty of man is to receive it cordially and thankfully as truth. With respect to some doctrines thus revealed from heaven, it may be that we are not able to produce any demonstration of their truth, but it is certain we can produce no demonstration to the contrary. It therefore is our duty to admit them as truths because of their Divine authority. The fact that they are revealed from heaven is a guarantee to us that they are true ; for they are declared by that God who cannot be deceived himself, and who cannot deceive his creatures. His infinite wisdom precludes the possibility of his being deceived himself, and his unchangeable rectitude and goodness preclude the possibility of his deceiving others. Therefore, whatever doctrine or proposition he declares in his blessed word must be unchangeably, eternally, and absolutely true. This is a fundamental principle which every rational mind must admit. If, then, it be received as a fundamental principle that every doctrine which God reveals is true, it follows that whenever a process of reasoning contradicts the Scriptures it must be false. There must be error somewhere in the argument, either in the premises or in the conclusion. But, on the other hand, when-

ever we reason correctly, both our process of argument and our conclusion must be in conformity with revelation. If, then, the doctrine of the Trinity be revealed from heaven, no rational argument can disprove it. This is impossible. Every argument which affects to disprove it must be false somewhere; either the premises are untenable, or the conclusion is illogical.

The *conclusion* of our argument on the Trinity is unquestionably in harmony with the Scripture doctrine, and must be true; and if the process of argument which leads to this conclusion be correct, it will follow that the premises themselves are also in harmony with Scripture. Since the argument was conceived and written out, we have been struck with a variety of instances, in which its leading and fundamental propositions are sustained by incidental declarations of Holy Scripture. The fundamental principles in the argument are these—that as the Divine attributes are exercised *now*, so if God is unchangeable they must have been exercised not merely within the limited period of creation, but eternally; and as their exercise requires an object, that object must be eternal also; and as their exercise, to be adequate, must be infinite, so their object must be both infinite and eternal; and as the object must be a conscious personal existence, so the Divine nature, which alone is infinite and eternal, must be characterized by such a peculiar mode as includes a plurality of persons.

After this argument was elaborated by rational induction, the inquiry naturally suggested itself to the mind of the author, Seeing the *conclusion* of the argument is in perfect accordance with the Holy Scripture, do the several *premises* in the process of the argument derive any sanction from the same Divine authority? Do the Scriptures speak at all on the fundamental principles here laid down by reason, and if they do, what is their testimony? Contemplated purely as a rational argument, it was not incongruous to make this inquiry, and it certainly could not be without some interest and importance. The inquiry thus suggested soon brought before the mind a variety of texts, which uttered no equivocal testimony in support of the leading principles of our argument.

It will at once be seen that any passages available for this object must refer to the mode of the Divine existence prior to all created being, and totally independent and irrespective of all created being; and several such passages are supplied in the Word of God. While there is not a single text in the Bible which represents the attributes or active perfections of the Deity as being dormant or latent prior to creation, there are several which describe them as in active operation prior to the first fiat of creative power. While there is no passage which represents God, in the exercise of his attributes, as being both agent and object in the same act, abstractedly and absolutely considered, there are several passages which represent his attributes as being so exercised as to involve agent and object distinct from one another. While there is no passage which represents God as existing in that absolute oneness which excludes all plurality from his nature, there are several which describe him prior to all creation, existing in such a plurality as admitted of the reciprocal exercise of love, communion, holiness, &c. It is our duty to adduce a few of these remarkable portions of Scripture.

I. *The eternal exercise of love.*

In our argument we laid down the proposition that love requires an object as well as an agent, and the object must be co-eternal and co-infinite with the agent. Our blessed Lord expressly declares that the Father loved him before the era of recorded time, or before the foundation of the world: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John xvii. 24). This passage carries our minds back to eternity, to the ages which preceded any *created* existence. The foundation of the world means the beginning of time. *Since* the foundation, or *from* the foundation of the world, means since time began to be; but *before* the foundation of the world means *eternity*—the infinite ages prior to any created existence. Take a few examples. Christ is said to have been "slain

from the beginning of the world" *—that is, set forth by type, promise, and prophecy, as a sacrificial victim through all the ages of time. But in another place he is said to have been ordained to be a Saviour prior to this period, even from eternity; as the Apostle Peter states, he was "foreordained BEFORE the foundation of the world." † So saints were chosen in Christ to gospel privileges from eternity; as Paul says, "According as he hath chosen us in him BEFORE the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." ‡ Thus it is clear as the light of day that the phrase, "before the foundation of the world," means that dateless eternity which preceded all created existence. The Psalmist, in like manner, refers to the infinite ages prior to creation, and speaks of that period as the eternity of God's existence: "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God." §

The Redeemer's words, therefore, carry us back to that awful eternity which preceded creation, when there was not a creature yet formed, and show us the mode or condition of the Divine existence at that period. What, then, was the mode of the Divine existence during that preceding eternity? Was it one of inactivity? On the contrary, it was one of love; it was one in which the benevolent affection was in full exercise. What then did God love? Was it mere self-love, or was it a benevolent love directed to an object? It was love directed to an object, as truly, as really, as it is this moment. Who, then, was the object of this love prior to all creation, prior to the existence of any created being, and during the awful eternity of his existence? Our Lord's words give the answer most emphatically: "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." When there was no being as yet in existence, when the universe was unborn, when there was as yet no external manifestation of his perfections, the eternal Father loved, and the eternal Son was the object of his love. This corroborates the leading principle of our argument—that love requires an

* Rev. xiii. 8. † 1 Peter i. 20. ‡ Ephes. i. 4. § Psalm xc. 2.

object as well as an agent, and the object as well as the agent must be a person, and must be eternal.

II. *The Father and the Son existed in mutual glory during that eternity which preceded creation.*

“And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was,” John xvii. 5. This passage carries us back to the same dateless period of eternity, to the ages prior to the existence of any created object, and represents both Father and Son enjoying together a state of glory. The passage is very remarkable, and worthy of a thorough investigation. To elicit the meaning and application of the passage, it is requisite to inquire, First, What is meant by the glory of God? and, Secondly, What is intended by Christ having this glory with the Father *himself*?

1. The glory of God means his estate of dignity, perfection, and blessedness. Our Lord's words clearly indicate that, whatever glory God has now, he had before a creature was formed; for he speaks of his glory “before the world was.” If it be essential to his glory *now* to be holy, just, benevolent, wise, powerful—to possess and exercise all his attributes, it was equally an element of his glory before the world was. We cannot detach any of these properties, qualities, or perfections from God, without detracting from his glory. We cannot suppose him to have been deficient in any one of them prior to creation, without supposing his glory to have been less at that period than what it is now. But, as our Lord's words imply he had the same glory before the world was, they necessarily imply that he had the same elements of perfection, dignity, and happiness from all eternity, and, therefore, the Scriptures being our guide, his attributes were exercised eternally.

2. Our Lord teaches that he had this glory with the Father before the world was; he therefore participated with him in the dignity, perfection, and blessedness of his nature from all eternity. As our Lord's language necessarily carries us to a period anterior to all creation, it necessarily refers to the condition of the Divine existence, independent of, and abstracted from, all created being. What, then, was that condition of the

Divine existence? It was one of glory naturally enjoyed by a plurality—the glory arising exclusively from the Divine nature. “Glorify thou me with thine own self (*παρὰ σεαυτῶ*)”—not with any external dignities or honours, but with thine own abstract self, thy very nature, thy very being, thine own essential perfections, even “with the glory which I had with thee (*παρὰ σοί*) before the world was.” Thus it is evident that from all eternity the Son enjoyed a glory in or with the Father’s own self. This glory, then, was not adventitious, but essential; not created, but uncreated; not external, but internal, or within the Divine nature—it was a glory within the very *self* or essential being of the Deity. The passage before examined represents the Father as loving the Son before any created being existed, and this passage represents him and the Son together enjoying a glory which had no source but his own self, his own essential being, and that before the world was. The two periods referred to in each passage are therefore the same—both texts carry us to that eternity before a creature was yet in existence; and they both describe the same state of being; for, if the Son was eternally loved by the Father, he must have enjoyed his eternal and essential glory; and if he enjoyed his essential glory, he must have been an object of his eternal love.

There is a beautiful and expressive harmony in the phrases employed in these passages. As the reference is to a state of being prior to all creation, it is evident that whatever love and glory were reciprocated must have been with the Deity *alone*; and hence the appropriate phrase, “*with thine own self*.” There was as yet no created being who could give him glory, who could love or glorify either Father or Son. If glory was enjoyed, or if love was reciprocated, in unison with any being at all in that anterior eternity, it must have been with the Deity alone; as our Lord states, “*with thine own self*.” He is speaking of a period when, as yet, the foundations of the world were not laid, when the matter of the universe was not called into being, when no seraph had gazed upon his majesty, when no radiant worshipper had veiled his face and fallen prostrate

before him, when the vast solitudes of space were untenanted, and the silence of eternity unbroken by the voice of any created being, and when the Godhead existed alone. It was then that the Son was loved by the Father; it was then that he had a glory with the Father's "*own self*," and with no other—in unison with his infinite, essential, and eternal being.

3. This language is expressive also of agent and object existing in the Deity. If the Son had a glory with the Father's "*own self*," and the Father with the Son, there was distinct consciousness, and mutual recognition, reciprocal love, holiness, communion, and blessedness, in which they were mutually agent and object one to another. This Scriptural representation, then, is in full harmony with our argument, and sustains its fundamental premises.

III. In our argument we have stated, that if in the Godhead there be a plurality of Persons, who are mutually object and agent to each other, they must thoroughly know each other. The thoughts, purposes, and will of each must be reciprocally understood and comprehended. This too is expressly asserted in the Sacred Scriptures, and asserted in reference to each Person—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Thus, the Father and the Son are declared mutually to know each other. Our Lord says, "As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father."* No one will dispute the perfect knowledge of the Father, but here the same perfection is ascribed to the Son. In the same perfect manner, the Holy Ghost is declared to have a knowledge which pierces into the very depths of the Godhead, and comprehends every thought, volition, purpose, disposition, and affection. "For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."† Just as a human soul is conscious of all its own thoughts, volitions, desires, emotions, and determinations, so the Holy Spirit is conscious of all that exists in the mind of Deity. In the same express

* John x. 15.

† 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.

manner God the Father is said to know the mind of the Spirit. "He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit."*

These Scriptures, therefore, teaching such absolute knowledge by, and of, each Person—by the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, plainly declare that they are reciprocally agent and object to each other; and if so now, they must have been so from all eternity. For the knowledge of the Father comprehends all the events of eternity—all that exists in his own nature; and all that has, does, or will exist in external nature. If, then, the Son comprehends this, he must be eternal; and if the Spirit comprehends this, he must be eternal also. Each Person must also be infinite. No finite mind can comprehend infinity; for, says the Saviour, "No being (not no *man*, for that word is not in the original, but)—no being knoweth the Son, but the Father."† Thus the teachings of Holy Scripture give direct support to the several premises in our argument.

IV. The mutual knowledge, love, and glory here eternally ascribed to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, imply the most intimate communion, the most delightful fellowship, one with another. From what we know of the laws of mind, a delightful fellowship must subsist between human beings when they have mutual views, harmonious sentiments and affections; and it is irrational, and, indeed, impossible to suppose a different result in the Three Divine Persons. If the Father is conscious of all the thoughts, intentions, purposes, and dispositions of the Son; and the Son of the Father, and the Holy Ghost of both, and both of the Holy Ghost; and if this mutual knowledge is combined with reciprocal love, there must be the most intimate and delightful communion. This itself, in fact, is actual communion of the most intimate and exalted kind which can be conceived—a communion yielding felicity as boundless as their infinite capacities, and as durable as their existence. If, then, the Sacred Scriptures teach that this was the condition of the

* Rom. viii. 27.

† Καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐπιγινώσκει τὸν υἱὸν εἰ μὴ ὁ πατήρ.—Matt. xi. 27.

Divine nature prior to all creation—during those dateless ages of eternity when there was nothing in existence but the Deity, it is obvious that our argument from reason is corroborated by the testimony of revelation—the *premises* of our argument, as well as the conclusion, have the direct sanction of Divine authority. It is satisfactory to find the harmony and consistency of reason and Scripture thus demonstrated.

V. Our argument for the essential union of the Persons is also sanctioned by the testimony of Scripture. The Apostle John declares, that “in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.”* The period intended by the phrase—in the beginning, is the eternity which preceded creation. This is too obvious to be rationally doubted. The whole context irresistibly proves it. The Evangelist speaks of two distinct periods. He speaks first of the condition of the Divine existence *prior* to creation; and then proceeds to speak of creation itself. Having spoken, in the first two verses, of what was the condition of the Divine existence *before* creation, he observes, in the next verse, “All things were made by him (the Divine Word); and without him was not anything made that was made.” This shows plainly that he speaks of two periods—eternity and time; and it so clearly fixes and defines the first period of which he was speaking that we cannot mistake it. That period was evidently the eternity prior to the existence of any created thing; not only prior to the existence of our world, but prior to all things, for, he emphatically declares, “without him was not anything made that was made.”

What, then, does he affirm was the condition or mode of the Divine existence during those awful and dateless ages of eternity? Did the Deity then exist in absolute oneness? Was there no plurality at all? The Apostle expressly affirms that the Divine Logos was then in existence—that he was co-existent with God, for “he was with God, and he was God.” Carry

* John i. i, 2. “Sic mos Hebræis Eternitatem populariter describere.” —*Grotius*. Such was the Hebrew manner of setting forth eternity.

back, then, the period of the existence of the Father as remotely as we may, we have the same duration ascribed to the Son. During whatever period the Father existed, the Logos was with him. If the Father was eternal, so was the Son, for he was with him. There is no difference—the same eternity is as applicable to one Divine Person as the other. Here, then, was plurality—an eternal plurality.

But this plurality is compatible with the most intimate and essential union of nature, for it is declared, "*The Word was with God.*" The Apostle intended this union to be as vividly impressed upon our minds as the Divine plurality, for he asserts the one in immediate connection with the other, and he asserts it twice. Not content with once uttering the assertion, "The Word was with God," he immediately reiterates the truth: "The same was in the beginning with God." There is a peculiar emphasis intended by this repetition. It is, indeed, the Apostle's usual manner of marking the importance of a subject, of expressing its peculiarity, and drawing special attention to it. The phrase rendered *with God* (*πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*) is expressive of the most intimate union compatible with distinction. It is, indeed, synonymous with the passage before quoted from John xvii. 5, where our Lord speaks of the glory which he had WITH the Father before the world was. The same truth is repeated in John's First Epistle (i. 2): "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; for the Life was manifested, and we have seen IT, and bear witness, and show unto you that Eternal Life, which was with the Father (*πρὸς τὸν πατέρα*), and was manifested unto us." He who is here called the Word and the Life, is declared to have been manifested in the flesh, and so manifested that the Apostle had seen him, and heard him, and handled him; but, prior to this manifestation he was *with the Father*—that is, as we have shown, he existed from eternity in the most intimate union with him. In another place the same essential union is asserted by his being "in the bosom of the Father," and by his being one with the Father: "I and my Father are one." So inti-

mately *one* in nature, attributes, and propriety, that the Redeemer could say, "All things that the Father hath are mine." So intimately one in nature, attributes, and operation, that he was the express image of his person, and could say to the inquiring disciple, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me." These, and all such passages, serve to unfold more clearly and fully the meaning of the Apostle's language, when, referring to the eternal existence of the Divine Word, he declares that he was in the beginning with God; and the meaning of our Lord's own words, when he speaks of being loved by the Father before the foundation of the world, and of enjoying a glory with the Father—with the Father's own self, before the world was.*

Such, then, are some of the representations which the Scriptures afford, when they make any reference to the condition of the Divine existence prior to creation. They never set forth the Deity as dwelling in that absolute oneness which excludes all plurality and distinction of Persons, nor in that absolute solitude which excludes the possibility of his attributes being exercised upon some object. But they represent Jehovah as a plurality of persons from all eternity, loving and being loved, as mutually enjoying glory together, as communing with and realizing felicity one with another—the sphere of the eternal activity, and the source of the Divine happiness, being solely comprehended in the boundless ocean of the Divine nature. This, then, is the doctrine of the sacred records respecting God, whenever they carry our thoughts to the mode of

* The phrase, *πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*, expresses the sense of the dative—*παρὰ σεαυτῷ*, with thyself; and *παρὰ σοί*, with thee—John xvii. 5. Thus it is rendered by Ignatius, *παρὰ πατρὶ*. Compare also *πρὸς ἡμᾶς*, Mark vi. 3, with Prov. viii. 30, where, in the Septuagint, wisdom is said to have been *παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ*; and Sapientia ix. 9, where the same sense is given to *μετα σοῦ ἡ σοφία*.

God's existence, during those immeasurable ages of eternity which preceded the first fiat of creative energy ; and here we find the premises of our argument sanctioned by Divine authority—we see the dictates of reason corroborated by the teachings of revelation.

VI. We may notice another passage which directly confirms our reasoning on the absolute independence and all-sufficiency of God, and on the Divine nature itself being the only adequate sphere of his own activity, and the source of his happiness. The passage we refer to is the following : “ Who is like unto Jehovah, our Elohim, who dwelleth on high, who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in earth ? ” Now, the things that are in heaven and in earth are all things that exist besides himself ; all created beings, whether material or immaterial ; whether rational or irrational ; whether human or angelic, the highest as well as the lowest. It is here said to be a condescension on the part of God to behold them, to notice them ; and if a condescension to behold them, he is absolutely independent of them—independent of their very existence—absolutely independent of them for his happiness, his perfection, his glory, and the exercise of his attributes. If he is thus independent of them now, he always was, for he is unchangeable. And if absolutely and eternally independent of them, there was no need for his creating them ; such must be his nature and the mode of his existence, that it has, within itself alone, a source of blessedness, and a sphere of activity adequate to its infinite faculties, energies, and capacities. Such a nature, we have shown, implies a plurality—object as well as agent within itself, and both agent and object must be Persons—infinite, eternal, co-equal Persons. Thus, the rational interpretation of this passage involves both the premises and the conclusion of our argument. Reason and Scripture lead to the same result.

Yet, though absolutely independent and eternally blessed as the Deity is in himself, essentially united and completely happy as the Divine Persons are in themselves, they do not exclude the creatures from their regard. Though a regard to created existence is a condescension, they *do* condescend to

behold the things that are in heaven and in earth. It was their blessed will to create them, it is their blessed will to regard them, to supply their need, to promote their welfare and happiness. The essential glory and infinite blessedness of the Divine Persons are within themselves, as much so since creation as in those immeasurable ages which preceded creation; but they love the works of their own hand, and delight to do them good, though they need them not. Thus their regard to the creature springs from pure, disinterested benevolence. Their all-sufficiency resides in their own infinite nature. The adequate sphere for the operation of their own essentially active energies, and the source of their absolute blessedness, reside in themselves; thus it was prior to all created being—thus it has been during the existence of created being—thus it is now, and ever shall be through the infinite ages of eternity to come.

CHAPTER III.

DIRECT TESTIMONY OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURE AS TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY TRINITY.

As this volume may fall into the hands of some readers who are not in possession of the author's volume of "Theology," wherein the Scripture doctrine of the Trinity is copiously unfolded, it may be proper to close with a brief and concentrated view of the direct evidence which the sacred Scriptures so richly furnish in reference to that important doctrine, which has been confirmed by a process of rational argumentation.

First.—*The names of God are directly applied to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.* This is never questioned respecting the Father. The Son is designated God—the true God—the blessed God—the great God—the mighty God—God over all—the Lord God—Jehovah—Jehovah of hosts. See John i. 1; 1 John v. 19, 20; Rom. ix. 5; Titus ii. 13; Isaiah ix. 6; Luke i. 16, 17; Eph. iv. 8, 9, 10, compared with Psalm lxxviii. 18; Isaiah vi. 1—3. The

Holy Ghost is designated God—Lord—Jehovah—Jehovah God—the God of Israel—Jehovah God of hosts. Acts v. 3—9; 2 Cor. iii. 18; Acts i. 16—20, compared with Psalms xlix. and cix.; Luke i. 67; Judges xv. 14; Isaiah vi., compared with Acts xxviii. 25—27. From a view of these and a multitude of other passages, it is evident that the peculiar and proper names of Deity are applied to the Divine Three—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Secondly.—*The attributes and perfections of God are those of a Trinity of Persons.*

1. *Each glorious Person is declared to be eternal.*—Of the Father it is said, “From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.” Of the Divine Word it is said that “he is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last;” that “he was in the beginning with God;” and that “his goings forth have been from the days of eternity.” And of the Holy Ghost it is said that “Christ, through the *Eternal Spirit*, offered himself, without spot, a sacrifice to God.”—Psalm xc. 2; Rev. i. 8; Heb. ix. 14, &c.

2. *The power of God is the power of the blessed Trinity.*—Speaking of the Father’s agency, the Apostle says that he was “appointed a minister of the Gospel by the grace of God, given unto him by the effectual working of *God’s power*.” Speaking of the Son he saith: “Most gladly will I glory in my infirmities, that the *power of Christ* may rest upon me.” And speaking of the Holy Ghost, he saith that “signs and wonders were wrought by the *power of the Spirit of God*.”—Eph. iii. 7; 2 Cor. xii. 9; Rom. xv. 19.

3. *The omnipresence of God is the omnipresence of the glorious Three in One.*—“Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith Jehovah.” Of the Son it is said, that “he filleth all in all.” To Moses God said, “In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.” Christ said, asserting the same Divine attribute, “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Of the Holy Ghost the Psalmist said, “Whither shall I go from *thy Spirit*? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?” And, again, the

Holy Spirit, to denote his omnipresence, is said to dwell in the hearts of God's people. Thus it is evident the omnipresence of the Deity is the omnipresence of the Trinity in Unity.—Jer. xxiii. 24; Eph. i. 23; Exod. xx. 24; Matt. xviii. 20; Psalm cxxxix. 7.

4. *The holiness of God is the holiness of the glorious Trinity.*—“Who would not fear thee, O Jehovah, and glorify thy name, for thou only art holy?” Of Christ it is said, that he is “the Holy One.” “But ye denied the Holy One, and desired a murderer to be released unto you.” The Spirit is emphatically called “the Holy Ghost.” “Ye have an-unction from the Holy One.” And of the whole Trinity the cherubim and seraphim exclaim, “Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts.” Rev. xv. 4; Acts iii. 14; 1 John ii. 20; Isaiah vi. 3.

5. Truth, as an attribute or perfection of God, is the attribute of the *blessed Three in One*.—Of the Father it is said by Christ, “He that sent me is True.” Of the Divine Logos, or Word, it is declared, “These things saith he that is Holy, he that is True, he that hath the key of David.” “This is the True God and Eternal Life.” Of the Holy Ghost it is said, “It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is Truth.” Thus the Truth of God is the Truth of the Trinity in Unity. John vii. 28; Rev. iii. 7; 1 John v. 20; 1 John v. 6.

6. *The omniscience of God is the omniscience of the Triune Jehovah.*—Of the Father it is said, that “he searcheth the heart.” Christ also declares, “All the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and the hearts.” Of the Holy Ghost it is said, that “the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” Jer. xvii. 10; Rev. ii. 23; 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. Here is an appeal to our own consciousness. As a man knows his own thoughts, affections, and emotions, and as no one else can know them but himself, so the Holy Ghost, penetrating the profound depths of the Godhead, understands and comprehends all the thoughts and purposes, and is conversant with all the dispositions and

affections in the mind of the Deity, through all the ages of eternity.

7. The benevolence of God is the benevolence of the ever blessed *Three in One*.—The prophet Nahum says, “The Lord is good,” “He is a stronghold in the day of trouble.” And it is said, “God so loved the world,” &c. Of the Son, also, it is said, that “Christ *loved* the Church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,” and so on. And of the Holy Ghost it is said, by the Psalmist, “Thy Spirit is *good* (benevolent): lead me in the land of uprightness.” And Nehemiah, enumerating God’s great benefits to the ancient Israelites, says, “Thou gavest them thy GOOD SPIRIT, or, thy benevolent Spirit.” Now, here we have it proved that the goodness of God is the goodness of the Trinity in Unity. Nahum i. 7; Psalm cxliii. 10; Eph. v. 25; Neh. ix. 20.

8. The disposition for communion is ascribed to the ever blessed Three.—It is exercised towards the saints by the Father and the Son: “For truly our *fellowship* is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” Also with the Holy Ghost: “The *communion* of the Holy Ghost be with you all, Amen.” It was also reciprocally exercised by the Divine Persons before man was created: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” 1 John i. 3; 2 Cor. xiii. 14; Gen. i. 26.

Thus, then, the attributes of eternity, of omnipotence, of omniscience, of omnipresence, with the moral perfections of truth, love, holiness, and the disposition for communion, in their infinite perfection, are the attributes of a Trinity in Unity. All the perfections which belong to the Father belong also to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; which proves, as clearly as language and facts can prove, that in the Godhead there are Three Persons; and that, in essence and perfections, these Three are One.

Thirdly.—*We observe that the works of God are also the operations of the Trinity in Unity.*

1. *Creation*.—The creation of the world is ascribed to the eternal and almighty *Three in One*. Of God it is said, “that

the heavens and the earth are the work of his hand." Of Christ it is said, that "by him all things were made, visible or invisible." And of the Holy Ghost it is said, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"—arranging and distributing the conflicting elements, impregnating them with their first principles, and disposing them into that order and harmony which resulted in the beauty and glory of the universe. And, again, it is said in Job: "By his Spirit he hath garnished the heavens." John i. 3; Gen. i. 2; Job xxvi. 13. Thus, creation is ascribed to each; and yet these Three are One; for in the first verse of the Bible it is said, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." And the noun, though plural, is constructed with a singular verb and pronoun.

2. *The creation of man*, the most noble and important work of God on earth, is ascribed to the *Divine Three*.—Of the Father it is said, that "Jehovah God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." Of Christ it is said, that "by him all things were made, whether visible or invisible;" which, of course, comprehends *man*. And of the Holy Ghost it is said, by Job, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Gen. ii. 7; John i. 3; Job xxxiii. 4.

Viewing man thus, as the work of the Trinity—of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—we clearly see the reason and force of the remarkable phraseology, "And God said, Let US make man in OUR image, and in OUR likeness," &c., Gen. i. 26. And in this view we see why man is called upon to remember his *Creators*—Eccles. xii. 1: "Remember now thy בריאך (thy Creators), in the days of thy youth." In the language of Scripture there is always a propriety and force which is seen by diligent and careful examination. See the force, the beauty, and the propriety of Scripture language in these instances.

3. *The preservation of all things is the work of the Triune God*.—Providence is everywhere ascribed to the Father. So it is to the Son; for "he upholdeth all things by the word of his own power," and "by him all things consist." So the same work is ascribed to the Holy Spirit; for, says the Psalmist,

“thou sendest forth thy Spirit, and they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth.” Heb. i. 2; Col. i. 16; Ps. civ. 30.

4. *The Trinity in Unity raised the body of Christ from the dead.*—Of the Father it is said, “God hath both raised up the Lord, and will raise us up by his own power.” The same is asserted by Christ. “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” “I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again.” And the same great work is ascribed to the Spirit. “Christ was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.” 1 Cor. vi. 14; John ii. 19, x. 18; 1 Peter iii. 18.

5. *The resurrection of all mankind is the work of the ever blessed Three.*—Of the Father it is said, “that he raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth whom he will.” Christ declareth, “Even so the Son quickeneth whom he will;” and “all that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and come forth.” The same work is ascribed to the Holy Ghost. “For it is the Spirit that quickeneth.” “For if the Spirit of him that raised up Christ from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” John v. 21, 28; Rom. viii. 11.

6. *The inspiration of prophets and apostles is ascribed to the glorious Three in One.* “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” To Christ the same act is ascribed. For “the prophets searched what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” The same inspiration is directly ascribed to the Holy Ghost. “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 Tim. iii. 16; 1 Pet. i. 10, 11; 2 Pet. i. 21.

7. *To give commission and authority to ministers of the Gospel is the prerogative of the Triune Deity.*—In reference to the Father says Paul, “Our sufficiency is of God; who hath made us able ministers of the New Testament.” The same act is ascribed to the Son; for, says Paul, of Jesus Christ, “He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry.” To the

Spirit the same commission and authority are ascribed. "Take heed, therefore, to the flock of God over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6; 1 Tim. i. 12; Acts xx. 28.

8. *To dwell in the hearts of God's people is ascribed to the omnipresent Trinity.*—"I will walk in you, and dwell in you, and be a Father unto you, saith the Lord God." The same is affirmed of the Son. "For, know ye not that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" And "*Christ in you*, the hope of glory," is the common privilege of God's people. The same is affirmed of the Spirit. "For, know ye not that your bodies are the temple of the *Holy Ghost* which is in you?" Thus the Triune God dwells in the heirs of glory; sealing their adoption, witnessing their acceptance, and preparing them for heaven. 2 Cor. vi. 16; xiii. 5; Col. i. 27; 1 Cor. vi. 19; Ex. xxix. 45.

9. *The work of sanctification is ascribed to the Holy Trinity.*—"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, to them that are sanctified by God the Father." Of Christ it is said, "He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Again, "Ye are washed and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the *Spirit* of our God." Jude 1; Heb. ii. 11; 1 Cor. vi. 11.

Such are the united acts of the three Persons in the Godhead—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—to create the universe; to form mankind; to preserve all things; to raise the dead body of Christ, and all mankind at the last day—a work equal to creation itself; to inspire prophets to foretell things to come; to commission and authorize apostles and ministers; to dwell in the hearts of God's people; to hold fellowship with the saints; and to sanctify us throughout—body, soul, and spirit;—such, and a hundred other acts had we space to go through them—all actions peculiar to God—actions which none but God could perform, are ascribed to each Person in the ever-BLESSED AND GLORIOUS TRINITY—FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST.

In the fourth place, the Divine worship ascribed to God is ascribed to the Trinity in Unity.

We might adduce a multitude of passages to prove that the

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are to be worshipped, but this has been amply done in another volume, therefore we shall now adduce merely those passages of Scripture in which the three Persons are *conjointly* worshipped.

This worship of the Triune God is rendered by the hosts of heaven. We refer, in the first place, to the 6th of Isaiah. Here the seraphim, veiling their faces with their wings, worship and adore Jehovah of hosts; and the Jehovah of hosts includes, as the context proves, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The word Jehovah, which occurs several times in that chapter, though singular in form, refers to a plurality of Persons; and, by comparing Scripture with Scripture, we find that, in this plurality, there is a clear and distinct reference to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. That there was here a representation of the Father needs no proof, as it is no matter of dispute—all Unitarians acknowledging that “Jehovah of hosts” is his appropriate designation. That there was here also the presence of the Son and the Holy Ghost is equally evident from Divine authority. That there was here the presence of the Son we learn from the Apostle John, who, speaking of Christ in chap. xii., 41st verse, says, “These things said Esaias, when he saw HIS GLORY, and spake of him.” He saw Christ’s glory, and spake of him. That there was here the presence also of the Holy Ghost is manifest from Acts xxviii. 25—27, where the prophecy uttered in this vision is said to be spoken by the Holy Ghost. Now, attend unto the words of Paul, “Well spake.”—who?—“Well spake the HOLY GHOST by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and ye shall not perceive.” Thus, then, the *Triune God*—the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—constitute the Jehovah of hosts exhibited in this sublime vision of the prophet. Here we see the reason for using the plural US in the eighth verse. There was a plurality of Persons intended, the Scripture informs us, and hence the language, “Who will go for US?”

The presence of the *Trinity* being thus established, it follows that the sublime adoration, presented by the seraphim,

was ascribed to each Person with equal reverence and awe; and hence the three-fold repetition in the language they employed: "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts"—that is, holy is the Father, holy is the Son, and holy is the Divine Spirit; equally holy, eternally blessed, and alike to be adored and exalted by all the creatures he has made.

It is in harmony with this, that, in a similar vision which St. John had of the heavenly world, he had a similar display of the Divine glory, and beheld the same description of exalted spirits before the eternal throne, and heard exactly the same language of three-fold adoration employed: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty" (Rev. iv. 8). The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost had been previously mentioned in this very passage; and, therefore, there can be no doubt but that this triple ascription of praise, like that in Isaiah's vision, was rendered to the Triune God. There is no possibility of evading this argument, but by proving that there was not the presence of the Son and the Spirit, as well as the Father. Such is the worship of heaven.

Worship is likewise equally rendered by the Church to the *Triune God*. We have an indication of this under the Old Testament dispensation. Although the Jewish economy was a dark and obscure one compared with the brightness of the Christian dispensation—and we are not to expect the same clear and complete discoveries of God in the Old Testament as in the New; yet the doctrine of the Trinity was intimated by the plural name given to God—Elohim—constructed with verbs and pronouns in the singular; and the spiritually-minded Jews recognized the doctrine thus implied. Indeed, in the threefold form of the benediction which the high priest was authorized to pronounce, this doctrine clearly appears to be recognized (Numbers vi. 24, 25):—

"JEHOVAH bless thee, and keep thee;

JEHOVAH make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee;

JEHOVAH lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace."

Here the term Jehovah is thrice repeated; and, though we

have not the names of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost mentioned, we have blessings recognized as proceeding from each—the blessings of benignity and guardianship from the First; the blessings of grace and favour from the Second; and the blessings of approving recognition and peace from the Third. The whole corresponds beautifully and harmoniously with the solemn form of benediction employed by the Apostle, namely—

“ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, } be with you all.
 And the love of God, } Amen.”
 And the communion of the Holy Spirit, }

Here, then, we have a threefold form of benediction in the old economy, and a threefold form in the new economy. In the more ancient form, we have not the appellation, Father, Son, and Spirit mentioned; but, in the new economy, we have the whole Three mentioned, and spiritual blessings are sought from each by prayer. Now, here is the reason why we find that a plural noun is not employed in the New Testament: the plural noun is done away by the brighter manifestation and distinct appellations of *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*.

In the form of baptism, also, we have the worship of the Triune God. “Go ye and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name—

OF THE FATHER,
 AND OF THE SON,
 AND OF THE HOLY GHOST.”

Baptism is a religious ordinance, appointed by Divine authority, and of universal obligation. The obligation to administer this ordinance is correlative with the duty to propagate Christianity. The obligation of doing both is enforced by the same authority, is enjoined in the same command, and expressed by the same breath. The duties of teaching and baptizing all nations are thus inseparably united, and they cooperate to the same result. It will be admitted that Christianity is a system of religion which instructs men in the knowledge of God, and comprehends the clearest revelation which God has made of himself to mankind. The command, therefore, to teach Christianity, is an injunction to teach men

the knowledge of the true God. Now, the ordinance of baptism was established as an initiatory rite of the Christian system—a rite performed on introducing men to the knowledge of the true God. It was, therefore, intended to be a visible symbol of Christian truth, and its practical utility consists mainly in assisting men to form right conceptions of God, and their relation to him. It was to be combined with oral instruction, in order that a visible symbol might unite with oral discourse in communicating to the mind right views of God and of Christianity.

As this ordinance was performed by the authority of God, it was performed in his NAME. This is expressly stated. “Baptizing thee in the name”—of whom? certainly in the name of that God set forth in the Christian system; and that name is threefold—The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Baptism, as a Christian ordinance, is a solemn recognition of God as our Creator, our sovereign Lord, who alone has an absolute right to our services and our hearts. Who, then, is this glorious Being, and what is his name? The formula declares him—The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Baptism is a solemn act of worship, directed exclusively to the true God. Who is this Being, who is the only proper object of worship? The ordinance asserts him to be the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Baptism is a solemn act of personal dedication to God. The above passage declares this Being, to whom we are thus consecrated by baptism, to be the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Finally, baptism is a sign and seal of a covenant between us and God—a covenant in which we receive the word of God for our oracle, his will for our law, his example for our pattern, and his glory as the sole end of our existence; and in which God gives himself to us, and imparts all the blessings and privileges of salvation. Who, then, is the glorious Being with whom we enter into this most sacred and important relationship? He is here set forth as the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

This formula, therefore, explicitly teaches a trinal distinction

in the Godhead, the personality of each distinction, and the proper Deity of each Person. The *distinction* is expressed in the words employed. The Father holds a specific relation, so does the Son, so does the Holy Ghost. We cannot confound one with the other, without confounding the use of terms, torturing the most explicit language of Scripture, and abusing our own minds. As the words Father, and Son, and Spirit, are distinct in their meaning, so they express things really distinct from one another. If a distinction be thus obvious in the passage, so is it equally evident that this distinction is *personal*, for each sustains the same personal relation to us. If baptism express, as we have stated, a recognition of the true God, an act of worship directed to the true God, a dedication of ourselves to the service and glory of the true God, and an entering into a covenant relationship with the true God, then must each, whom we thus solemnly recognize in baptism, be a proper Person; that is, a conscious, intelligent existence. It is obvious we can sustain the relations of creature, worshipper, servant, covenanter, to no one but a personal existence; nor can any other than a personal existence sustain the corresponding relations to us. Baptism is performed, not in the name of the Father only, but in the name of the Three; and, therefore, all that baptism expresses in reference to the Father, it expresses in reference to the Son and the Holy Spirit. There is here no difference at all. If it be essential that the Father should be a Person—a conscious, intelligent existence—in order to receive our worship, our homage, our dedication, and to enter into a covenant relation with us, it is equally essential to the Son and the Holy Spirit. The evidence, therefore, of the distinct personality of each is irresistible.

In the same emphatic manner, and by the same reasoning, the proper Deity of each is taught in this formula. The evidence which proves the personality of each, conducts us infallibly to the Deity of each. Each stands precisely in the same relation to us as our Lord, our Creator, our Sovereign, our Lawgiver, and our covenant God. As certainly, therefore, as the Father is our God, the Son and the Holy Spirit are our God.

In being baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we are baptized in the name of the Triune God.

Since, then, the Word of God declares that there is but One God, and since the same Word as expressly teaches us that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are invested with the names and attributes of Deity, to whom equally all the works of God are ascribed, to whom all homage is ascribed, we have conclusive evidence that the sacred Scriptures teach the important doctrine of the Holy Trinity—Three in One, and One in Three.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

ADDENDA.

THE VIEWS OF SEVERAL AUTHORS ON THE TRINITY.

THE general reader will be aware that, in several eminent writers, some incidental thoughts and observations may be found which substantially correspond with some of the principles laid down in our general argument. Howe, in his *Calm Discourse on the Trinity*, observes:—

“We do know of the actual union of two things of very different natures, so as to be one thing; and have no reason to think the union of two or more things, of the same sort of nature, with sufficient remaining distinction, less possible or less intelligible.

“Upon the whole, let such a union be conceived in the being of God with such distinction, and one would think the absolute perfection of the Deity, and especially the perfect felicity thereof, should be much the more apprehensible with us. When we consider the most delicious society which would hence ensue among the so entirely consentient Father, Son, and Spirit, with whom there is so perfect rectitude, everlasting harmony, mutual

complacency, unto highest delectation; according to our way of conceiving things, who are taught by our own nature (which, also, hath in it the Divine image) to reckon no enjoyment pleasant, without the consociation of some other with us therein, we, for our parts, cannot but hereby have in our minds a more gustful idea of a blessed state, than we can conceive in mere eternal solitude.

“God speaks to us as men, and will not blame us for conceiving things so infinitely above us according to the capacity of our natures, provided we do not assume to ourselves to be a measure for our conceptions of him, further than as he is himself pleased to warrant and direct us herein. . . . When looking into ourselves, we find there is in us a disposition, often upon no necessity, but sometimes from a sort of benignity of temper, unto conversation with others; we have no reason when other things concur, and do fairly induce and lead our thoughts this way, to apprehend any incongruity in supposing God may have some distinct object of the same sort of propension in his own most perfect being too, and therewith such a propension itself also.

“We are not, I say, strictly to measure God by ourselves in this, further than as he himself prompts and leads us; but if we so form our conception of Divine bliss, as not to exclude from it somewhat whereof that delight in society which we find in ourselves may be an imperfect faint resemblance, it seems not altogether disagreeable to what the Scriptures also teach us to conceive concerning him, when they bring in the Eternal Wisdom, saying, as one distinct from the prime author and parent of all things, ‘Then was I by him, as one brought up with him, and daily his delight.’”—Prov. viii. 30. *Howe's Works*, vol. iv. 320.

Dr. Watts expresses the same view, apparently having derived it from Howe.

“Our admiration may be raised yet higher if we make one excursion beyond all created nature, and lift our thoughts upwards to the blessedness of the Glorious Trinity. All their infinite and unknown pleasures are derived from their ineffable union and communion with one Godhead, their inconceivable

nearness to each other in the very centre and spring of all felicity. They are inseparably and intimately one God; they are eternally one God, and therefore eternally blessed; 1 John v. 7, which text I believe to be authentic and Divine, and that upon just reasons, notwithstanding the cavils and criticisms that have endeavoured to blot it out of the Bible. Nor is their blessedness nor their nearness a dull inactive state: knowledge and mutual love make up their heaven so far as mortals dare conceive of it, and so far as we have leave to speak of God after the manner of men.

“Knowledge—an eternal blissful contemplation of all the infinite beauties, powers, and properties of the Godhead, and of all the operation of these powers in an inconceivable variety among creatures—this is the glorious employment of God. His own knowledge of infinite truths, whether wrapt up in his own nature, or unfolded and displayed in his works, is a pleasure becoming the Deity, and each sacred Person possesses this unknown pleasure.

“And, besides the general glories of the Divine nature, we may suppose that a full and comprehensive knowledge of the sameness, the difference, the special properties, and the mutual relations, of the three Divine Persons, which are utterly incomprehensible to mortals, and perhaps far above the reach of all created minds, is the incommunicable entertainment of the Holy Trinity, and makes a part of their blessedness.” In reference to this mystery, God may be said to dwell in thick darkness,—1 Kings viii. 12, or, which is all one, in light inaccessible, 1 Tim. vi. 16. We are lost in this glorious, this Divine abyss, and overcome with dazzling confusion. But the ever-blessed Three behold these unities and distinctions in the clearest light. *As the Father knoweth me so know I the Father*, saith Jesus, the eternal Son, John x. 15. And, *as the spirit of a man knoweth the things of a man, so the things of God are known to his Spirit*, for he searcheth the depths of God, 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11: as it is expressed in the original, *τὰ βάθη τοῦ Θεοῦ*.

“May we not suppose the blessedness of the sacred Three to consist also in mutual love? May I call it a perpetual de-

lightful tendency, and active propensity, toward each other. An eternal approach to each other with infinite complacency—with arms of inimitable love, and with sensations of unmeasured joy? Thus saith the Son of God under the character of Divine wisdom, Prov. viii. 23, 30: ‘I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.’ As the Father loveth the Son, so the Son loveth the Father.

“As the Father delights infinitely in his perfect image, so may we not venture to say the Son takes infinite delight in the glorious archetype, and thus imitates the Father? Will not the expressions of the Apostle Paul, Heb. i. 3, and the words of Christ himself, John v. 19, 20, encourage and support this manner of speaking? He is the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person. The Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth, and what things soever he seeth the Father to do, these also doeth the Son likewise. And this seems to be the foundation of those glorious offices of raising the dead and judging the world, which, in the following verses, are committed to the Son, that all men may honour the Son as they honour the Father.

“As the blessed Three have an unknown communication in the Godhead, or Divine nature, so they must have an unspeakable nearness to each other’s person, an inconceivable in-being and in-dwelling in each other, John xiv. 10. Each is near to the two other Divine subsistences, and this mutual nearness must be attended with delight and felicity unknown to all but the blessed Three who enjoy it. O, glorious and Divine communication! The Father for ever near his own image, the Son, and herein blessed! The Son never divided from the embraces of the Father, and, therefore, happy! The Spirit everlastingly near them both, and, therefore, he is the ever blessed Spirit. And all these united in one Godhead, and, therefore, infinitely and for ever blessed!

“The Father is so intimately near the Son and Spirit, that no finite or created natures, or unions, can give a just resemblance of it.

“ In vain we may run through all the parts and powers of nature and art to seek a full resemblance of the mutual propensity and love of the blessed Three towards each other. Mathematicians talk, indeed, of the perpetual tendencies and infinite approximations of two or more lines in the same surface, which never can entirely concur in one line. And if we should say that the three persons of the Trinity, by mutual in-dwelling and love, approach each other infinitely in one Divine nature, and yet lose not their distinct personality, it would be but an obscure account of this sublime mystery. But this we are sure of, that for three Divine persons to be so inconceivably near one another in the original and eternal spring of love, goodness, and pleasure, must produce infinite delight. In order to illustrate the happiness of the sacred Three, may we not suppose something of society necessary to the perfection of happiness in all intellectual nature? To know and be known, to love and to be beloved, are, perhaps, such essential ingredients to complete felicity, that it cannot subsist without them. And it may be doubted whether such mutual knowledge and love, as seems requisite to this end, can be found in a nature absolutely simple in all respects. We, for our parts, cannot but hereby have in our mind a more gustful idea of a blessed state than we can conceive in mere eternal solitude.

“ And, if this be true, then the three differences, which we call personal distinctions in the nature of God, are as absolutely necessary as his blessedness, as his being, or any part of his perfections.

“ These are glories too Divine and dazzling for the weak eye of our understanding, too bright for the eye of angels, those morning stars, and they and we must fall down together, alike overwhelmed and confounded. It is one infinite transport, that runs through the Father, Son, and Spirit, without beginning and without end, with boundless variety, yet ever-perfect and ever-present, without change, and without degree, and all this because they are so near to one another, and so much one with God.”—*Watts's Works*, vol. i. pp. 178, 181.

†. Professor Kidd, in the year 1815, published “ An Essay on

the Doctrine of the Trinity," in which he argues, from the essentially vital energy of the Divine nature, the necessary emanation of a second Person; and, from their necessary conjoint united act, the procession of the third Person in the Godhead. We had not seen this work before our own argument was elaborated and written out. Several of the principles and propositions maintained by Professor Kidd are in harmony with our own, though the mode of the argument is different. Indeed, from what is stated above, it will be seen that Mr. Kidd applies his argument further than we have felt justified in carrying it as a *rational demonstration*.—He endeavours to prove not only that a plurality of persons in the Godhead is sustained by the verdict of reason, but that the peculiar relations of the persons must necessarily result from the essentially vital energy of the Deity. We honour the author's motives, but, before we can either admit or reject his reasoning, *in toto*, we must give his volume a more careful and searching investigation than we have yet had the opportunity of doing. Our present view is this—that the existence of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, aided by Holy Scripture, is demonstrable; but, that the peculiar relations of the Son, as a filial emanation from the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, as a procession from both, though not incongruous to reason, yet is not capable of demonstration by rational argument.

The objections which have been alleged against this doctrine, on the ground of its being incompatible with the eternity of the Son and Spirit, are puerile objections. They are totally without foundation, and the dogmatical and positive manner in which they have been put forth by some is to be deeply deplored. Such objectors often confute their own principles. The eternity of the Divine attributes is maintained by them, although these attributes have the Divine essence as their source. The eternity of the exercise of at least some of the Divine attributes is held by them, although that exercise is *voluntary*. Even the eternity of the Divine purposes is admitted by them, although those purposes are *voluntary*. Now, the filial relation of the Son, and the procession of the Holy Ghost, are never represented as the result of any *voluntary* act, but absolutely

necessary, as the *essential* mode of the Divine nature. There is, therefore, great feebleness, gross inconsistency, and palpable contradiction, in the reasoning of the objectors to this doctrine. To admit a voluntary act to be eternal, and to deny that a necessary condition of the Divine nature can be eternal, is absurd. The relation of the Son and Spirit to the Father is perfectly compatible with their eternity and absolute perfection. If essential, they must necessarily be eternal.

Dr. Harris, in his profound work on the Pre-Adamite Earth, sufficiently intimates his views on this interesting subject in the following passage :—

“If the operation of infinite activity, either of love, or power, or of any other excellence, be essential to infinite perfection, and if such activity could not be agent and object at the same time and in the same act, and yet no object, *ad extra*, existed from eternity, then it must have existed in the Divine nature itself; in other words, the Divine nature must include it as one of its necessary conditions, or essential perfections; that, if no exercise of the Divine efficiency, *ad extra*, can ever be adequate to its infinite perfection, then must it be one of the excellencies of the Divine nature, not only that it should include a plurality of distinctions, but that the adequate sphere of its infinite activity should be its own infinite perfections—that, if a God in unity, without internal distinctions, or diversity of modes, be incapable of moral affection because having had nothing, *ad extra*, from eternity to love, then such internal distinctions must ever have existed as elements of reciprocal, social, self-sufficient perfection; and if such plurality be an excellence, and if unity be an excellence also, and if there be any respect in which this plurality of one kind can consist as an excellence with this unity of another, then it will certainly be included in absolute perfection. And, further, this perfection implies not only that all the excellence which it includes is simple, uncompounded, one, but that God and it are identical, that it is not an adjunct of his being, but his being itself.”—*Pre-Adamite Earth*, p. 4.

THE END.

GLOSSARY.

- Algae**, a name given to sea-weeds.
Animalculum, a very small microscopic animal. **Animalcula** is the plural.
Aplocrinite, a pear-shaped, lily-like fossil.
Argumentum ad verecundiam, deference to authority instead of evidence.
Axiom, a proposition evident at first sight.
Batrachian, having the nature and properties of the frog.
Cephalopoda, a class of molluscous animals having their organs of motion arranged round their head.
Cheirotherium, the hand-shaped beast, resembling an enormous toad.
Chelonian, a reptile of the tortoise kind.
Confervæ, a very simple order of plants.
Crinoid, lily-shaped fossil.
Cystidean, partaking of the properties of a cyst or bag.
Distoma, double-mouthed.
Echinoderm, a marine animal.
Eozoon Canadense, The Canadian Dawn animal.
Entozoa, a name for animals living inside others.
Fauna and Flora: the various kinds of animals peculiar to a country constitute its Fauna, as the various kinds of vegetables constitute its Flora.
Fissiparous, reproducing by natural fissure.
Fucoid, a low order of fossil weed.
Fungus, soft, spongy vegetables, like the mushroom. **Fungi** is the plural.
Gemmiparous, reproducing by buds.
Genera, the plural of genus, a term which comprehends species.
Helianthoid, a fossil covered with spines resembling a sun-flower.
Hornblende, a mineral of a dark green or black colour.
Hybrid, a mongrel animal, whose sire is of one kind and dam of another.
Ichthyolite, a fossil fish.
Igneous, fiery.
Iguanodon, an animal like a colossal lizard.
Infusoria, animalcules generated in impure water.
Labyrinthodon, same creature as the cheirotherium.
Mammalia, animals which suckle their young.
Mastodon, an extinct animal resembling the elephant.
Megalosaur, a colossal lizard.
Megatherium, a great beast, like a colossal sloth.
Mica, the shining silvery surface seen in granite and gneiss.
Molecule, a very minute particle of matter.
Monad, the smallest microscopic animal.
Oviparous, reproducing by eggs.
Ovum, an egg, a seed, or a germ. **Ova** is plural.
Plesiosaur, an amphibious animal, having the double form of lizard and crocodile.
Polygastric, having many stomachs.
Pterodactyle, a reptile, with wings terminating with fingers.
Rotifer Vulgaris, a microscopic animal, with a wheel-like organization.
Saurian, an animal of the lizard kind.
Schist, same as slate.
Scholium, an explanatory observation.
Silurian Rocks, a name given to very ancient rocks which abound in Wales.
Stratum, a bed, or layer, commonly applied to geological formations.
Strata, the plural of stratum.
Trilobite, a small aquatic fossil animal, having three parallel lobes. The race is extinct.
Viviparous, producing the young alive.
Vomerine, relating to the lower part of the nose.
Zoophyte, a creature partaking of the properties of both animal and plant, such as corals, sponges, &c.

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