

Theological Essays and Other Papers v1

Thomas de Quincey

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by Thomas de Quincey

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BY THOMAS DE QUINCEY

AUTHOR OF

'CONFESSIONS OF AN ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER,' ETC. ETC.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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ON CHRISTIANITY, AS AN ORGAN OF POLITICAL MOVEMENT.

[1846.]

FORCES, which are illimitable in their compass of effect, are often, for the same reason, obscure and untraceable in the steps of their movement. Growth, for instance, animal or vegetable, what eye can arrest its eternal increments? The hour-hand of a watch, who can detect the separate fluxions of its advance? Judging by the past, and the change which is registered between that and the present, we know that it must be awake; judging by the immediate appearances, we should say that it was always asleep. Gravitation, again, that works without holiday for ever, and searches every corner of the universe, what intellect can follow it to its fountains? And yet, shyer than gravitation, less to be counted than the fluxions of sun-dials, stealthier than the growth of a forest, are the footsteps of Christianity amongst the political workings of man. Nothing, that the heart of man values, is so secret; nothing is so potent.

It is because Christianity works so secretly, that it works so potently; it is because Christianity burrows and hides itself, that it towers above the clouds; and hence partly it is that its working comes to be misapprehended, or even lost out of sight. It is dark to eyes touched with the films of human frailty: but it is 'dark with excessive bright.' [Footnote: 'Dark with excessive bright.' Paradise Lost. Book III.] Hence it has

happened sometimes that minds of the highest order have entered into enmity with the Christian faith, have arraigned it as a curse to man, and have fought against it even upon Christian impulses, (impulses of benignity that could not have had a birth except in Christianity.) All comes from the labyrinthine intricacy in which the _social_ action of Christianity involves itself to the eye of a contemporary. Simplicity the most absolute is reconcilable with intricacy the most elaborate. The weather--how simple would appear the laws of its oscillations, if we stood at their centre! and yet, because we do _not_, to this hour the weather is a mystery. Human health--how transparent is its economy under ordinary circumstances! abstinence and cleanliness, labor and rest, these simple laws, observed in just proportions, laws that may be engrossed upon a finger nail, are sufficient, on the whole, to maintain the equilibrium of pleasurable existence. Yet, if once that equilibrium is disturbed, where is the science oftentimes deep enough to rectify the unfathomable watch-work? Even the simplicities of planetary motions do not escape distortion: nor is it easy to be convinced that the distortion is in the eye which beholds, not in the object beheld. Let a planet be wheeling with heavenly science, upon arches of divine geometry: suddenly, to us, it shall appear unaccountably retrograde; flying when none pursues; and unweaving its own work. Let this planet in its utmost elongations travel out of sight, and for _us_ its course will become incoherent: because _our_ sight is feeble, the beautiful curve of the planet shall be dislocated into segments, by a parenthesis of darkness; because our earth is in no true centre, the disorder of parallax shall trouble the laws of light; and, because we ourselves are wandering, the heavens shall seem fickle.

Exactly in the predicament of such a planet is Christianity: its motions are intermingled with other motions; crossed and thwarted, eclipsed and disguised, by counter-motions in man himself, and by disturbances that man cannot overrule. Upon lines that are direct, upon curves that are circuitous, Christianity is advancing for ever; but from our imperfect vision, or from our imperfect opportunities for applying even such a vision, we cannot trace it continuously. We lose it, we regain it; we see it doubtfully, we see it interruptedly; we see it in collision, we see it in combination; in collision with darkness that confounds, in combination with cross lights that perplex. And this in part is irremediable; so that no finite intellect will ever retrace the total curve upon which Christianity has moved, any more than eyes that are incarnate will ever see God.

But part of this difficulty in unweaving the maze, has its source in a misconception of the original machinery by which Christianity moved, and of the initial principle which constituted its differential power. In books, at least, I have observed one capital blunder upon the relations which Christianity bears to Paganism: and out of that one mistake, grows a liability to others, upon the possible relations of Christianity to the total drama of this world. I will endeavor to explain my views. And the reader, who takes any interest in the subject, will not need to fear that the explanation should prove tedious; for the mere want of space, will put me under a coercion to move rapidly over the ground; I cannot be diffuse; and, as regards quality, he will find in this paper little of what is scattered over the surface of books.

I begin with this question:--What do people mean in a Christian

land by the word 'religion?' My purpose is not to propound any metaphysical problem; I wish only, in the plainest possible sense, to ask, and to have an answer, upon this one point--how much is understood by that obscure term, 'religion,' when used by a Christian? Only I am punctilious upon one demand, viz., that the answer shall be comprehensive. We are apt in such cases to answer elliptically, omitting, because silently presuming as understood between us, whatever seems obvious. To prevent that, we will suppose the question to be proposed by an emissary from some remote planet,--who, knowing as yet absolutely nothing of us and our intellectual differences, must insist (as I insist) upon absolute precision, so that nothing essential shall be wanting, and nothing shall be redundant.

*[Footnote: 'That obscure term;--i. e. not obscure as regards the use of the term, or its present value, but as regards its original genesis, or what in civil law is called the deductio. Under what angle, under what aspect, or relation, to the field which it concerns did the term religion originally come forward? The general field, overlooked by religion, is the ground which lies between the spirit of man and the supernatural world. At present, under the humblest conception of religion, the human spirit is supposed to be interested in such a field by the conscience and the nobler affections, But I suspect that originally these great faculties were absolutely excluded from the point of view. Probably the relation between spiritual terrors and man's power of propitiation, was the problem to which the word religion formed the answer. Religion meant apparently, in the infancies of the various idolatries, that latreia, or service of sycophantic fear, by which, as the most approved method of approach, man was able to conciliate the favor, or to buy off the malice of supernatural powers. In all Pagan nations, it is probable that religion would, on the whole, be a degrading influence; although I see, even for such nations, two cases, at the least, where the uses of a religion would be indispensable; viz. for the sanction of oaths, and as a channel for gratitude not pointing to a human object. If so, the answer is easy: religion was degrading: but heavier degradations would have arisen from irreligion. The noblest of all idolatrous peoples, viz. the Romans, have left deeply scored in their very use of their word religio, their testimony to the degradation wrought by any religion that Paganism could yield. Rarely indeed is this word employed, by a Latin author, in speaking of an individual, without more or less of sneer. Reading that word, in a Latin book, we all try it and ring it, as a petty shopkeeper rings a half-crown, before we venture to receive it as offered in good faith and loyalty. Even the Greeks are nearly in the same case, when they wish to speak of religiosity in a spirit of serious praise. Some circuitous form, commending the correctness of a man, in respect of divine things, becomes requisite; for all the direct terms, expressing the religious temper, are preoccupied by a taint of scorn. The word pious,--not as regards the gods, but as regards the dead; and even piety, though not used sneeringly, is a world short of our word 'religious.' This condition of language we need not wonder at: the language of life must naturally receive, as in a mirror, the realities of life. Difficult it is to maintain a just equipoise in any moral habits, but in none so much as in habits of religious demeanor under a Pagan [that is, a degrading] religion. To be a coward, is base: to be a

sycophant, is base: but to be a sycophant in the service of cowardice, is the perfection of baseness: and yet this was the brief analysis of a devotee amongst the ancient Romans. Now, considering that the word religion is originally Roman, [probably from the Etruscan,] it seems probable that it presented the idea of religion under some one of its bad aspects. Coleridge must quite have forgotten this Paganism of the word, when he suggested as a plausible idea, that originally it had presented religion under the aspect of a coercion or restraint. Morality having been viewed as the prime restraint or obligation resting upon man, then Coleridge thought that religion might have been viewed as a religatio, a reiterated restraint, or secondary obligation. This is ingenious, but it will not do. It is cracked in the ring. Perhaps as many as three objections might be mustered to such a derivation: but the last of the three is conclusive. The ancients never did view morality as a mode of obligation: I affirm this peremptorily; and with the more emphasis, because there are great consequences suspended upon that question.]

What, then, is religion? Decomposed into its elements, as they are found in Christianity, how many powers for acting on the heart of man, does, by possibility, this great agency include? According to my own view, four.[Footnote: there are six, in one sense, of religion: viz. 5 thly, corresponding moral affections; 6 thly, a suitable life. But this applies to religion as subjectively possessed by a man, not to religion as objectively contemplated.] I will state them, and number them.

1st. A form of worship, a cultus.

2dly. An idea of God; and (pointing the analysis to Christianity in particular) an idea not purified merely from ancient pollutions, but recast and absolutely born again.

3dly. An idea of the relation which man occupies to God: and of this idea also, when Christianity is the religion concerned, it must be said, that it is so entirely remodelled, as in no respect to resemble any element in any other religion. Thus far we are reminded of the poet's expression, 'Pure religion breathing household laws;' that is, not teaching such laws, not formally prescribing a new economy of life, so much as inspiring it indirectly through a new atmosphere surrounding all objects with new attributes. But there is also in Christianity,

4thly. A doctrinal part, a part directly and explicitly occupied with teaching; and this divides into two great sections, 1st, A system of ethics so absolutely new as to be untranslatable[Footnote: This is not generally perceived. On the contrary, people are ready to say, 'Why, so far from it, the very earliest language in which the Gospels appeared, excepting only St. Matthew's, was the Greek.' Yes, reader; but what Greek? Had not the Greeks been, for a long time, colonizing Syria under princes of Grecian blood,--had not the Greek language (as a lingua Hellenistica) become steeped in Hebrew ideas,--no door of communication could have been opened between the new world of Christian feeling, and the old world so deaf to its music. Here, therefore, we may observe two preparations made secretly by Providence for receiving Christianity and clearing the road before it; first, the diffusion of the Greek

language through the whole civilized world (some time before Christ, by which means the Evangelists found wings, as it were, for flying abroad through the kingdoms of the earth; secondly, the Hebraizing of this language, by which means the Evangelists found a new material made plastic and obedient to these new ideas, which they had to build with, and which they had to build upon.] into either of the classical languages; and, A system of mysteries; as, for instance, the mystery of the Trinity, of the Divine Incarnation, of the Atonement, of the Resurrection, and others.

Here are great elements; and now let me ask, how many of these are found in the Heathen religion of Greece and Rome? This is an important question; it being my object to show that no religion but the Christian, and precisely through some one or two of its _differential_ elements, could have been an organ of political movement.

Most divines who anywhere glance at this question, are here found in, what seems to me, the deepest of errors. Great theologians are they, and eminent philosophers, who have presumed that (as a matter of course) all religions, however false, are introductory to some scheme of morality, however imperfect. They grant you that the morality is oftentimes unsound; but still, they think that some morality there must have been, or else for what purpose was the religion? This I pronounce error.

All the moral theories of antiquity were utterly disjoined from religion. But this fallacy of a dogmatic or doctrinal part in Paganism is born out of Anachronism. It is the anachronism of unconsciously reflecting back upon the ancient religions of darkness, and as if essential to _all_ religions, features that never were suspected as possible, until they had been revealed in Christianity.[Footnote: Once for all, to save the trouble of continual repetitions, understand Judaism to be commemorated jointly with Christianity; the dark root together with the golden fruitage; whenever the nature of the case does not presume a contradistinction of the one to the other.] Religion, in the eye of a Pagan, had no more relation to morals, than it had to ship-building or trigonometry. But, then, why was religion honored amongst Pagans? How did it ever arise? What was its object? Object! it _had_ no object; if by this you mean ulterior object. Pagan religion arose in no motive, but in an impulse. Pagan religion aimed at no distant prize ahead: it fled from a danger immediately behind. The gods of the Pagans were wicked natures; but they were natures to be feared, and to be propitiated; for they were fierce, and they were moody, and (as regarded man who had no wings) they were powerful. Once accredited as facts, the Pagan gods could not be regarded as other than terrific facts; and thus it was, that in terror, blind terror, as against power in the hands of divine wickedness, arose the ancient religions of Paganism. Because the gods were wicked, man was religious; because Olympus was cruel, earth trembled; because the divine beings were the most lawless of Thugs, the human being became the most abject of sycophants.

Had the religions of Paganism arisen teleologically; that is, with a view to certain purposes, to certain final causes ahead; had they grown out of _forward_-looking views, contemplating, for instance, the furthering of civilization, or contemplating some

interests in a world beyond the present, there would probably have arisen, concurrently, a section in all such religions, dedicated to positive instruction. There would have been a doctrinal part. There might have been interwoven with the ritual or worship, a system of economics, or a code of civil prudence, or a code of health, or a theory of morals, or even a secret revelation of mysterious relations between man and the Deity: all which existed in Judaism. But, as the case stood, this was impossible. The gods were mere odious facts, like scorpions or rattlesnakes, having no moral aspects whatever; public nuisances; and bearing no relation to man but that of capricious tyrants. First arising upon a basis of terror, these gods never subsequently enlarged that basis; nor sought to enlarge it. All antiquity contains no hint of a possibility that love could arise, as by any ray mingling with the sentiments in a human creature towards a Divine one; not even sycophants ever pretended to love the gods.

Under this original peculiarity of Paganism, there arose two consequences, which I will mark by the Greek letters $\hat{\iota}$ and $\hat{\iota}^2$. The latter I will notice in its order, first calling the reader's attention to the consequence marked $\hat{\iota}$, which is this:--In the full and profoundest sense of the word believe, the pagans could not be said to believe in any gods: but, in the ordinary sense, they did, and do, and must believe, in all gods. As this proposition will startle some readers, and is yet closely involved in the main truth which I am now pressing, viz. the meaning and effect of a simple cultus, as distinguished from a high doctrinal religion, let us seek an illustration from our Indian empire. The Christian missionaries from home, when first opening their views to Hindoos, describe themselves as laboring to prove that Christianity is a true religion, and as either asserting, or leaving it to be inferred, that, on that assumption, the Hindoo religion is a false one. But the poor Hindoo never dreamed of doubting that the Christian was a true religion; nor will he at all infer, from your religion being true, that his own must be false. Both are true, he thinks: all religions are true; all gods are true gods; and all are equally true. Neither can he understand what you mean by a false religion, or how a religion could be false; and he is perfectly right. Wherever religions consist only of a worship, as the Hindoo religion does, there can be no competition amongst them as to truth. That would be an absurdity, not less nor other than it would be for a Prussian to denounce the Austrian emperor, or an Austrian to denounce the Prussian king, as a false sovereign. False! How false? In what sense false? Surely not as non-existing. But at least, (the reader will reply,) if the religions contradict each other, one of them must be false. Yes; but that is impossible. Two religions cannot contradict each other, where both contain only a cultus: they could come into collision only by means of a doctrinal, or directly affirmative part, like those of Christianity and Mahometanism. But this part is what no idolatrous religion ever had, or will have. The reader must not understand me to mean that, merely as a compromise of courtesy, two professors of different idolatries would agree to recognise each other. Not at all. The truth of one does not imply the falsehood of the other. Both are true as facts: neither can be false, in any higher sense, because neither makes any pretence to truth doctrinal.

This distinction between a religion having merely a worship, and a

religion having also a body of doctrinal truth, is familiar to the Mahometans; and they convey the distinction by a very appropriate expression. Those majestic religions, (as they esteem them,) which rise above the mere pomps and tympanies of ceremonial worship, they denominate 'religions of the book.' There are, of such religions, three, viz., Judaism, Christianity, and Islamism. The first builds upon the Law and the Prophets; or, perhaps, sufficiently upon the Pentateuch; the second upon the Gospel; the last upon the Koran. No other religion can be said to rest upon a book; or to need a book; or even to admit of a book. For we must not be duped by the case where a lawgiver attempts to connect his own human institutes with the venerable sanctions of a national religion, or the case where a learned antiquary unfolds historically the record of a vast mythology. Heaps of such cases, (both law and mythological records,) survive in the Sanscrit, and in other pagan languages. But these are books which build upon the religion, not books upon which the religion is built. If a religion consists only of a ceremonial worship, in that case there can be no opening for a book; because the forms and details publish themselves daily, in the celebration of the worship, and are traditionally preserved, from age to age, without dependence on a book. But, if a religion has a doctrine, this implies a revelation or message from Heaven, which cannot, in any other way, secure the transmission of this message to future generations, than by causing it to be registered in a book. A book, therefore, will be convertible with a doctrinal religion:--no book, no doctrine; and, again, no doctrine, no book.

Upon these principles, we may understand that second consequence (marked I²) which has perplexed many men, viz., why it is that the Hindoos, in our own times; but, equally, why it is that the Greek and Roman idolaters of antiquity, never proselytized; no, nor could have viewed such an attempt as rational. Naturally, if a religion is doctrinal, any truth which it possesses, as a secret deposit consigned to its keeping by a revelation, must be equally valid for one man as for another, without regard to race or nation. For a doctrinal religion, therefore, to proselytize, is no more than a duty of consistent humanity. You, the professors of that religion, possess the medicinal fountains. You will not diminish your own share by imparting to others. What churlishness, if you should grudge to others a health which does not interfere with your own! Christians, therefore, Mahometans, and Jews originally, in proportion as they were sincere and conscientious, have always invited, or even forced, the unbelieving to their own faith: nothing but accidents of situation, local or political, have disturbed this effort. But, on the other hand, for a mere 'cultus' to attempt conversions, is nonsense. An ancient Roman could have had no motive for bringing you over to the worship of Jupiter Capitolinus; nor you any motive for going. 'Surely, poor man,' he would have said, 'you have, some god of your own, who will be quite as good for your countrymen as Jupiter for mine. But, if you have not, really I am sorry for your case; and a very odd case it is: but I don't see how it could be improved by talking nonsense. You cannot beneficially, you cannot rationally, worship a tutelary Roman deity, unless in the character of a Roman; and a Roman you may become, legally and politically. Being such, you will participate in all advantages, if any there are, or our national religion; and, without needing a process of conversion, either in substance or in form. Ipsa facto, and without any separate choice of your own, on becoming a Roman citizen, you become a party to the

Roman worship.' For an idolatrous religion to proselytize, would, therefore, be not only useless but unintelligible.

Now, having explained that point, which is a great step towards the final object of my paper, viz., the investigation of the reason why Christianity is, which no pagan religion ever has been, an organ of political movement, I will go on to review rapidly those four constituents of a religion, as they are realized in Christianity, for the purpose of contrasting them with the false shadows, or even blank negations, of these constituents in pagan idolatries.

First, then, as to the CULTUS, or form of the national worship:--In our Christian ritual I recognise these separate acts; viz. A, an act of Praise; B, an act of Thanksgiving; C, an act of Confession; D, an act of Prayer. In A, we commemorate with adoration the general perfections of the Deity. There, all of us have an equal interest. In B, we commemorate with thankfulness those special qualities of the Deity, or those special manifestations of them, by which we, the individual worshippers, have recently benefited. In C, by upright confession, we deprecate. In D, we pray, or ask for the things which we need. Now, in the cultus of the ancient pagans, B and C (the second act and the third) were wanting altogether. No thanksgiving ever ascended, on his own account, from the lips of an individual; and the state thanksgiving for a triumph of the national armies, was but a mode of ostentatiously publishing the news. As to C, it is scarcely necessary to say that this was wanting, when I mention that penitential feelings were unknown amongst the ancients, and had no name; for pĀnitentia [Footnote: In Greek, there is a word for repentance, but not until it had been rebaptized into a Christian use. Metanoia, however, is not that word: it is grossly to defeat the profound meaning of the New Testament, if John the Baptist is translated as though summoning the world to repentance; it was not that to which he summoned them.] means regret, not penitence; and me pĀnitet hujus facti, means, 'I rue this act in its consequences,' not 'I repent of this act for its moral nature.' A and D, the first act and the last, appear to be present; but are so most imperfectly. When 'God is praised aright,' praised by means of such deeds or such attributes as express a divine nature, we recognise one great function of a national worship,--not otherwise. This, however, we must overlook and pardon, as being a fault essential to the religion: the poor creatures did the best they could to praise their god, lying under the curse of gods so thoroughly depraved. But in D, the case is different. Strictly speaking, the ancients never prayed; and it may be doubted whether D approaches so near to what we mean by prayer, as even by a mockery. You read of preces, of ἱκετήριον, &c. and you are desirous to believe that pagan supplications were not always corrupt. It is too shocking to suppose, in thinking of nations idolatrous yet noble, that never any pure act of approach to the heavens took place on the part of man; that always the intercourse was corrupt; always doubly corrupt; that eternally the god was bought, and the votary was sold. Oh, weariness of man's spirit before that unresting mercenariness in high places, which neither, when his race clamored for justice, nor when it languished for pity, would listen without hire! How gladly would man turn away from his false rapacious divinities to the godlike human heart, that so often would yield pardon before

it was asked, and for the thousandth time that would give without a bribe! In strict propriety, as my reader knows, the classical Latin word for a prayer is *votum*; it was a case of contract; of mercantile contract; of that contract which the Roman law expressed by the formula-- *Do ut des*. Vainly you came before the altars with empty hands. "But *my* hands are pure." Pure, indeed! would reply the scoffing god, let me see what they contain. It was exactly what you daily read in morning papers, viz.--that, in order to appear effectually before that Olympus in London, which rains rarities upon us poor abject creatures in the provinces, you must enclose 'an order on the Post-Office or a reference.' It is true that a man did not always register his *votum*, (the particular offering which he vowed on the condition of receiving what he asked,) at the moment of asking. Ajax, for instance, prays for light in the *Iliad*, and he does not then and there give either an order or a reference. But you are much mistaken, if you fancy that even light was to be had *gratis*. It would be 'carried to account.' Ajax would be 'debited' with that 'advance.'

Yet, when it occurs to a man that, in this *Do ut des*, the general *Do* was either a temple or a sacrifice, naturally it occurs to ask what *was* a sacrifice? I am afraid that the dark murderous nature of the pagan gods is here made apparent. Modern readers, who have had no particular reason for reflecting on the nature and management of a sacrifice, totally misconceive it. They have a vague notion that the slaughtered animal was roasted, served up on the altars as a banquet to the gods; that these gods by some representative ceremony 'made believe' to eat it; and that finally, (as dishes that had now become hallowed to divine use,) the several joints were disposed of in some mysterious manner: burned, suppose, or buried under the altars, or committed to the secret keeping of rivers. Nothing of the sort: when a man made a sacrifice, the meaning was, that he gave a dinner. And not only was every sacrifice a dinner party, but every dinner party was a sacrifice. This was strictly so in the good old ferocious times of paganism, as may be seen in the *Iliad*: it was not said, 'Agamemnon has a dinner party to-day,' but 'Agamemnon sacrifices to Apollo.' Even in Rome, to the last days of paganism, it is probable that some slight memorial continued to connect the dinner party [*cena*] with a divine sacrifice; and thence partly arose the sanctity of the hospitable board; but to the east of the Mediterranean the full ritual of a sacrifice must have been preserved in all banquets, long after it had faded to a form in the less superstitious West. This we may learn from that point of casuistry treated by St. Paul,--whether a Christian might lawfully eat of things offered to idols. The question was most urgent; because a Christian could not accept an invitation to dine with a Grecian fellow-citizen who still adhered to paganism, *without* eating things offered to idols;--the whole banquet was dedicated to an idol. If he would not take *that*, he must continue *impransus*. Consequently, the question virtually amounted to this: Were the Christians to separate themselves altogether from those whose interests were in so many ways entangled with their own, on the single consideration that these persons were heathens? To refuse their hospitalities, *was* to separate, and with a hostile expression of feeling. That would be to throw hindrances in the way of Christianity: the religion could not spread rapidly under such repulsive prejudices; and dangers, that it became un-Christian to provoke, would thus multiply against the infant faith. This being so, and as the gods were really the

only parties invited who got nothing at all of the banquet, it becomes a question of some interest,--what _did_ they get? They were merely mocked, if they had no compensatory interest in the dinner! For surely it was an inconceivable mode of honoring Jupiter, that you and I should eat a piece of roast beef, leaving to the god's share only the mockery of a _Barmecide_ invitation, assigning him a chair which every body knew that he would never fill, and a plate which might as well have been filled with warm water? Jupiter got _something_, be assured; and what _was_ it? This it was,--the luxury of inhaling the groans, the fleeting breath, the palpitations, the agonies, of the dying victim. This was the dark interest which the wretches of Olympus had in human invitations to dinner: and it is too certain, upon comparing facts and dates, that, when left to their own choice, the gods had a preference for _man_ as the victim. All things concur to show, that precisely as you ascend above civilization, which continually increased the limitations upon the gods of Olympus, precisely as you go back to that gloomy state in which their true propensities had power to reveal themselves, was man the genuine victim for _them_, and the dying anguish of man the best 'nidor' that ascended from earthly banquets to _their_ nostrils. Their stern eyes smiled darkly upon the throbbings of tortured flesh, as in Moloch's ears dwelt like music the sound of infants' wailings. Secondly, as to the birth of a new idea respecting the nature of God:--It may not have occurred to every reader, but none will perhaps object to it, when once suggested to his consideration, that--as is the god of any nation, such will be that nation. God, however falsely conceived of by man. even though splintered into fragments by Polytheism, or disfigured by the darkest mythologies, is still the greatest of all objects offered to human contemplation. Man, when thrown upon his own delusions, may have raised himself, or may have adopted from others, the very falsest of ideals, as the true image and reflection of what he calls god. In his lowest condition of darkness, terror may be the moulding principle for spiritual conceptions; power, the engrossing attribute which he ascribes to his deity; and this power may be hideously capricious, or associated with vindictive cruelty. It may even happen, that his standard of what is highest in the divinity should be capable of falling greatly below what an enlightened mind would figure to itself as lowest in man. A more shocking monument, indeed, there cannot be than this, of the infinity by which man may descend below his own capacities of grandeur: the gods, in some systems of religion, have been such and so monstrous by excesses of wickedness, as to insure, if annually one hour of periodical eclipse should have left them at the mercy of man, a general rush from their own worshippers for strangling them as mad dogs. Hypocrisy, the cringing of sycophants, and the credulities of fear, united to conceal this misotheism; but we may be sure that it was widely diffused through the sincerities of the human heart. An intense desire for kicking Jupiter, or for hanging him, if found convenient, must have lurked in the honorable Roman heart, before the sincerity of human nature could have extorted upon the Roman stage a public declaration,--that their supreme gods were capable of enormities which a poor, unpretending human creature [homuncio] would have disdained. Many times the ideal of the divine nature, as adopted by pagan races, fell under the contempt, not only of men superior to the national superstition, but of men partaking in that superstition. Yet, with all those drawbacks, an ideal _was_ an ideal. The being set up for adoration as god, _was_ such upon the whole to the

worshipper; since, if there had been any higher mode of excellence conceivable for _him_, that higher mode would have virtually become his deity. It cannot be doubted, therefore, that the nature of the national divinities indicated the qualities which ranked highest in the national estimation; and that being contemplated continually in the spirit of veneration, these qualities must have worked an extensive conformity to their own standard. The mythology sanctioned by the ritual of public worship, the features of moral nature in the gods distributed through that mythology, and sometimes commemorated by gleams in that ritual, domineered over the popular heart, even in those cases where the religion had been a derivative religion, and not originally moulded by impulses breathing from the native disposition. So that, upon the whole, such as were the gods of a nation, such was the nation: given the particular idolatry, it became possible to decipher the character of the idolaters. Where Moloch was worshipped, the people would naturally be found cruel; where the Paphian Venus, it could not be expected that they should escape the taint of a voluptuous effeminacy.

Against this principle, there could have been no room for demur, were it not through that inveterate prejudice besieging the modern mind,--as though all religion, however false, implied some scheme of morals connected with it. However imperfectly discharged, one function even of the pagan priest (it is supposed) must have been--to guide, to counsel, to exhort, as a teacher of morals. And, had _that_ been so, the practical precepts, and the moral commentary coming after even the grossest forms of worship, or the most revolting mythological legends, might have operated to neutralize their horrors, or even to allegorize them into better meanings. Lord Bacon, as a trial of skill, has attempted something of that sort in his 'Wisdom of the Ancients.' But all this is modern refinement, either in the spirit of playful ingenuity or of ignorance. I have said sufficiently that there was no _doctrinal_ part in the religion of the pagans. There was a _cultus_, or ceremonial worship: _that_ constituted the sum total of religion, in the idea of a pagan. There was a necessity, for the sake of guarding its traditional usages, and upholding and supporting its pomp, that official persons should preside in this _cultus_: _that_ constituted the duty of the priest. Beyond this ritual of public worship, there was nothing at all; nothing to believe, nothing to understand. A set of legendary tales undoubtedly there was, connected with the mythologic history of each separate deity. But in what sense you understood these, or whether you were at all acquainted with them, was a matter of indifference to the priests; since many of these legends were variously related, and some had apparently been propagated in ridicule of the gods, rather than in their honor.

With Christianity a new scene was opened. In this religion the _cultus_, or form of worship, was not even the primary business, far less was it the exclusive business. The worship flowed as a direct consequence from the new idea exposed of the divine nature, and from the new idea of man's relations to this nature. Here were suddenly unmasked great doctrines, truths positive and directly avowed: whereas, in Pagan forms of religion, any notices which then were, or seemed to be, of circumstances surrounding the gods, related only to matters of fact or accident, such as that a particular god was the son or the nephew of some other god; a truth, if it _were_ a truth, wholly impertinent to any interest of man.

As there are some important truths, dimly perceived or not at all, lurking in the idea of God,--an idea too vast to be navigable as yet by the human understanding, yet here and there to be coasted,--I wish at this point to direct the reader's attention upon a passage which he may happen to remember in Sir Isaac Newton: the passage occurs at the end of the 'Opticks;' and the exact expressions I do not remember; but the sense is what I am going to state: Sir Isaac is speaking of God; and he takes occasion to say, that God is not good, but goodness; is not holy, but holiness; is not infinite, but infinity. This, I apprehend, will have struck many readers as merely a rhetorical *_bravura_*; sublime, perhaps, and fitted to exalt the feeling of awe connected with so unapproachable a mystery, but otherwise not throwing any new light upon the darkness of the idea as a problem before the intellect. Yet indirectly perhaps it *_does_*, when brought out into its latent sense by placing it in *_juxtaposition_* with paganism. If a philosophic theist, who is also a Christian, or who (*_not_* being a Christian,) has yet by his birth and breeding become saturated with Christian ideas and feelings,[Footnote: this case is far from uncommon; and undoubtedly, from having too much escaped observation, it has been the cause of much error. Poets I could mention, if it were not invidious to do so, who, whilst composing in a spirit of burning enmity to the Christian faith, yet rested for the very sting of their pathos upon ideas that but for Christianity could never have existed. Translators there have been, English, French, German, of Mahometan books, who have so colored the whole vein of thinking with sentiments peculiar to Christianity, as to draw from a reflecting reader the exclamation, 'If this can be indeed the product of Islamism, wherefore should Christianity exist?' If thoughts so divine can, indeed, belong to a false religion, what more could we gain from a true one?] attempts to realize the idea of supreme Deity, he becomes aware of a double and contradictory movement in his own mind whilst striving towards that result. He demands, in the first place, something in the highest degree generic; and yet again in the opposite direction, something in the highest degree individual; he demands on the one path, a vast ideality, and yet on the other, in union with a determinate personality. He must not surrender himself to the first impulse, else he is betrayed into a mere *_anima mundi_*; he must not surrender himself to the second, else he is betrayed into something merely human. This difficult antagonism, of what is most and what is least generic, must be maintained, otherwise the idea, the possible idea, of that august unveiling which takes place in the Judaico-Christian God, is absolutely in clouds. Now, this antagonism utterly collapses in paganism. And to a philosophic apprehension, this peculiarity of the heathen gods is more shocking and fearful than what at first sight had seemed most so. When a man pauses for the purpose of attentively reviewing the Pantheon of Greece and Rome, what strikes him at the first with most depth of impression and with most horror is, the *_wickedness_* of this Pantheon. And he observes with surprise, that this wickedness, which is at a furnace-heat in the superior gods, becomes fainter and paler as you descend. Amongst the semi-deities, such as the Oreads or Dryads, the Nereids or Naiads, he feels not at all offended. The odor of corruption, the *_saeva mephitis_*, has by this time exhaled. The uproar of eternal outrage has ceased. And these gentle divinities, if too human and too beset with infirmities, are not impure, and not vexed with ugly appetites, nor instinct of quarrel: they are tranquil

as are the hills and the forests; passionless as are the seas and the fountains which they tenant. But, when he ascends to the *dii majorum gentium*, to those twelve gods of the supreme house, who may be called in respect of rank, the Paladins of the classical Pantheon, secret horror comes over him at the thought that demons, reflecting the worst aspects of brutal races, ever *could* have levied worship from his own. It is true they do so no longer as regards *our* planet. But what *has* been apparently *may* be. God made the Greeks and Romans of one blood with himself; he cannot deny that *intellectually* the Greeks--he cannot deny that *morally* the Romans--were amongst the foremost of human races; and he trembles in thinking that abominations, whose smoke ascended through so many ages to the *supreme* heavens, may, or might, so far as human resistance is concerned, again become the law for the noblest of his species. A deep feeling, it is true, exists latently in human beings of something perishable in evil. Whatsoever is founded in wickedness, according to a deep misgiving dispersed amongst men, must be tainted with corruption. *There* might seem consolation; but a man who reflects is not quite so sure of *that*. As a commonplace resounding in schools, it may be justly current amongst us, that what is evil by nature or by origin must be transient. But *that* may be because evil in all human things is partial, is heterogeneous; evil mixed with good; and the two natures, by their mutual enmity, must enter into a collision, which may possibly guarantee the final destruction of the whole compound. Such a result may not threaten a nature that is purely and totally evil, that is *homogeneously* evil. Dark natures there may be, whose *essence* is evil, that may have an abiding root in the system of the universe not less awfully exempt from change than the mysterious foundations of God.

This is dreadful. Wickedness that is immeasurable, in connection with power that is superhuman, appals the imagination. Yet this is a combination that might easily have been conceived; and a wicked god still commands a mode of reverence. But that feature of the pagan pantheon, which I am contrasting with this, viz., that no pagan deity is an *abstraction* but a vile *concrete*, impresses myself with a subtler sense of horror; because it blends the hateful with a mode of the ludicrous. For the sake of explaining myself to the non-philosophic reader, I beg him to consider what is the sort of feeling with which he regards an ancient river-god, or the presiding nymph of a fountain. The impression which he receives is pretty much like that from the monumental figure of some allegoric being, such as Faith or Hope, Fame or Truth. He hardly believes that the most superstitious Grecian seriously believed in such a being as a distinct personality. He feels convinced that the sort of personal existence ascribed to such an abstraction, as well as the human shape, are merely modes of representing and drawing into unity a variety of phenomena and agencies that seem *one*, by means of their unintermitting continuity, and because they tend to one common purpose. Now, from such a symbolic god as this, let him pass to Jupiter or Mercury, and instantly he becomes aware of a revolting individuality. He sees before him the opposite pole of deity. The river-god had too little of a concrete character. Jupiter has nothing else. In Jupiter you read no incarnation of any abstract quality whatever: he represents nothing whatever in the metaphysics of the universe. Except for the accident of his power, he is merely a man. He has a *character*, that is, a tendency or determination to this quality or that, in excess;

whereas a nature truly divine must be in equilibrio as to all qualities, and comprehend them all, in the way that a genus comprehends the subordinate species. He has even a personal history: he has passed through certain adventures, faced certain dangers, and survived hostilities that, at one time, were doubtful in their issue. No trace, in short, appears, in any Grecian god, of the generic. Whereas we, in our Christian ideas of God, unconsciously, and without thinking of Sir Isaac Newton, realize Sir Isaac's conceptions. We think of him as having a sort of allegoric generality, liberated from the bonds of the individual; and yet, also, as the most awful among natures, having a conscious personality. He is diffused through all things, present everywhere, and yet not the less present locally. He is at a distance unapproachable by finite creatures; and yet, without any contradiction, (as the profound St. Paul observes,) 'not very far' from every one of us. And I will venture to say, that many a poor old woman has, by virtue of her Christian inoculation, Sir Isaac's great idea lurking in her mind; as for instance, in relation to any of God's attributes; suppose holiness or happiness, she feels, (though analytically she could not explain,) that God is not holy or is not happy by way of participation, after the manner of other beings: that is, he does not draw happiness from a fountain separate and external to himself, and common to other creatures, he drawing more and they drawing less; but that he, himself is the fountain; that no other being can have the least proportion of either one or the other but by drawing from that fountain; that as to all other good gifts, that as to life itself, they are, in man, not on any separate tenure, not primarily, but derivatively, and only in so far as God enters into the nature of man; that 'we live and move' only so far and so long as the incomprehensible union takes place between the human spirit and the fontal abyss of the divine. In short, here, and here only, is found the outermost expansion, the centrifugal, of the TO catholic, united with the innermost centripetal of the personal consciousness. Had, therefore, the pagan gods been less detestable, neither impure nor malignant, they could not have won a salutary veneration--being so merely concrete individuals.

Next, it must have degraded the gods, (and have made them instruments of degradation for man,) that they were, one and all, incarnations; not, as even the Christian God is, for a transitory moment and for an eternal purpose; but essentially and by overruling necessity. The Greeks could not conceive of spirituality. Neither can we, metaphysically, assign the conditions of the spiritual; but, practically, we all feel and represent to our own minds the agencies of God, as liberated from bonds of space and time, of flesh and of resistance. This the Greeks could not feel, could not represent. And the only advantage which the gods enjoyed over the worm and the grub was, that they, (or at least the Paladins amongst them--the twelve supreme gods,) could pass, fluently, from one incarnation to another.

Thirdly. Out of that essential bondage to flesh arose a dreadful suspicion of something worse: in what relation did the pagan gods stand to the abominable phenomenon of death? It is not by uttering pompous flatteries of ever-living and ambrotos aei, &c., that a poet could intercept the searching jealousies of human penetration. These are merely oriental forms of compliment. And here, by the way, as elsewhere, we find Plato vehemently confuted: for it was the undue exaltation of the gods, and not their degradation, which

must be ascribed to the frauds of poets. Tradition, and no poetic tradition, absolutely pointed to the grave of more gods than one. But waiving all that as liable to dispute, one thing we know, from the ancients themselves, as open to no question, that all the gods were born; were born infants; passed through the stages of helplessness and growth; from all which the inference was but too fatally obvious. Besides, there were grandfathers, and even great-grandfathers in the Pantheon: some of these were confessedly superannuated; nay, some had disappeared. Even men, who knew but little of Olympian records, knew this, at least, for certain, that more than one dynasty of gods had passed over the golden stage of Olympus, had made their exit, and were hurrying onward to oblivion. It was matter of notoriety, also, that all these gods were and had been liable to the taint of sorrow for the death of their earthly children, (as the Homeric Jupiter for Sarpedon, Thetis for Achilles, Calliope, in Euripides, for her blooming Rhesus;) all were liable to fear; all to physical pain; all to anxiety; all to the indefinite menaces of a danger not measurable.[Footnote: it must not be forgotten that all the superior gods passed through an infancy (as Jove, &c.) or even an adolescence, (as Bacchus,) or even a maturity, (as the majority of Olympus during the insurrection of the Titans,) surrounded by perils that required not strength only, but artifice, and even abject self-concealment to evade.] Looking backwards or looking forwards, the gods beheld enemies that attacked their existence, or modes of decay, (known and unknown,) which gnawed at their roots. All this I take the trouble to insist upon: not as though it could be worth any man's trouble, at this day, to expose (on its own account) the frailty of the Pantheon, but with a view to the closer estimate of the Divine idea amongst men; and by way of contrast to the power of that idea under Christianity: since I contend that, such as is the God of every people, such, in the corresponding features of character, will be that people. If the god (like Moloch) is fierce, the people will be cruel; if (like Typhon) a destroying energy, the people will be gloomy; if (like the Paphian Venus) libidinous, the people will be voluptuously effeminate. When the gods are perishable, man cannot have the grandeurs of his nature developed: when the shadow of death sits upon the highest of what man represents to himself as celestial, essential blight will sit for ever upon human aspirations. One thing only remains to be added on this subject: Why were not the ancients more profoundly afflicted by the treacherous gleams of mortality in their gods? How was it that they could forget, for a moment, a revelation so full of misery? Since not only the character of man partly depended upon the quality of his god, but also and a fortiori, his destiny upon the destiny of his god. But the reason of his indifference to the divine mortality was--because, at any rate, the pagan man's connection with the gods terminated at his own death. Even selfish men would reconcile themselves to an earthquake, which should swallow up all the world; and the most unreasonable man has professed his readiness, at all times, to die with a dying universe--mundo secum pereunte, mori.

But, thirdly, the gods being such, in what relation to them did man stand? It is a fact hidden from the mass of the ancients themselves, but sufficiently attested, that there was an ancient and secret enmity between the whole family of the gods and the human race. This is confessed by Herodotus as a persuasion spread through some of the nations amongst which he travelled: there was

a sort of truce, indeed, between the parties; temples, with their religious services, and their votive offerings, recorded this truce. But below all these appearances lay deadly enmity, to be explained only by one who should know the mysterious history of both parties from the eldest times. It is extraordinary, however, that Herodotus should rely, for this account, upon the belief of distant nations, when the same belief was so deeply recorded amongst his own countrymen in the sublime story of Prometheus. Much[Footnote: not all: for part was due to the obstinate concealment from Jupiter, by Prometheus, of the danger which threatened his throne in a coming generation.] of the sufferings endured by Prometheus was on account of man, whom he had befriended; and, _by_ befriending, had defeated the malignity of Jove. According to some, man was even created by Prometheus: but no accounts, until lying Platonic philosophers arose, in far later times, represented man as created by Jupiter.

Now let us turn to Christianity; pursuing it through the functions which it exercises in common with Paganism, and also through those which it exercises separately and incommunicably.

I. As to the _Idea of God_,--how great was the chasm dividing the Hebrew God from all gods of idolatrous birth, and with what starry grandeur this revelation of _Supreme_ deity must have wheeled upwards into the field of human contemplation, when first surmounting the steams of earth-born heathenism, I need not impress upon any Christian audience. To their _knowledge_ little could be added. Yet to _know_ is not always to _feel_: and without a correspondent depth of feeling, there is in moral cases no effectual knowledge. Not the understanding is sufficient upon such ground, but that which the Scriptures in their profound philosophy entitle the 'understanding heart.' And perhaps few readers will have adequately appreciated the prodigious change effected in the theatre of the human spirit, by the transition, sudden as the explosion of light, in the Hebrew cosmogony, when, from the caprice of a fleshly god, in one hour man mounted to a justice that knew no shadow of change; from cruelty, mounted to a love which was inexhaustible; from gleams of _essential_ evil, to a holiness that could not be fathomed; from a power and a knowledge, under limitations so merely and obviously human,[Footnote: It is a natural thought, to any person who has not explored these recesses of human degradation, that surely the Pagans must have had it in their power to invest their gods with all conceivable perfections, quite as much as we that are _not_ Pagans. The thing wanting to the Pagans, he will think, was the _right_: otherwise as regarded the _power_.] to the same agencies lying underneath creation, as a root below a plant. Not less awful in power was the transition from the limitations of space and time to ubiquity and eternity, from the familiar to the mysterious, from the incarnate to the spiritual. These enormous transitions were fitted to work changes of answering magnitude in the human spirit. The reader can hardly make any mistake as to this. He _must_ concede the changes. What he will be likely to misconceive, unless he has reflected, is--the immensity of these changes. And another mistake, which he is even more likely to make, is this: he will imagine that a new idea, even though the idea of an object so vast as God, cannot become the ground of any revolution more than intellectual--cannot revolutionize the moral and active principles in man, consequently cannot lay the ground of any political movement. We shall see. But next, that is,--

II. Secondly, as to the idea of man's relation to God, this, were it capable of disjunction, would be even more of a revolutionary idea than the idea of God. But the one idea is enlinked with the other. In Paganism, as I have said, the higher you ascend towards the original fountains of the religion, the more you leave behind the frauds, forgeries, and treacheries of philosophy; so much the more clearly you descry the odious truth--that man stood in the relation of a superior to his gods, as respected all moral qualities of any value, but in the relation of an inferior as respected physical power. This was a position of the two parties fatal, by itself, to all grandeur of moral aspirations. Whatever was good or corrigibly bad, man saw associated with weakness; and power was sealed and guaranteed to absolute wickedness. The evil disposition in man to worship success, was strengthened by this mode of superiority in the gods. Merit was disjoined from prosperity. Even merit of a lower class, merit in things morally indifferent, was not so decidedly on the side of the gods as to reconcile man to the reasonableness of their yoke. They were compelled to acquiesce in a government which they did not regard as just. The gods were stronger, but not much; they had the unfair advantage of standing over the heads of men, and of wings for flight or for manoeuvring. Yet even so, it was clearly the opinion of Homer's age, that, in a fair fight, the gods might have been found liable to defeat. The gods again were generally beautiful: but not more so than the elite of mankind; else why did these gods, both male and female, continually persecute our race with their odious love? which love, be it observed, uniformly brought ruin upon its objects. Intellectually the gods were undoubtedly below men. They pretended to no great works in philosophy, in legislation, or in the fine arts, except only that, as to one of these arts, viz. poetry, a single god vaunted himself greatly in simple ages. But he attempted neither a tragedy nor an epic poem. Even in what he did attempt, it is worth while to follow his career. His literary fate was what might have been expected. After the Persian war, the reputation of his verses rapidly decayed. Wits arose in Athens, who laughed so furiously at his style and his metre, in the Delphic oracles, that at length some echoes of their scoffing began to reach Delphi; upon which the god and his inspired ministers became sulky, and finally took refuge in prose, as the only shelter they could think of from the caustic venom of Athenian malice.

These were the miserable relations of man to the Pagan gods. Every thing, which it is worth doing at all, man could do better. Now it is some feature of alleviation in a servile condition, if the lord appears by natural endowments superior to his slave; or at least it embitters the degradation of slavery, if he does not. Greatly, therefore, must human interests have suffered, had this jealous approximation of the two parties been the sole feature noticeable in the relations between them. But there was a worse. There was an original enmity between man and the Pantheon; not the sort of enmity which we Christians ascribe to our God; that is but a figure of speech: and even there is a derivative enmity; an enmity founded on something in man subsequent to his creation, and having a ransom annexed to it. But the enmity of the heathen gods was original--that is, to the very nature of man, and as though man had in some stage of his career been their rival; which indeed he was, if we adopt Milton's hypothesis of the gods as ruined angels, and of man as created to supply the vacancy thus

arising in heaven.

Now, from this dreadful scheme of relations, between the human and divine, under Paganism, turn to the relations under Christianity. It is remarkable that even here, according to a doctrine current amongst many of the elder divines, man was naturally superior to the race of beings immediately ranking above him. Jeremy Taylor notices the obscure tradition, that the angelic order was, by original constitution, inferior to man; but this original precedency had been reversed for the present, by the fact that man, in his higher nature, was morally ruined, whereas the angelic race had not forfeited the perfection of their nature, though otherwise an inferior nature. Waiving a question so inscrutable as this, we know, at least, that no allegiance or homage is required from man towards this doubtfully superior race. And when man first finds himself called upon to pay tributes of this nature as to a being inimitably his superior, he is at the same moment taught by a revelation that this awful superior is the same who created him, and that in a sense more than figurative, he himself is the child of God. There stand the two relations, as declared in Paganism and in Christianity,--both probably true. In the former, man is the essential enemy of the gods, though sheltered by some conventional arrangement; in the latter, he is the son of God. In his own image God made him; and the very central principle of his religion is, that God for a great purpose assumed his own human nature; a mode of incarnation which could not be conceivable, unless through some divine principle common to the two natures, and forming the nexus between them.

With these materials it is, and others resembling these, that Christianity has carried forward the work of human progression. The ethics of Christianity it was,--new ethics and unintelligible, in a degree as yet but little understood, to the old pagan nations,--which furnished the rudder, or guidance, for a human revolution; but the mysteries of Christianity it was,--new Eleusinian shows, presenting God under a new form and aspect, presenting man under a new relation to God,--which furnished the oars and sails, the moving forces, for the advance of this revolution.

It was my intention to have shown how this great idea of man's relation to God, connected with the previous idea of God, had first caused the state of slavery to be regarded as an evil. Next, I proposed to show how charitable institutions, not one of which existed in pagan ages, hospitals, and asylums of all classes, had arisen under the same idea brooding over man from age to age. Thirdly, I should have attempted to show, that from the same mighty influence had grown up a social influence of woman, which did not exist in pagan ages, and will hereafter be applied to greater purposes. But, for want of room, I confine myself to saying a few words on war, and the mode in which it will be extinguished by Christianity.

WAR.--This is amongst the foremost of questions that concern human progress, and it is one which, of all great questions, (the question of slavery not excepted, nor even the question of the slave-trade;) has travelled forward the most rapidly into public favor. Thirty years ago, there was hardly a breath stirring against war, as the sole natural resource of national anger or national competition. Hardly did a wish rise, at intervals, in that

direction, or even a protesting sigh, over the calamities of war. And if here and there a contemplative author uttered such a sigh, it was in the spirit of mere hopeless sorrow, that mourned over an evil apparently as inalienable from man as hunger, as death, as the frailty of human expectations. Cowper, about sixty years ago, had said,

'War is a game which, were their subjects wise,
Kings would not play at.'

But Cowper would not have said this, had he not been nearly related to the Whig house of Panshanger. Every Whig thought it a duty occasionally to look fiercely at kings, saying--'D--, who's afraid?' pretty much as a regular John Bull, in the lower classes, expresses his independence by defying the peerage,--'A lord! do you say? what care I for a lord? I value a lord no more than a button top;' whilst, in fact, he secretly reveres a lord as being usually amongst the most ancient of landed proprietors, and, secondly, amongst the richest. The scourge of kingship was what Cowper glanced at, rather than the scourge of war; and in any case the condition which he annexed to his suggestion of relief, is too remote to furnish much consolation for cynics like myself, or the reader. If war is to cease only when subjects become wise, we need not contract the scale of our cannon-founderies until the millennium. Sixty years ago, therefore, the abolition of war looked as unprosperous a speculation as Dr. Darwin's scheme for improving our British climate by hauling out all the icebergs from the polar basin in seasons when the wind sate fair for the tropics; by which means these wretched annoyers of our peace would soon find themselves in quarters too hot to hold them, and would disappear as rapidly as sugar-candy in children's mouths. Others, however, inclined rather to the Ancient Mariner's scheme, by shooting an albatross:--

'Twas right, said they, such birds to shoot,
That bring the frost and snow.'

Scarcely more hopeless than these crusades against frost, were any of the serious plans which had then been proposed for the extirpation of war. St. Pierre contributed '*son petite possible*' to this desirable end, in the shape of an essay towards the idea of a perpetual peace; Kant, the great professor of Koenigsberg, subscribed to the same benevolent scheme *his* little essay under the same title; and others in England subscribed a guinea each to the fund for the suppression of war. These efforts, one and all, spent their fire as vainly as Darwin spent his wrath against the icebergs: the icebergs are as big and as cold as ever; and war is still, like a basking snake, ready to rear his horrid crest on the least rustling in the forests.

But in quarters more powerful than either purses of gold or scholastic reveries, there has, since the days of Kant and Cowper, begun to gather a menacing thundercloud against war. The nations, or at least the great leading nations, are beginning to set their faces against it. War, it is felt, comes under the denunciation of Christianity, by the havoc which it causes amongst those who bear

God's image; of political economy, by its destruction of property and human labor; of rational logic, by the frequent absurdity of its pretexts. The wrong, which is put forth as the ostensible ground of the particular war, is oftentimes not of a nature to be redressed by war, or is even forgotten in the course of the war; and, secondly, the war prevents another course which might have redressed the wrong: viz., temperate negotiation, or neutral arbitration. These things were always true, and, indeed, heretofore more flagrantly true: but the difference, in favor of our own times, is, that they are now felt to be true. Formerly, the truths were seen, but not felt: they were inoperative truths, lifeless, and unvalued. Now, on the other hand, in England, America, France, societies are rising for making war upon war; and it is a striking proof of the progress made by such societies, that, some two years ago, a deputation from one of them being presented to King Louis Philippe, received from him--not the sort of vague answer which might have been expected, but a sincere one, expressed in very encouraging words.[Footnote: and rather presumptuous words, if the newspapers reported them correctly: for they went the length of promising, that he separately, as King of the French, would coerce Europe into peace. But, from the known good sense of the king, it is more probable that he promised his negative aid,--the aid of not personally concurring to any war which might otherwise be attractive to the French government.] Ominous to himself this might have been thought by the superstitious, who should happen to recollect the sequel to a French king, of the very earliest movement in this direction: the great (but to this hour mysterious) design of Henry IV. in 1610, was supposed by many to be a plan of this very nature, for enforcing a general and permanent peace on Christendom, by means of an armed intervention; and no sooner had it partially transpired through traitorous evidence, or through angry suspicion, than his own assassination followed.

Shall I offend the reader by doubting, after all, whether war is not an evil still destined to survive through several centuries? Great progress has already been made. In the two leading nations of the earth, war can no longer be made with the levity which provoked Cowper's words two generations back. France is too ready to fight for mere bubbles of what she calls glory. But neither in France nor England could a war now be undertaken without a warrant from the popular voice. This is a great step in advance; but the final step for its extinction will be taken by a new and Christian code of international law. This cannot be consummated until Christian philosophy shall have traversed the earth, and reorganized the structure of society.

But, finally, and (as regards extent, though not as regards intensity of effect) far beyond all other political powers of Christianity, is the power, the demiurgic power of this religion over the kingdoms of human opinion. Did it ever strike the reader, that the Greeks and Romans, although so frantically republican, and, in some of their institutions, so democratic, yet, on the other hand, never developed the idea of representative government, either as applied to legislation or to administration? The elective principle was widely used amongst them. Nay, the nicer casuistries of this principle had been latterly discussed. The separate advantages of open or of secret voting, had been the subject of keen dispute in the political circles of Rome; and the art was well understood of disturbing the natural course of the public suffrage, by varying

the modes of combining the voters under the different forms of the Comitia. Public authority and jurisdiction were created and modified by the elective principle; but never was this principle applied to the creation or direction of public opinion. The senate of Rome, for instance, like our own sovereign, represented the national majesty, and, to a certain degree, continued to do so for centuries after this majesty had received a more immediate representative in the person of the reigning Caesar. The senate, like our own sovereign, represented the grandeur of the nation, the hospitality of the nation to illustrious strangers, and the gratitude of the nation in the distribution of honors. For the senate continued to be the fountain of honors, even to Caesar himself: the titles of Germanicus, Britannicus, Dalmaticus, &c. (which may be viewed as peerages,) the privilege of precedency, the privilege of wearing a laurel diadem, &c. (which may be viewed as the Garter, Bath, Thistle,) all were honors conferred by the senate. But the senate, no more than our own sovereign ever represented, by any one act or function, the public opinion. How was this? Strange, indeed, that so mighty a secret as that of delegating public opinions to the custody of elect representatives, a secret which has changed the face of the world, should have been missed by nations applying so vast an energy to the whole theory of public administration. But the truth, however paradoxical, is, that in Greece and Rome no body of public opinions existed that could have furnished a standing ground for adverse parties, or that consequently could have required to be represented. In all the dissensions of Rome, from the secessions of the Plebs to the factions of the Gracchi, of Marius and Sylla, of Caesar and Pompey; in all the *ἰστάσεις* of the Grecian republics,--the contest could no more be described as a contest of opinion, than could the feuds of our buccaneers in the seventeenth century, when parting company, or fighting for opposite principles of dividing the general booty. One faction has, another sought to have, a preponderant share of power: but these struggles never took the shape, even in pretence, of differences that moved through the conflict of principles. The case was always the simple one of power matched against power, faction against faction, usage against innovation. It was not that the patricians deluded themselves by any speculative views into the refusal of intermarriages with the plebeians: it was not as upon any opinion that they maintained the contest, (such as at this day divides ourselves from the French upon the question of opinion with regard to the social rank of literary men) but simply as upon a fact: they appealed to evidences not to speculations; to usage, not to argument. They were in possession, and fought against change, not as inconsistent with a theory, but as hostility to an interest. In the contest of Caesar with the oligarchic knavery of Cicero, Cato, and Pompey, no possible exercise of representative functions (had the people possessed them) could have been applied beneficially to the settlement of the question at issue. Law, and the abuses of law, good statutes and evil customs, had equally thrown the public power into a settlement fatal to the public welfare. Not any decay of public virtue, but increase of poverty amongst the inferior citizens, had thrown the suffrages, and consequently the honors and powers of the state, into the hands of some forty or fifty houses, rich enough to bribe, and bribing systematically. Caesar, undertaking to correct a state of disease which would else have convulsed the republic every third year by civil war, knew that no arguments could be available against a competition of mere interests. The remedy lay, not through opposition speeches in the senate, or from the rostra,--not through pamphlets

or journals,--but through a course of intense cudgelling. This he happily accomplished; and by that means restored Rome for centuries,--not to the aspiring condition which she once held, but to an immunity from annual carnage, and in other respects to a condition of prosperity which, if less than during her popular state, was greater than any else attainable after that popular state had become impossible, from changes in the composition of society.

Here, and in all other critical periods of ancient republics, we shall find that opinions did not exist as the grounds of feud, nor could by any dexterity have been applied to the settlement of feuds. Whereas, on the other hand, with ourselves for centuries, and latterly with the French, no public contest has arisen, or does now exist, without fighting its way through every stage of advance by appeals to public opinion. If, for instance, an improved tone of public feeling calls for a gradual mitigation of army punishments, the quarrel becomes instantly an intellectual one: and much information is brought forward, which throws light upon human nature generally. But in Rome, such a discussion would have been stopped summarily, as interfering with the discretionary power of the Praetorium. To take the *vitis*, or cane, from the hands of the centurion, was a perilous change; but, perilous or not, must be committed to the judgment of the particular imperator, or of his legatus. The executive business of the Roman exchequer, again, could not have been made the subject of public discussion; not only because no sufficient material for judgment could, under the want of a public press, have been gathered, except from the parties interested in all its abuses, but also because these parties (a faction amongst the equestrian order) could have effectually overthrown any counter-faction formed amongst parties not personally *affected* by the question. The Roman institution of *clientela*--which had outlived its early uses--does any body imagine that this was open to investigation? The influence of murderous riots would easily have been brought to bear upon it, but not the light of public opinion. Even if public opinion could have been evoked in those days, or trained to combined action, insuperable difficulties would have arisen in adjusting its force to the necessities of the Roman provinces and allies. Any arrangement that was practicable, would have obtained an influence for these parties, either dangerous to the supreme section of the empire, or else nugatory for each of themselves. It is a separate consideration, that through total defect of cheap instruments for communication, whether personally or in the way of thought, public opinion must always have moved in the dark: what I chiefly assert is, that the feuds bearing at all upon public interests, never *did* turn, or could have turned, upon any collusion of opinions. And two things must strengthen the reader's conviction upon this point, viz. first, that no public meetings (such as with us carry on the weight of public business throughout the empire) were ever called in Rome; secondly, that in the regular and 'official' meetings of the people, no social interest was ever discussed, but only some political interest.

Now, on the other hand, amongst ourselves, every question, that is large enough to engage public interest, though it should begin as a mere comparison of strength with strength, almost immediately travels forward into a comparison of right with rights, or of duty with duty. A mere fiscal question of restraint upon importation from this or that particular quarter, passes into a question of colonial rights. Arrangements of convenience for the management

of the pauper, or the debtor, or the criminal, or the war-captive, become the occasions of profound investigations into the rights of persons occupying those relations. Sanatory ordinances for the protection of public health; such as quarantine, fever hospitals, draining, vaccination, &c., connect themselves, in the earliest stages of their discussion, with the general consideration of the duties which the state owes to its subjects. If education is to be promoted by public counsels, every step of the inquiry applies itself to the consideration of the knowledge to be communicated, and of the limits within which any section of religious partisanship can be safely authorized to interfere. If coercion, beyond the warrant of the ordinary law, is to be applied as a remedy for local outrages, a tumult of opinions arises instantly, as to the original causes of the evil, as to the sufficiency of the subsisting laws to meet its pressure, and as to the modes of connecting enlarged powers in the magistrate with the minimum of offence to the general rights of the subject.

Everywhere, in short, some question of duty and responsibility arises to face us in any the smallest public interest that can become the subject of public opinion. Questions, in fact, that fall short of this dignity; questions that concern public convenience only, and do not wear any moral aspect, such as the bullion question, never do become subjects of public opinion. It cannot be said in which direction lies the bias of public opinion. In the very possibility of interesting the public judgment, is involved the certainty of wearing some relation to moral principles. Hence the ardor of our public disputes; for no man views, without concern, a great moral principle darkened by party motives, or placed in risk by accident: hence the dignity and benefit of our public disputes; hence, also, their ultimate relation to the Christian faith. We do not, indeed, in these days, as did our homely ancestors in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, cite texts of Scripture as themes for senatorial commentary or exegesis; but the virtual reference to scriptural principles is now a thousand times more frequent. The great principles of Christian morality are now so interwoven with our habits of thinking, that we appeal to them no longer as scriptural authorities, but as the natural suggestions of a sound judgment. For instance, in the case of any wrong offered to the Hindoo races, now so entirely dependent upon our wisdom and justice, we British [Footnote: It may be thought that, in the prosecution of Verres, the people of Rome acknowledged something of the same high responsibility. Not at all. The case came before Rome, not as a case of injury to a colonial child, whom the general mother was bound to protect and avenge; but as an appeal, by way of special petition, from Sicilian clients. It was no grand political movement, but simply judicial. Verres was an ill-used man and the victim of private intrigues. Or, whatever he might be, Rome certainly sat upon the cause, not in any character of maternal protectress, taking up voluntarily the support of the weak, but as a sheriff assessing damages in a case forced upon his court by the plaintiff.] immediately, by our solemnity of investigation, testify our sense of the deep responsibility to India with which our Indian supremacy has invested us. We make no mention of the Christian oracles. Yet where, then, have we learned this doctrine of far-stretching responsibility? In all pagan systems of morality, there is the vaguest and slightest appreciation of such relations as connect us with our colonies. But, from the profound philosophy of Scripture, we have learned that no relations whatever, not even

those of property, can connect us with even a brute animal, but that we contract concurrent obligations of justice and mercy.

In this age, then, public interests move and prosper through conflicts of opinion. Secondly, as I have endeavored to show, public opinion cannot settle, powerfully, upon any question that is not essentially a moral question. And, thirdly, in all moral questions, we, of Christian nations, are compelled, by habit and training, as well as other causes, to derive our first principles, consciously or not, from the Scriptures. It is, therefore, through the doctrinality of our religion that we derive arms for all moral questions; and it is as moral questions that any political disputes much affect us. The daily conduct, therefore, of all great political interests, throws us unconsciously upon the first principles which we all derive from Christianity. And, in this respect, we are more advantageously placed, by a very noticeable distinction, than the professors of the two other doctrinal religions. The Koran having pirated many sentiments from the Jewish and the Christian systems, could not but offer some rudiments of moral judgment; yet, because so much of these rudiments is stolen, the whole is incoherent, and does not form a system of ethics. In Judaism, again, the special and insulated situation of the Jews has unavoidably impressed an exclusive bias upon its principles. In both codes the rules are often of restricted and narrow application. But, in the Christian Scriptures, the rules are so comprehensive and large as uniformly to furnish the major proposition of a syllogism; whilst the particular act under discussion, wearing, perhaps, some modern name, naturally is not directly mentioned: and to bring this, in the minor proposition, under the principle contained in the major, is a task left to the judgment of the inquirer in each particular case. Something is here intrusted to individual understanding; whereas in the Koran, from the circumstantiality of the rule, you are obliged mechanically to rest in the letter of the precept. The Christian Scriptures, therefore, not only teach, but train the mind to habits of self-teaching in all moral questions, by enforcing more or less of activity in applying the rule; that is, in subsuming the given case proposed under the scriptural principle.

Hence it is certain, and has been repeatedly illustrated, that whilst the Christian faith, in collision with others, would inevitably rouse to the most active fermentation of minds, the Mahometan (as also doctrinal but unsystematical) would have the same effect, in kind, but far feebler in degree; and an idolatrous religion would have no such effect at all. Agreeably to this scale, some years ago, a sect of reforming or fanatical Mahometans, in Bengal, [Footnote: At Baraset, if I remember rightly.] commenced a persecution of the surrounding Hindoos. At length, a reaction took place on the part of the idolaters, but in what temper? Bitter enough, and so far alarming as to call down a government interference with troops and artillery, but yet with no signs of religious retaliation. That was a principle of movement which the Hindoos could not understand: their retaliation was simply to the personal violence they had suffered. Such is the inertia of a mere cultus. And, in the other extreme, if we Christians, in our intercourse with both Hindoos and Mahometans, were not sternly reined up by the vigilance of the local governments, no long time would pass before all India would be incurably convulsed by disorganizing feuds.

PROTESTANTISM. [Footnote: A Vindication of Protestant Principles. By Phileleutheros Anglicanus. London: Parker. 1847.]

[1847.]

The work whose substance and theme are thus briefly abstracted is, at this moment, making a noise in the world. It is ascribed by report to two bishops--not jointly, but alternatively--in the sense that, if one did not write the book, the other did. The Bishops of Oxford and St. David's, Wilberforce and Thirlwall, are the two pointed at by the popular finger; and, in some quarters, a third is suggested, viz., Stanley, Bishop of Norwich. The betting, however, is altogether in favor of Oxford. So runs the current of public gossip. But the public is a bad guesser, 'stiff in opinion' it is, and almost 'always in the wrong.' Now let me guess. When I had read for ten minutes, I offered a bet of seven to one (no takers) that the author's name began with H. Not out of any love for that amphibious letter; on the contrary, being myself what Professor Wilson calls a hedonist, or philosophical voluptuary, and murmuring, with good reason, if a rose leaf lies doubled below me, naturally I murmur at a letter that puts one to the expense of an aspiration, forcing into the lungs an extra charge of raw air on frosty mornings. But truth is truth, in spite of frosty air. And yet, upon further reading, doubts gathered upon my mind. The H. that I mean is an Englishman; now it happens that here and there a word, or some peculiarity in using a word, indicates, in this author, a Scotchman; for instance, the expletive 'just,' which so much infests Scotch phraseology, written or spoken, at page 1; elsewhere the word 'short-comings,' which, being horridly tabernacular, and such that no gentleman could allow himself to touch it without gloves, it is to be wished that our Scottish brethren would resign, together with 'backslidings,' to the use of field preachers. But worse, by a great deal, and not even intelligible in England, is the word thereafter, used as an adverb of time, i.e., as the correlative of hereafter. Thereafter, in pure vernacular English, bears a totally different sense. In 'Paradise Lost,' for instance, having heard the character of a particular angel, you are told that he spoke thereafter, i.e., spoke agreeably to that character. 'How a score of sheep, Master Shallow?' The answer is, 'Thereafter as they be.' Again, 'Thereafter as a man sows shall he reap.' The objections are overwhelming to the Scottish use of the word; first, because already in Scotland it is a barbarism transplanted from the filthy vocabulary of attorneys, locally called writers; secondly, because in England it is not even intelligible, and, what is worse still, sure to be mis-intelligible. And yet, after all, these exotic forms may be a mere blind. The writer is, perhaps, purposely leading us astray with his 'thereafters,' and his horrid 'short-comings.' Or, because London newspapers, and Acts of Parliament, are beginning to be more and more polluted with these barbarisms, he may even have caught them unconsciously.

And, on looking again at one case of 'thereafter,' viz. at page 79, it seems impossible to determine whether he uses it in the

classical English sense, or in the sense of leguleian barbarism. This question of authorship, meantime, may seem to the reader of little moment. Far from it! The weightier part of the interest depends upon that very point. If the author really is a bishop, or supposing the public rumor so far correct as that he is a man of distinction in the English church, then, and by that simple fact, this book, or this pamphlet, interesting at any rate for itself, becomes separately interesting through its authorship, so as to be the most remarkable phenomenon of the day; and why? Because the most remarkable expression of a movement, accomplished and proceeding in a quarter that, if any on this earth, might be thought sacred from change. Oh, fearful are the motions of time, when suddenly lighted up to a retrospect of thirty years! Pathetic are the ruins of time in its slowest advance! Solemn are the prospects, so new and so incredible, which time unfolds at every turn of its wheeling flight! Is it come to this? Could any man, one generation back, have anticipated that an English dignitary, and speaking on a very delicate religious question, should deliberately appeal to a writer confessedly infidel, and proud of being an infidel, as a 'triumphant' settler of Christian scruples? But if the infidel is right, a point which I do not here discuss--but if the infidel is a man of genius, a point which I do not deny--was it not open to cite him, even though the citer were a bishop? Why, yes--uneasily one answers, yes; but still the case records a strange alteration, and still one could have wished to hear such a doctrine, which ascribes human infirmity (nay, human criminality) to every book of the Bible, uttered by anybody rather than by a father of the Church, and guaranteed by anybody rather than by an infidel, in triumph. A boy may fire his pistol unnoticed; but a sentinel, mounting guard in the dark, must remember the trepidation that will follow any shot from him, and the certainty that it will cause all the stations within hearing to get under arms immediately. Yet why, if this bold opinion does come from a prelate, he being but one man, should it carry so alarming a sound? Is the whole bench of bishops bound and compromised by the audacity of any one amongst its members? Certainly not. But yet such an act, though it should be that of a rash precursor, marks the universal change of position; there is ever some sympathy between the van and the rear of the same body at the same time; and the boldest could not have dared to go ahead so rashly, if the rearmost was not known to be pressing forward to his support, far more closely than thirty years ago he could have done. There have been, it is true, heterodox professors of divinity and free-thinking bishops before now. England can show a considerable list of such people--even Rome has a smaller list. Rome, that weeds all libraries, and is continually burning books, in effigy, by means of her vast Index Expurgatorius, [Footnote: A question of some interest arises upon the casuistical construction of this Index. We, that are not by name included, may we consider ourselves indirectly licensed? Silence, I should think, gives consent. And if it wasn't that the present Pope, being a horrid Radical, would be sure to blackball me as an honest Tory, I would send him a copy of my Opera Omnia, requesting his Holiness to say, by return of post, whether I ranked amongst the chaff winnowed by St. Peter's flail, or had his gracious permission to hold myself amongst the pure wheat gathered into the Vatican garner.] which index, continually, she is enlarging by successive supplements, needs also an Index Expurgatorius for the catalogue of her prelates. Weeds there are in the very flower-garden and conservatory of the church. Fathers

of the church are no more to be relied on, as safe authorities, than we rascally lay authors, that notoriously will say anything. And it is a striking proof of this amongst our English bishops, that the very man who, in the last generation, most of all won the public esteem as the champion of the Bible against Tom Paine, was privately known amongst us connoisseurs in heresy (that are always prying into ugly secrets) to be the least orthodox thinker, one or other, amongst the whole brigade of fifteen thousand contemporary clerks who had subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles. Saving your presence, reader, his lordship was no better than a bigoted Socinian, which, in a petty diocese that he never visited, and amongst South Welshmen, that are all incorrigible Methodists, mattered little, but would have been awkward had he come to be Archbishop of York; and that he did not, turned upon the accident of a few weeks too soon, by which the Fates cut short the thread of the Whig ministry in 1807. Certainly, for a Romish or an English bishop to be a Socinian is un peu fort. But I contend that it is quite possible to be far less heretical, and yet dangerously bold; yes, upon the free and spacious latitudes, purposely left open by the English Thirty-nine Articles (ay, or by any Protestant Confession), to plant novelties not less startling to religious ears than Socinianism itself. Besides (which adds to the shock), the dignitary now before us, whether bishop or no bishop, does not write in the tone of a conscious heretic; or, like Archdeacon Blackburne[Footnote: He was the author of The Confessional, which at one time made a memorable ferment amongst all those who loved as sons, or who hated as nonconformists, the English Establishment. This was his most popular work, but he wrote many others in the same temper, that fill six or seven octavos.] of old, in a spirit of hostility to his own fellow-churchmen; but, on the contrary, in the tone of one relying upon support from his clerical brethren, he stands forward as expositor and champion of views now prevailing amongst the elite of the English Church. So construed, the book is, indeed, a most extraordinary one, and exposes a history that almost shocks one of the strides made in religious speculation. Opinions change slowly and stealthily. The steps of the changes are generally continuous; but sometimes it happens that the notice of such steps, the publication of such changes, is not continuous, that it comes upon us per saltum, and, consequently, with the stunning effect of an apparent treachery. Every thoughtful man raises his hands with an involuntary gesture of awe at the revolutions of so revolutionary an age, when thus summoned to the spectacle of an English prelate serving a piece of artillery against what once were fancied to be main outworks of religion, and at a station sometimes considerably in advance of any occupied by Voltaire.[Footnote: Let not the reader misunderstand me; I do not mean that the clerical writer now before us (bishop or not bishop) is more hostile to religion than Voltaire, or is hostile at all. On the contrary, he is, perhaps, profoundly religious, and he writes with neither levity nor insincerity. But this conscientious spirit, and this piety, do but the more call into relief the audacity of his free-thinking--do but the more forcibly illustrate the prodigious changes wrought by time, and by the contagion from secular revolutions, in the spirit of religious philosophy.]

It is this audacity of speculation, I apprehend, this etalage of bold results, rather than any success in their development, which has fixed the public attention. Development, indeed, applied to philosophic problems, or research applied to questions of erudition,

was hardly possible within so small a compass as one hundred and seventeen pages, for that is the extent of the work, except as regards the notes, which amount to seventy-four pages more. Such brevity, on such a subject, is unseasonable, and almost culpable. On such a subject as the Philosophy of Protestantism--' satius erat silere, quam parcius, dicere.' Better were absolute silence, more respectful as regards the theme, less tantalizing as regards the reader, than a style of discussion so fragmentary and so rapid.

But, before we go farther, what are we to call this bold man? One must have some name for a man that one is reviewing; and, as he comes abroad incognito, it is difficult to see what name could have any propriety. Let me consider: there are three bishops in the field, Mr. H., and the Scotchman--that makes five. But every one of these, you say, is represented equally by the name in the title--Phileleutheros Anglicanus. True, but that's as long as a team of horses. If it had but Esquire at the end, it would measure against a Latin Hendecasyllable verse. I'm afraid that we must come at last to Phil. I've been seeking to avoid it, for it's painful to say 'Jack' or 'Dick' either to or of an ecclesiastical great gun. But if such big wigs will come abroad in disguise, and with names as long as Fielding's Hononchrononthonothologus, they must submit to be hustled by pickpockets and critics, and to have their names docked as well as profane authors.

Phil, then, be it--that's settled. Now, let us inquire what it is that Phil has been saying, to cause such a sensation amongst the Gnostics. And, to begin at the beginning, what is Phil's capital object? Phil shall state it himself--these are his opening words:--

'In the following pages we propose to vindicate the fundamental and inherent principles of Protestantism.'

Good; but what are the fundamental principles of Protestantism? 'They are,' says Phil, 'the sole sufficiency of Scripture,' [Footnote: This is much too elliptical a way of expressing the Protestant meaning. Sufficiency for what? 'Sufficiency for salvation' is the phrase of many, and I think elsewhere of Phil. But that is objectionable on more grounds than one; it is redundant, and it is aberrant from the true point contemplated. Sufficiency for itself, without alien helps, is the thing contemplated. The Greek autarkeia, self-sufficiency, or, because that phrase, in English, has received a deflexion towards a bad meaning, the word self-ufficingness might answer; sufficiency for the exposition of its own most secret meaning, out of fountains within itself; needing, therefore, neither the supplementary aids of tradition, on the one hand, nor the complementary aids on the other, (in the event of unprovided cases, or of dilemmas arising,) from the infallibility of a living expounder.] the right of private judgment in its interpretation, and the authority of individual conscience in matters of religion.' Errors of logic show themselves more often in a man's terminology, and his antithesis, and his subdivisions, than anywhere else. Phil goes on to make this distinction, which brings out his imperfect conception. 'We,' says he (and, by the way, if Phil is we, then it must be my duty to call him

they), 'we do not propose to defend the varieties of _doctrine_ held by the different communities of Protestants.' Why, no; that would be a sad task for the most skilful of funambulists or theological tumblers, seeing that many of these varieties stand related to each other as categorical affirmative and categorical negative: it's heavy work to make _yes_ and _no_ pull together in the same proposition. But this, fortunately for himself, _Phil._ declines. You are to understand that he will not undertake the defence of Protestantism in its _doctrines_, but only in its _principles_. That won't do; that antithesis is as hollow as a drum; and, if the objection were verbal only, I would not make it. But the contradistinction fails to convey the real meaning. It is not that he has falsely expressed his meaning, but that he has falsely developed that meaning to his own consciousness. Not the word only is wrong; but the wrong word is put forward for the sake of hiding the imperfect idea. What he calls _principles_ might almost as well be called _doctrines_; and what he calls _doctrines_ as well be called _principles_. Out of these terms, apart from the rectifications suggested by the context, no man could collect his drift, which is simply this. Protestantism, we must recollect, is not an absolute and self-dependent idea; it stands in relation to something antecedent, against which it protests, viz., Papal Rome. And under what phasis does it protest against Rome? Not against the Christianity of Rome, because every Protestant Church, though disapproving a great deal of _that_, disapproves also a great deal in its own sister churches of the protesting household; and because every Protestant Church holds a great deal of Christian truth, in common with Rome. But what furnishes the matter of protest is--the _deduction of the title_ upon which Rome plants the right to be church at all. This deduction is so managed by Rome as to make herself, not merely a true church (which many Protestants grant), but the exclusive church. Now, what _Phil._ in effect undertakes to defend is not principles by preference to doctrines (for they are pretty nearly the same thing), but the question of title to teach at all, in preference to the question of what is the thing taught. _There_ is the distinction, as I apprehend it. All these terms--'principle,' 'doctrine,' 'system,' 'theory,' 'hypothesis'--are used nearly always most licentiously, and as arbitrarily as a Newmarket jockey selects the colors for his riding-dress. It is true that one shadow of justification offers itself for _Phil.'s_ distinction. All principles are doctrines, but all doctrines are not principles; which, then, in particular? Why, those properly are principles which contain the _principia_, the beginnings, or starting-points of evolution, out of which any system of truth is evolved. Now, it may seem that the very starting-point of our Protestant pretensions is, first of all, to argue our _title_ or right to be a church _sui juris_; apparently we must begin by making good our _locus standi_, before we can be heard upon our doctrines. And upon this mode of approach, the pleadings about the _title_, or right to teach at all, taking precedence of the pleadings about the particular things taught, would be the _principia_, or beginning of the whole process, and so far would be entitled by preference to the name of _principles_. But such a mode of approach is merely an accident, and contingent upon our being engaged in a polemical discussion of Protestantism in relation to Popery. _That_, however, is a pure matter of choice; Protestantism may be discussed, 'as though Rome were not, in relation to its own absolute merits; and this treatment is the logical treatment, applying itself to what is permanent in the _nature_

of the object; whereas the other treatment applies itself to what is casual and vanishing in the history (or the origin) of Protestantism. For, after all, it would be no great triumph to Protestantism that she should prove her birthright to revolve as a primary planet in the solar system; that she had the same original right as Rome to wheel about the great central orb, undegraded to the rank of satellite or secondary projection--if, in the meantime, telescopes should reveal the fact that she was pretty nearly a sandy desert. What a church teaches is true or not true, without reference to her independent right of teaching; and eventually, when the irritations of earthly feuds and political schisms shall be soothed by time, the philosophy of this whole question will take an inverse order. The credentials of a church will not be put in first, and the quality of her doctrine discussed as a secondary question. On the contrary, her credentials will be sought in her doctrine. The Protesting Church will say, I have the right to stand separate, because I stand; and from my holy teaching I deduce my title to teach. Jus est ibi summum docendi, ubi est fons purissimus doctrinae. That inversion of the Protestant plea with Rome is even now valid with many; and, when it becomes universally current, then the principles, or great beginnings of the controversy, will be transplanted from the locus, or centre, where Phil. places them, to the very locus which he neglects.

There is another expression of Phil.'s (I am afraid Phil. is getting angry by this time) to which I object. He describes the doctrines held by all the separate Protestant churches as doctrines of Protestantism. I would not delay either Phil. or myself for the sake of a trifle; but an impossibility is not a trifle. If from orthodox Turkey you pass to heretic Persia, if from the rigor of the Sonnees to the laxity of the Sheeahs, you could not, in explaining those schisms, go on to say, 'And these are the doctrines of Islamism;' for they destroy each other. Both are supported by earthly powers; but one only could be supported by central Islamism. So of Calvinism and Arminianism; you cannot call them doctrines of Protestantism, as if growing out of some reconciling Protestant principles; one of the two, though not manifested to human eyes in its falsehood, must secretly be false; and a falsehood cannot be a doctrine of Protestantism. It is more accurate to say that the separate creeds of Turkey and Persia are within Mahomedanism; such, viz., as that neither excludes a man from the name of Mussulman; and, again, that Calvinism and Arminianism are doctrines within the Protestant Church--as a church of general toleration for all religious doctrines not de-monstrably hostile to any cardinal truth of Christianity.

Phil., then, we all understand, is not going to traverse the vast field of Protestant opinions as they are distributed through our many sects; that would be endless; and he illustrates the mazy character of the wilderness over which these sects are wandering,

--'ubi passim
Palantes error recto de tramite pellit,'

by the four cases of--1, the Calvinist; 2, the Newmanite; 3, the Romanist;[Footnote: What, amongst Protestant sects? Ay, even so.

It's Phil.'s mistake, not mine. He will endeavor to doctor the case, by pleading that he was speaking universally of Christian error; but the position of the clause forbids this plea. Not only in relation to what immediately precedes, the passage must be supposed to contemplate Protestant error; but the immediate inference from it, viz., that 'the world may well be excused for doubting whether there is, after all, so much to be gained by that liberty of private judgment, which is the essential characteristic of Protestantism; whether it be not, after all, merely a liberty to fall into error,' nails Phil. to that construction--argues too strongly that it is an oversight of indolence. Phil. was sleeping for the moment, which is excusable enough towards the end of a book, but hardly in section I. P.S.--I have since observed (which not to have observed is excused, perhaps, by the too complex machinery of hooks and eyes between the text and the notes involving a double reference--first, to the section; second, to the particular clause of the section) that Phil. has not here committed an inadvertency; or, if he has, is determined to fight himself through his inadvertency, rather than break up his quaternion of cases. 'In speaking of Romanism as arising from a misapplication of Protestant principles; we refer, not to those who were born, but to those who have become members of the Church of Rome.' What is the name of those people? And where do they live? I have heard of many who think (and there are cases in which most of us, that meddle with philosophy, are apt to think) occasional principles of Protestantism available for the defence of certain Roman Catholic mysteries too indiscriminately assaulted by the Protestant zealot; but, with this exception, I am not aware of any parties professing to derive their Popish learnings from Protestantism; it is in spite of Protestantism, as seeming to them not strong enough, or through principles omitted by Protestantism, which therefore seems to them not careful enough or not impartial enough, that Protestants have lapsed to Popery. Protestants have certainly been known to become Papists, not through Popish arguments, but simply through their own Protestant books; yet never, that I heard of, through an affirmative process, as though any Protestant argument involved the rudiments of Popery, but by a negative process, as fancying the Protestant reasons, though lying in the right direction, not going far enough; or, again, though right partially, yet defective as a whole. Phil. therefore, seems to me absolutely caught in a sort of Furcae Caudinae, unless he has a dodge in reserve to puzzle us all. In a different point, I, that hold myself a doctor seraphicus, and also inexpugnabilis upon quilllets of logic, justify Phil., whilst also I blame him. He defends himself rightly for distinguishing between the Romanist and Newmanite on the one hand, between the Calvinist and the Evangelical man on the other, though perhaps a young gentleman, commencing his studies on the Organon, will fancy that here he has Phil. in a trap, for these distinctions, he will say, do not entirely exclude to each other as they ought to do. The class calling itself Evangelical, for instance, may also be Calvinistic; the Newmanite is not, therefore, anti-Romanish. True, says Phil.; I am quite aware of it. But to be aware of an objection is not to answer it. The fact seems to be, that the actual combinations of life, not conforming to the truth of abstractions, compel us to seeming breaches of logic. It would be right practically to distinguish the Radical from the Whig; and yet it might shock Duns or Lombardus, the magister sententiarum, when he came

to understand that partially the principles of Radicals and Whigs coincide. But, for all that, the logic which distinguishes them is right; and the apparent error must be sought in the fact, that all cases (political or religious) being cases of life, are concretes, which never conform to the exquisite truth of abstractions. Practically, the Radical is opposed to the Whig, though casually the two are in conjunction continually; for, as acting partisans, they work from different centres, and finally, for different results.] 4, the Evangelical enthusiast--as holding systems of doctrine, 'no one of which is capable of recommending itself to the favorable opinion of an impartial judge.' Impartial! but what Christian can be impartial? To be free from all bias, and to begin his review of sects in that temper, he must begin by being an infidel. Vainly a man endeavors to reserve in a state of neutrality any preconceptions that he may have formed for himself, or prepossessions that he may have inherited from 'mamma;' he cannot do it any more than he can dismiss his own shadow. And it is strange to contemplate the weakness of strong minds in fancying that they can. Calvin, whilst amiably engaged in hunting Servetus to death, and writing daily letters to his friends, in which he expresses his hope that the executive power would not think of burning the poor man, since really justice would be quite satisfied by cutting his head off, meets with some correspondents who conceive (idiots that they were!) even that little amputation not indispensable. But Calvin soon settles their scruples. You don't perceive, he tells them, what this man has been about. When a writer attacks Popery, it's very wrong in the Papists to cut his head off; and why? Because he has only been attacking error. But here lies the difference in this case; Servetus had been attacking the TRUTH. Do you see the distinction, my friends? Consider it, and I am sure you will be sensible that this quite alters the case. It is shocking, it is perfectly ridiculous, that the Bishop of Rome should touch a hair of any man's head for contradicting him; and why? Because, do you see? he is wrong. On the other hand, it is evidently agreeable to philosophy, that I, John Calvin, should shave off the hair, and, indeed, the head itself (as I heartily hope[Footnote: The reader may imagine that, in thus abstracting Calvin's epistolary sentiments, I am a little improving them. Certainly they would bear improvement, but that is not my business. What the reader sees here is but the result of bringing scattered passages into closer juxtaposition; whilst, as to the strongest (viz., the most sanguinary) sentiments here ascribed to him, it will be a sufficient evidence of my fidelity to the literal truth, if I cite three separate sentences. Writing to Farrel, he says, 'Spero capitale saltern fore judicium.' Sentence of the court, he hopes, will, at any rate, reach the life of Servetus. Die he must, and die he shall. But why should he die a cruel death? "Paenoe vero atrocitatem remitti cupio." To the same purpose, when writing to Sultzzer, he expresses his satisfaction in being able to assure him that a principal civic officer of Geneva was, in this case, entirely upright, and animated by the most virtuous sentiments. Indeed! what an interesting character! and in what way now might this good man show this beautiful tenderness of conscience? Why; by a fixed resolve that Servetus should not in any case escape the catastrophe which I, John Calvin, am longing for, ('ut saltem exitum, quem optamus, noa fugiat.') Finally, writing to the same Sultzzer, he remarks that--when we see the Papists such avenging champions of their own superstitious fables as not to falter in shedding innocent blood,

'pudeat Christianos magistratus [as if the Roman Catholic magistrates were not Christians] in tuenda _certa_ veritate nihil prorsus habere animi'--'Christian magistrates ought to be ashamed of themselves for manifesting no energy at all in the vindication of truth undeniable;' yet really since these magistrates had at that time the full design, which design not many days after they executed, of maintaining truth by fire and faggot, one does not see the call upon them for blushes so very deep as Calvin requires. Hands so crimson with blood might compensate the absence of crimson cheeks.] will be done in this present case) of any man presumptuous enough to contradict _me;_ but then, why? For a reason that makes all the difference in the world, and which, one would think, idiocy itself could not overlook, viz., that I, John Calvin, am right--right, through three degrees of comparison--right, righter, or more right, rightest, or most right. Calvin fancied that he could demonstrate his own impartiality.

The self-sufficingness of the Bible, and the right of private judgment--here, then, are the two great charters in which Protestantism commences; these are the bulwarks behind which it intrenches itself against Rome. And it is remarkable that these two great preliminary laws, which soon diverge into fields so different, at the first are virtually one and the same law. The refusal of an oracle alien to the Bible, extrinsic to the Bible, and claiming the sole interpretation of the Bible; the refusal of an oracle that reduced the Bible to a hollow masque, underneath which fraudulently introducing itself any earthly voice could mimic a heavenly voice, was in effect to refuse the coercion of this false oracle over each man's conscientious judgment; to make the Bible independent of the Pope, was to make man independent of all religious controllers. The _self-sufficingness_ of Scripture_, its independency of any external interpreter, passed in one moment into the other great Protestant doctrine of _Toleration_. It was but the same triumphal monument under a new angle of sight, the golden and silver faces of the same heraldic shield. The very same act which denies the right of interpretation to a mysterious Papal phoenix, renewed from generation to generation, having the antiquity and the incomprehensible omniscience of the Simorg in Southey, transferred this right of mere necessity to the individuals of the whole human race. For where else could it have been lodged? Any attempt in any other direction was but to restore the Papal power in a new impersonation. Every man, therefore, suddenly obtained the right of interpreting the Bible for himself. But the word '_right_' obtained a new sense. Every man has the right, under the Queen's Bench, of publishing an unlimited number of metaphysical systems; and, under favor of the same indulgent Bench, we all enjoy the unlimited right of laughing at him. But not the whole race of man has a right to _coerce_, in the exercise of his intellectual rights, the humblest of individuals. The rights of men are thus unspeakably elevated; for, being now freed from all anxiety, being sacred as merely _legal_ rights, they suddenly rise into a new mode of responsibility as _intellectual_ rights. As a Protestant, every mature man has the same dignified right over his own opinions and profession of faith that he has over his own hearth. But his hearth can rarely be abused; whereas his religious system, being a vast kingdom, opening by immeasurable gates upon worlds of light and worlds of darkness, now brings him within a new amenability--called upon to answer new impeachments, and to seek for new assistances. Formerly another was answerable for his belief; if that were wrong, it was no fault of his. Now he

has new rights, but these have burthened him with new obligations. Now he is crowned with the glory and the palms of an intellectual creature, but he is alarmed by the certainty of corresponding struggles. Protestantism it is that has created him into this child and heir of liberty; Protestantism it is that has invested him with these unbounded privileges of private judgment, giving him in one moment the sublime powers of a Pope within his own conscience; but Protestantism it is that has introduced him to the most dreadful of responsibilities.

I repeat that the twin maxims, the columns of Hercules through which Protestantism entered the great sea of human activities, were originally but two aspects of one law: to deny the Papal control over men's conscience being to affirm man's self-control, was, therefore, to affirm man's universal right to toleration, which again implied a corresponding duty of toleration. Under this bi-fronted law, generated by Protestantism, but in its turn regulating Protestantism, Phil. undertakes to develop all the principles that belong to a Protestant church. The seasonableness of such an investigation--its critical application to an evil now spreading like a fever through Europe--he perceives fully, and in the following terms he expresses this perception:--

'That we stand on the brink of a great theological crisis, that the problem must soon be solved, how far orthodox Christianity is possible for those who are not behind their age in scholarship and science; this is a solemn fact, which may be ignored by the partisans of short-sighted bigotry, but which is felt by all, and confessed by most of those who are capable of appreciating its reality and importance. The deep Sibylline vaticinations of Coleridge's philosophical mind, the practical working of Arnold's religious sentimentalism, and the open acknowledgment of many divines who are living examples of the spirit of the age, have all, in different ways, foretold the advent of a Church of the Future.'

This is from the preface, p. ix., where the phrase, Church of the Future, points to the Prussian minister's (Bunsen's) Kirche der Zukunft; but in the body of the work, and not far from its close, (p. 114,) he recurs to this crisis, and more circumstantially.

Phil. embarrasses himself and his readers in this development of Protestant principles. His own view of the task before him requires that he should separate himself from the consideration of any particular church, and lay aside all partisanship--plausible or not plausible. It is his own overture that warrants us in expecting this. And yet, before we have travelled three measured inches, he is found entangling himself with Church of Englandism. Let me not be misunderstood, as though, borrowing a Bentham word, I were therefore a Jerry Benthamite: I, that may describe myself generally as Philo-Phil., am not less a son of the 'Reformed Anglican Church' than Phil. Consequently, it is not likely that, in any vindication of that church, simply as such, and separately for itself, I should be the man to find grounds of exception. Loving most of what Phil. loves, loving Phil. himself, and hating (I grieve to say), with a theological hatred, whatever Phil. hates, why should I demur at this particular point to a course of argument that travels in the line of my own

partialities? And yet I do demur. Having been promised a philosophic defence of the principles concerned in the great European schism of the sixteenth century, suddenly we find ourselves collapsing from that altitude of speculation into a defence of one individual church. Nobody would complain of Phil. if, after having deduced philosophically the principles upon which all Protestant separation from Rome should revolve, he had gone forward to show, that in some one of the Protestant churches, more than in others, these principles had been asserted with peculiar strength, or carried through with special consistency, or associated pre-eminently with the other graces of a Christian church, such as a ritual more impressive to the heart of man, or a polity more symmetrical with the structure of English society. Once having unfolded from philosophic grounds the primary conditions of a pure scriptural church, Phil. might then, without blame, have turned sharp round upon us, saying, such being the conditions under which the great idea of a true Christian church must be constructed, I now go on to show that the Church of England has conformed to those conditions more faithfully than any other. But to entangle the pure outlines of the idealizing mind with the practical forms of any militant church, embarrassed (as we know all churches to have been) by preoccupations of judgment, derived from feuds too local and interests too political, moving too (as we know all churches to have moved) in a spirit of compromise, occasionally from mere necessities of position; this is in the result to injure the object of the writer doubly: first, as leaving an impression of partisanship the reader is mistrustful from the first, as against a judge that, in reality, is an advocate; second, without reference to the effect upon the reader, directly to Phil. it is injurious, by fettering the freedom of his speculations, or, if leaving their freedom undisturbed, by narrowing their compass.

And, if Phil., as to the general movement of his Protestant pleadings, modulates too little in the transcendental key, sometimes he does so too much. For instance, at p. 69, sec. 35, we find him half calling upon Protestantism to account for her belief in God; how then? Is this belief special to Protestants? Are Roman Catholics, are those of the Greek, the Armenian, and other Christian churches, atheistically given? We used to be told that there is no royal road to geometry. I don't know whether there is or not; but I am sure there is no Protestant by-road, no Reformation short-cut, to the demonstration of Deity. It is true that Phil. exonerates his philosophic scholar, when throwing himself in Protestant freedom upon pure intellectual aids, from the vain labor of such an effort. He consigns him, however philosophic, to the evidence of 'inevitable assumptions, upon axiomatic postulates, which the reflecting mind is compelled to accept, and which no more admit of doubt and cavil than of establishment by formal proof.' I am not sure whether I understand Phil. in this section. Apparently he is glancing at Kant. Kant was the first person, and perhaps the last, that ever undertook formally to demonstrate the indemonstrability of God. He showed that the three great arguments for the existence of the Deity were virtually one, inasmuch as the two weaker borrowed their value and vis apodeictica from the more rigorous metaphysical argument. The physico-theological argument he forced to back, as it were, into the cosmological, and that into the ontological. After this reluctant regressus of the three into one, shutting up like a spying-glass, which (with the iron hand of Hercules forcing

Cerberus up to daylight) the stern man of Koenigsberg resolutely dragged to the front of the arena, nothing remained, now that he had this pet scholastic argument driven up into a corner, than to break its neck--which he did. Kant took the conceit out of all the three arguments; but, if this is what Phil. alludes to, he should have added, that these three, after all, were only the arguments of speculating or theoretic reason. To this faculty Kant peremptorily denied the power of demonstrating the Deity; but then that same apodeixis, which he had thus inexorably torn from reason under one manifestation, Kant himself restored to the reason in another (the praktische vernunft.) God he asserts to be a postulate of the human reason, as speaking through the conscience and will, not proved ostensively, but indirectly proved as being wanted indispensably, and presupposed in other necessities of our human nature. This, probably, is what Phil. means by his short-hand expression of 'axiomatic postulates.' But then it should not have been said that the case does not 'admit of formal proof,' since the proof is as 'formal' and rigorous by this new method of Kant as by the old obsolete methods of Sam. Clarke and the schoolmen.[Footnote: The method of Des Cartes was altogether separate and peculiar to himself; it is a mere conjuror's juggle; and yet, what is strange, like some other audacious sophisms, it is capable of being so stated as most of all to baffle the subtle dialectician; and Kant himself, though not cheated, was never so much perplexed in his life as in the effort to make its hollowness apparent.]

But it is not the too high or the too low--the too much or the too little--of what one might call by analogy the transcendental course, which I charge upon Phil. It is, that he is too desultory--too eclectic. And the secret purpose, which seems to me predominant throughout his work, is, not so much the defence of Protestantism, or even of the Anglican Church, as a report of the latest novelties that have found a roosting-place in the English Church, amongst the most temperate of those churchmen who keep pace with modern philosophy; in short, it is a selection from the classical doctrines of religion, exhibited under their newest revision; or, generally, it is an attempt to show, from what is going on amongst the most moving orders in the English Church, how far it is possible that strict orthodoxy should bend, on the one side, to new impulses, derived from an advancing philosophy, and yet, on the other side, should reconcile itself, both verbally and in spirit, with ancient standards. But if Phil. is eclectic, then I will be eclectic; if Phil. has a right to be desultory, then I have a right. Phil. is my leader. I can't, in reason, be expected to be better than he is. If I'm wrong, Phil. ought to set me a better example. And here, before this honorable audience of the public, I charge all my errors (whatever they may be, past or coming) upon Phil.'s misconduct.

Having thus established my patent of vagrancy, and my license for picking and choosing, I choose out these three articles to toy with:--first, Bibliolatry; second, Development applied to the Bible and Christianity; third, Philology, as the particular resource against false philosophy, relied on by Phil.

Bibliolatry.--We Protestants charge upon the Ponteficii, as the more learned of our fathers always called the Roman Catholics,

Mariolatry; they pay undue honors, say we, to the Virgin. They in return charge upon us, Bibliolatry, or a superstitious allegiance--an idolatrous homage--to the words, syllables, and punctuation of the Bible. They, according to us, deify a woman; and we, according to them, deify an arrangement of printer's types. As to their error, we need not mind that: let us attend to our own. And to this extent it is evident at a glance that Bibliolatrists must be wrong, viz., because, as a pun vanishes on being translated into another language, even so would, and must melt away, like ice in a hot-house, a large majority of those conceits which every Christian nation is apt to ground upon the verbal text of the Scriptures in its own separate vernacular version. But once aware that much of their Bibliolatry depends upon ignorance of Hebrew and Greek, and often upon peculiarity of idiom or structures in their mother dialect, cautious people begin to suspect the whole. Here arises a very interesting, startling, and perplexing situation for all who venerate the Bible; one which must always have existed for prying, inquisitive people, but which has been incalculably sharpened for the apprehension of these days by the extraordinary advances made and making in Oriental and Greek philology. It is a situation of public scandal even to the deep reverencers of the Bible; but a situation of much more than scandal, of real grief, to the profound and sincere amongst religious people. On the one hand, viewing the Bible as the word of God, and not merely so in the sense of its containing most salutary counsels, but, in the highest sense, of its containing a revelation of the most awful secrets, they cannot for a moment listen to the pretence that the Bible has benefited by God's inspiration only as other good books may be said to have done. They are confident that, in a much higher sense, and in a sense incommunicable to other books, it is inspired. Yet, on the other hand, as they will not tell lies, or countenance lies, even in what seems the service of religion, they cannot hide from themselves that the materials of this imperishable book are perishable, frail, liable to crumble, and actually have crumbled to some extent, in various instances. There is, therefore, lying broadly before us, something like what Kant called an antinomy--a case where two laws equally binding on the mind are, or seem to be, in collision. Such cases occur in morals--cases which are carried out of the general rule, and the jurisdiction of that rule, by peculiar deflexions; and from the word case we derive the word casuistry, as a general science dealing with such anomalous cases. There is a casuistry, also, for the speculative understanding, as well as for the moral (which is the practical) understanding. And this question, as to the inspiration of the Bible, with its apparent conflict of forces, repelling it and yet affirming it, is one of its most perplexing and most momentous problems.

My own solution of the problem would reconcile all that is urged against an inspiration with all that the internal necessity of the case would plead in behalf of an inspiration. So would Phil.'s. His distinction, like mine, would substantially come down to this--that the grandeur and extent of religious truth is not of a nature to be affected by verbal changes such as can be made by time, or accident, or without treacherous design. It is like lightning, which could not be mutilated, or truncated, or polluted. But it may be well to rehearse a little more in detail, both Phil.'s view and my own. Let my principal go first; make way, I desire, for my leader: let Phil. have precedence, as, in all reason, it is my duty to see that he has.

Whilst rejecting altogether any inspiration as attaching to the separate words and phrases of the Scriptures, _Phil._ insists (sect. 25, p. 49) upon such an inspiration as attaching to the spiritual truths and doctrines delivered in these Scriptures. And he places this theory in a striking light, equally for what it affirms and for what it denies, by these two arguments--first (in affirmation of the real spiritual inspiration), that a series of more than thirty writers, speaking in succession along a vast line of time, and absolutely without means of concert, yet all combine unconsciously to one end--lock like parts of a great machine into one system--conspire to the unity of a very elaborate scheme, without being at all aware of what was to come after. Here, for instance, is one, living nearly one thousand six hundred years before the last in the series, who lays a foundation (in reference to man's ruin, to God's promises and plan for human restoration), which is built upon and carried forward by all, without exception, that follow. Here come a multitude that prepare each for his successor--that unconsciously integrate each other--that, finally, when reviewed, make up a total drama, of which each writer's separate share would have been utterly imperfect without corresponding parts that he could not have foreseen. At length all is finished. A profound piece of music, a vast oratorio, perfect and of elaborate unity, has resulted from a long succession of strains, each for itself fragmentary. On such a final creation resulting from such a distraction of parts, it is indispensable to suppose an overruling inspiration, in order at all to account for the final result of a most elaborate harmony. Besides, which would argue some inconceivable magic, if we did not assume a providential inspiration watching over the coherencies, tendencies, and intertessellations (to use a learned word) of the whole,--it happens that, in many instances, typical things are recorded--things ceremonial, that could have no meaning to the person recording--prospective words, that were reported and transmitted in a spirit of confiding faith, but that could have little meaning to the reporting parties for many hundreds of years. Briefly, a great mysterious _word_ is spelt as it were by the whole sum of the scriptural books--every separate book forming a letter or syllable in that secret and that unfinished word, as it was for so many ages. This cooperation of ages, not able to communicate or concert arrangements with each other, is neither more nor less an argument of an overruling inspiration, than if the separation of the contributing parties were by space, and not by time. As if, for example, every island at the same moment were to send its contribution, without previous concert, to a sentence or chapter of a book; in which case the result, if full of meaning, much more if full of awful and profound meaning, could not be explained rationally without the assumption of a supernatural overruling of these unconscious co-operators to a common result. So far on behalf of inspiration. Yet, on the other hand, as an argument in denial of any blind mechanic inspiration cleaving to words and syllables, _Phil._ notices this consequence as resulting from such an assumption, viz., that if you adopt any one gospel, St. John's suppose, or any one narrative of a particular transaction, as inspired in this minute and pedantic sense, then for every other report, which, adhering to the spiritual _value_ of the circumstances, and virtually the same, should differ in the least of the details, there would instantly arise a solemn degradation. All parts of Scripture, in fact, would thus be made active and operative in degrading each other.

Now, in this last way of construing the text, which is the way adopted by our authorized version, one objection strikes everybody at a glance, viz., that St. Paul could not possibly mean to say of all writing, indiscriminately, that it was divinely inspired, this being so revoltingly opposed to the truth. It follows, therefore, that, on this way of interpolating the _is_, we must understand the Apostle to use the word _graphe_, writing, in a restricted sense, not for writing generally, but for sacred writing, or (as our English phrase runs) '_Holy Writ;_' upon which will arise three separate demurs--_first_, one already stated by _Phil._, viz., that, when _graphe_ is used in this sense, it is accompanied by the article; the phrase is either ἡ γραφή, 'the writing,' or else (as in St. Luke) ἡ γραφή, 'the writings,' just as in English it is said, 'the Scripture,' or 'the Scriptures.' _Secondly_, that, according to the Greek usage, this would not be the natural place for introducing the _is_. _Thirdly_--which disarms the whole objection from this text, _howsoever_ construed--that, after all, it leaves the dispute with the bibliolaters wholly untouched. We also, the anti-bibliolaters, say that all Scripture is inspired, though we may not therefore suppose the Apostle to be here insisting on that doctrine. But no matter whether he is or not, in relation to this dispute. Both parties are contending for the inspiration--so far they are agreed; the question between them arises upon quite another point, viz., as to the _mode_ of that inspiration, whether incarnating its golden light in the corruptibilities of perishing syllables, or in the sanctities of indefeasible, word-transcending ideas. Now, upon that question, the apostolic words, torture them how you please, say nothing at all.

There is, then, no such dogma (or, to speak _Germanice_, no such _macht-spruch_) in behalf of verbal inspiration as has been ascribed to St. Paul, and I pass to my own argument against it. This argument turns upon the self-confounding tendency of the common form ascribed to ἡ γραφή, ἡ γραφή, or divine inspiration. When translated from its true and lofty sense of an inspiration--brooding, with outstretched wings, over the mighty abyss of _secret_ truth--to the vulgar sense of an inspiration, burrowing, like a rabbit or a worm, in grammatical quilllets and syllables, mark how it comes down to nothing at all; mark how a stream, pretending to derive itself from a heavenly fountain, is finally lost and confounded in a morass of human perplexities.

First of all, at starting, we have the inspiration (No. 1) to the original composers of the sacred books. _That_ I grant, though distinguishing as to its nature.

Next, we want another inspiration (No. 2) for the countless _translators_ of the Bible. Of what use is it to a German, to a Swiss, or to a Scotsman, that, three thousand years before the Reformation, the author of the Pentateuch was kept from erring by a divine restraint over his words, if the authors of this Reformation--Luther, suppose, Zwingle, John Knox--either making translations themselves, or relying upon translations made by others under no such verbal restraint, have been left free to bias his mind, pretty nearly as much as if the original Hebrew writer had been resigned to his own human discretion?

Thirdly, even if we adopt the inspiration No. 2, that will not avail us; because many different translators exist. Does the very earliest translation of the Law and the Prophets, viz., the Greek translation of the Septuagint, always agree verbally with the Hebrew? Or the Samaritan Pentateuch always with the Hebrew? Or do the earliest Latin versions of the entire Bible agree verbally with modern Latin versions? Jerome's Latin version, for instance, memorable as being that adopted by the Romish Church, and known under the name of the Vulgate, does it agree verbally with the Latin versions of the Bible or parts of the Bible made since the Reformation? In the English, again, if we begin with the translation still sleeping in MS., made five centuries ago, and passing from that to the first printed translation (which was, I think, Coverdale's, in 1535), if we thence travel down to our own day, so as to include all that have confined themselves to separate versions of some one book, or even of some one cardinal text, the versions that differ--and to the idolater of words all differences are important--may be described as countless. Here, then, on that doctrine of inspiration which ascribes so much to the power of verbal accuracy, we shall want a fourth inspiration, No. 4, for the guidance of each separate Christian applying himself to the Scriptures in his mother tongue; he will have to select not one (where is the one that has been uniformly correct?) but a multitude; else the same error will again rush in by torrents through the license of interpretation assumed by these many adverse translators.

Fourthly, as these differences of version arise often under the same reading of the original text; but as, in the meantime, there are many different readings, here a fifth source of possible error calls for a fifth inspiration overruling us to the proper choice amongst various readings. What may be called a 'textual' inspiration for selecting the right reading is requisite for the very same reason, neither more nor less, which supposes any verbal inspiration originally requisite for constituting a right reading. It matters not in which stage of the Bible's progress the error commences; first stage and last stage are all alike in the sight of God. There was, reader, as perhaps you know, about six score years ago, another Phil., not the same as this Phil. now before us (who would be quite vexed if you fancied him as old as all that comes to--oh dear, no! he's not near as old)--well, that earlier Phil. was Bentley, who wrote (under the name of Phileleutheros Lipsiansis) a pamphlet connected with this very subject, partly against an English infidel of that day. In that pamphlet, Phil. the first pauses to consider and value this very objection from textual variation to the validity of Scripture: for the infidel (as is usual with infidels) being no great scholar, had argued as though it were impossible to urge anything whatever for the word of God, since so vast a variety in the readings rendered it impossible to know what was the word of God. Bentley, though rather rough, from having too often to deal with shallow coxcombs, was really and unaffectedly a pious man. He was shocked at this argument, and set himself seriously to consider it. Now, as all the various readings were Greek, and as Bentley happened to be the first of Grecians, his deliberate review of this argument is entitled to great attention. There were, at that moment when Bentley spoke, something more (as I recollect) than ten thousand varieties of reading in the text of the New Testament; so many had been collected in the early part of Queen Anne's reign

we believe that the burning of a wood, or even of a forest, which happens in our vast American possessions, sometimes from natural causes (lightning, or spontaneous combustion), sometimes from an Indian's carelessness, can seriously have injured botany. But for _him_, who conceives an inviolable sanctity to have settled upon each word and particle of the original record, there _should_ have been strictly required an inspiration (No. 5) to prevent the possibility of various readings arising. It is too late, however, to pray for _that_ ; the various readings _have_ arisen; here they are; and what's to be done now? The only resource for the bibliolatrists is--to invoke a new inspiration (No.4) for helping him out of his difficulty, by guiding his choice. We, anti-bibliolaters, are not so foolish as to believe that God having once sent a deep message of truth to man, would suffer it to lie at the mercy of a careless or a wicked copyist. Treasures so vast would not be left at the mercy of accidents so vile. Very little more than two hundred years ago, a London compositor, not wicked at all, but simply drunk, in printing Deuteronomy, left out the most critical of words; the seventh commandment he exhibited thus-'Thou _shalt_ commit adultery;' in which form the sheet was struck off. And though in those days no practical mischief could arise from this singular _erratum_, which English Griesbachs will hardly enter upon the roll of various readings, yet, harmless as it was, it met with punishment. 'Scandalous!' said Laud, 'shocking! to tell men in the seventeenth century, as a biblical rule, that they positively must commit adultery!' The brother compositors of this drunken biblical reviser, being too honorable to betray the individual delinquent, the Star Chamber fined the whole 'chapel.' Now, the copyists of MSS. were as certain to be sometimes drunk as this compositor--famous by his act--utterly forgotten in his person--whose crime is remembered--the record of whose name has perished. We therefore hold, that it never was in the power, or placed within the discretion, of any copyist, whether writer or printer, to injure the sacred oracles. But the bibliolatrists cannot say _that_ ; because, if he does, then he is formally unsaying the very principle which is meant by bibliolatry. He therefore must require another supplementary inspiration, viz., No. 4, to direct him in his choice of the true reading amongst so many as continually offer themselves.[Footnote: [Footnote: I recollect no variation in the text of Scripture which makes any startling change, even to the amount of an eddy in its own circumjacent waters, except that famous passage about the three witnesses--' _There are three that bare record in heaven_, ' &c. This has been denounced with perfect fury as an interpolation; and it is impossible to sum up the quart bottles of ink, black and blue, that have been shed in the dreadful skirmish. Person even, the all-accomplished Grecian, in his letters to Archdeacon Travis, took a conspicuous part in the controversy; his wish was, that men should think of him as a second Bentley tilting against Phalaris; and he stung like a hornet. To be a Cambridge man in those days was to be a hater of all Establishments in England; things and persons were hated alike. I hope the same thing may not be true at present. It may chance that on this subject Master Porson will get stung through his coffin, before he is many years deader. However, if this particular variation troubles the waters just around itself (for it would desolate a Popish village to withdraw its local saint), yet carrying one's eye from this Epistle to the whole domains of the New Testament--yet, looking away from that defrauded village to universal Christendom, we must exclaim--What does one miss? Surely Christendom is not disturbed

because a village suffers wrong; the sea is not roused because an eddy in a corner is boiling; the doctrine of the Trinity is not in danger because Mr. Porson is in a passion.]

Fifthly, as all words cover ideas, and many a word covers a choice of ideas, and very many ideas split into a variety of modifications, we shall, even after a fourth inspiration has qualified us for selecting the true reading, still be at a loss how, upon this right reading, to fix the right acceptation. So there, at that fifth stage, in rushes the total deluge of human theological controversies. One church, or one sect, insists upon one sense; another, and another, 'to the end of time,' insists upon a different sense. Babel is upon us; and, to get rid of Babel, we shall need a fifth inspiration. No. 5 is clamorously called for.[Footnote: One does not wish to be tedious; or, if one has a gift in that way, naturally one does not wish to bestow it all upon a perfect stranger, as 'the reader' usually is, but to reserve a part for the fireside, and the use of one's most beloved friends; else I could torment the reader by a longer succession of numbers, and perhaps drive him to despair. But one more of the series, viz., No. 6, as a parting gage d' amitie, he must positively permit me to drop into his pocket. Supposing, then, that No. 5 were surmounted, and that, supernaturally, you knew the value to a hair's breadth, of every separate word (or, perhaps, composite phrase made up from a constellation of words)--ah, poor traveller in trackless forests, still you are lost again--for, oftentimes, and especially in St. Paul, the words may be known, their sense may be known, but their logical relation is still doubtful. The word X and the word Y are separately clear; but has Y the dependency of a consequence upon X, or no dependency at all? Is the clause which stands eleventh in the series a direct prolongation of that which stands tenth? or is the tenth wholly independent and insulated? or does it occupy the place of a parenthesis, so as to modify the ninth clause? People that have practised composition as much, and with as vigilant an eye as myself, know also, by thousands of cases, how infinite is the disturbance caused in the logic of a thought by the mere position of a word as despicable as the word even. A mote, that is itself invisible, shall darken the august faculty of sight in a human eye--the heavens shall be hidden by a wretched atom that dares not show itself--and the station of a syllable shall cloud the judgment of a council. Nay, even an ambiguous emphasis falling to the right-hand word, or the left-hand word, shall confound a system.] But we all know, each knows by his own experience, that No. 5 is not forthcoming; and, in the absence of that, what avail for us the others? 'Man overboard!' is the cry upon deck; but what avails it for the poor drowning creature that a rope being thrown to him is thoroughly secured at one end to the ship, if the other end floats wide of his grasp? We are in prison: we descend from our prison-roof, that seems high as the clouds, by knotting together all the prison bed-clothes, and all the aids from friends outside. But all is too short: after swarming down the line, in middle air, we find ourselves hanging: sixty feet of line are still wanting. To reascend--that is impossible: to drop boldly--alas! that is to die.

Meantime, what need of this eternal machinery, that eternally is breaking like ropes of sand? Or of this earth resting on an elephant, that rests on a tortoise, that, when all is done, must still consent to rest on the common atmosphere of God? These chains

of inspiration are needless. The great ideas of the Bible protect themselves. The heavenly truths, by their own imperishableness, defeat the mortality of languages with which for a moment they are associated. Is the lightning enfeebled or dimmed, because for thousands of years it has blended with the tarnish of earth and the steams of earthly graves? Or light, which so long has travelled in the chambers of our sickly air, and searched the haunts of impurity--is that less pure than it was in the first chapter of Genesis? Or that more holy light of truth--the truth, suppose, written from his creation upon the tablets of man's heart--which truth never was imprisoned in any Hebrew or Greek, but has ranged for ever through courts and camps, deserts and cities, the original lesson of justice to man and piety to God--has that become tainted by intercourse with flesh? or has it become hard to decipher, because the very heart, that human heart where it is inscribed, is so often blotted with falsehoods? You are aware, perhaps, reader, that in the Mediterranean Sea, off the coast of Asia Minor (and, indeed, elsewhere), through the very middle of the salt-sea billows, rise up, in shining columns, fountains of fresh water.[Footnote: See Mr. Yates's 'Annotations upon Fellowes's Researches in Anatolia,' as one authority for this singular phenomenon.] In the desert of the sea are found Arabian fountains of Ishmael and Isaac! Are these fountains poisoned for the poor victim of fever, because they have to travel through a contagion of waters not potable? Oh, no! They bound upwards like arrows, cleaving the seas above with as much projectile force as the glittering water-works of Versailles cleave the air, and rising as sweet to the lip as ever mountain torrent that comforted the hunted deer.

It is impossible to suppose that any truth, launched by God upon the agitations of things so unsettled as languages, can perish. The very frailty of languages is the strongest proof of this; because it is impossible to suppose that anything so great can have been committed to the fidelity of anything so treacherous. There is laughter in heaven when it is told of man, that he fancies his earthly jargons, which, to heavenly ears, must sound like the chucklings of poultry, equal to the task of hiding or distorting any light of revelation. Had words possessed any authority or restraint over scriptural truth, a much worse danger would have threatened it than any malice in the human will, suborning false copyists, or surreptitiously favoring depraved copies. Even a general conspiracy of the human race for such a purpose would avail against the Bible only as a general conspiracy to commit suicide might avail against the drama of God's providence. Either conspiracy would first become dangerous when first either became possible. But a real danger seems to lie in the insensible corruption going on for ever within all languages, by means of which they are eternally dying away from their own vital powers; and that is a danger which is travelling fast after all the wisdom and the wit, the eloquence and the poetry of this earth, like a mountainous wave, and will finally overtake them--their very vehicles being lost and confounded to human sensibilities. But such a wave will break harmlessly against scriptural truth; and not merely because that truth will for ever evade such a shock by its eternal transfer from language to language--from languages dying out to languages in vernal bloom--but also because, if it could not evade the shock, supreme truth would surmount it for a profounder reason. A danger analogous to this once existed in a different form. The languages into which the New Testament was first translated offered an

apparent obstacle to the translation that seemed insurmountable. The Latin, for instance, did not present the spiritual words which such a translation demanded; and how should it, when the corresponding ideas had no existence amongst the Romans? Yet, if not spiritual, the language of Rome was intellectual; it was the language of a cultivated and noble race. But what shall be done if the New Testament wishes to drive a tunnel through a rude forest race, having an undeveloped language, and understanding nothing but war? Four centuries after Christ, the Gothic Bishop Ulphilas set about translating the Gospels for his countrymen. He had no words for expressing spiritual relations or spiritual operations. The new nomenclature of moral graces, humility, resignation, the spirit of forgiveness, &c., hitherto unrecognised for such amongst men, having first of all been shown in blossom, and distinguished from weeds, by Christian gardening, had to be reproduced in the Gothic language, with apparently no means whatever of effecting it. In this earliest of what we may call ancestral translations, (for the Goths were of our own blood,) and, therefore, by many degrees, this most interesting of translations, may be seen to this day, after fourteen centuries and upwards have passed, how the good bishop succeeded, to what extent he succeeded, and by what means. I shall take a separate opportunity for investigating that problem; but at present I will content myself with noticing a remarkable principle which applies to the case, and illustrating it by a remarkable anecdote. The principle is this--that in the grander parts of knowledge, which do not deal much with petty details, nearly all the building or constructive ideas (those ideas which build up the system of that particular knowledge) lie involved within each other; so that any one of the series, being awakened in the mind, is sufficient (given a multitude of minds) to lead backwards or forwards, analytically or synthetically, into many of the rest. That is the principle; [Footnote: I am afraid, on reviewing this passage, that the reader may still say, 'What is the principle?' I will add, therefore, the shortest explanation of my meaning. If into any Pagan language you had occasion to translate the word love, or purity, or penitence, &c., you could not do it. The Greek language itself, perhaps the finest (all things weighed and valued) that man has employed, could not do it. The scale was not so pitched as to make the transfer possible. It was to execute organ music on a guitar. And, hereafter, I will endeavor to show how scandalous an error has been committed on this subject, not by scholars only, but by religious philosophers. The relation of Christian ethics (which word ethics, however, is itself most insufficient) to natural or universal ethics is a field yet uncultured by a rational thought. The first word of sense has yet to be spoken. There lies the difficulty; and the principle which meets it is this, that what any one idea could never effect for itself (insulated, it must remain an unknown quality for ever), the total system of the ideas developed from its centre would effect for each separately. To know the part, you must first know the whole, or know it, at least, by some outline. The idea of purity, for instance, in its Christian altitude, would be utterly incomprehensible, and, besides, could not sustain itself for a moment if by any glimpse it were approached. But when a ruin was unfolded that had affected the human race, and many things heretofore unobserved, because uncombined, were gathered into a unity of evidence to that ruin, spread through innumerable channels, the great altitude would begin dimly to reveal itself by means of the mighty depth in correspondence. One

deep calleth to another. One after one the powers lodged in the awful succession of uncoverings would react upon each other; and thus the feeblest language would be as capable of receiving and reflecting the system of truths (because the system is an arch that supports itself) as the richest and noblest; and for the same reason that makes geometry careless of language. The vilest jargon that ever was used by a shivering savage of Terra del Fuego is as capable of dealing with the sublime and eternal affections of space and quantity, with up and down, with more and less, with circle and radius, angle and tangent, as is the golden language of Athens.] and the story which illustrates it is this:--A great work of Apollonius, the sublime geometer, was supposed in part to have perished: seven of the eight books remained in the original Greek; but the eighth was missing. The Greek, after much search, was not recovered; but at length there was found (in the Bodleian, I think,) an Arabic translation of it. An English mathematician, Halley, knowing not one word of Arabic, determined (without waiting for that Arabic key) to pick the lock of this MS. And he did so. Through strength of preconception, derived equally from his knowledge of the general subject, and from his knowledge of this particular work in its earlier sections, using also to some extent the subtle art of the decipherer, [Footnote: An art which, in the preceding century, had been greatly improved by Wallis, Savilian professor of geometry at Oxford, the improver of analytic mathematics, and the great historian of algebra. Algebra it was that suggested to him his exquisite deciphering skill, and the parliamentary war it was that furnished him with a sufficient field of practice. The King's private cabinet of papers, all written in cipher, and captured in the royal coach on the decisive day of Naseby (June, 1645), was (I believe) deciphered by Wallis, *_proprio Marte_*.] now become so powerful an instrument of analysis, he translated the whole Arabic MS. He printed it--he published it. He tore--he extorted the truth from the darkness of an unknown language--he would not suffer the Arabic to benefit by its own obscurity to the injury of mathematics. And the book remains a monument to this day, that a system of ideas, having internal coherency and interdependency, is vainly hidden under an unknown tongue; that it may be illuminated and restored chiefly through their own reciprocal involutions. The same principle applies, and *_a fortiori_* applies, to religious truth, as one which lies far deeper than geometry in the spirit of man, one to which the inner attestation is profounder, and to which the key-notes of Scripture (once awakened on the great organ of the heart) are sure to call up corresponding echoes. It is not in the power of language to arrest or to defeat this mode of truth; because, when once the fundamental base is furnished by revelation, the human heart itself is able to co-operate in developing the great harmonies of the system, without aid from language, and in defiance of language--without aid from human learning, and in defiance of human learning.

Finally, there is another security against the suppression or distortion of any great biblical truth by false readings, which I will state in the briefest terms. The reader is aware of the boyish sport sometimes called 'drake-stone;' a flattish stone is thrown by a little dexterity so as to graze the surface of a river, but so, also, as in grazing it to dip below the surface, to rise again from this dip, again to dip, again to ascend, and so on alternately, *_a plusieurs reprises_*. In the same way, with the same effect of alternate resurrections, all scriptural truths reverberate and diffuse themselves along the pages of the Bible; none is confined

to one text, or to one mode of enunciation; all parts of the scheme are eternally chasing each other, like the parts of a fugue; they hide themselves in one chapter, only to restore themselves in another; they diverge, only to recombine; and under such a vast variety of expressions, that even in that way, supposing language to have powers over religious truth--which it never had, or can have--any abuse of such a power would be thoroughly neutralized. The case resembles the diffusion of vegetable seeds through the air and through the waters; draw a cordon sanitaire against dandelion or thistle-down, and see if the armies of earth would suffice to interrupt this process of radiation, which yet is but the distribution of weeds. Suppose, for instance, the text about the three heavenly witnesses to have been eliminated finally as an interpolation. The first thought is--there goes to wreck a great doctrine! Not at all. That text occupied but a corner of the garden. The truth, and the secret implications of the truth, have escaped at a thousand points in vast arches above our heads, rising high above the garden wall, and have sown the earth with memorials of the mystery which they envelope.

The final inference is this--that scriptural truth is endowed with a self-conservative and a self-restorative virtue; it needs no long successions of verbal protection by inspiration; it is self-protected; first, internally, by the complex power which belongs to the Christian system of involving its own integrations, in the same way as a musical chord involves its own successions of sound, and its own resolutions; secondly, in an external and obvious way, it is protected by its prodigious iteration, and secret presupposed in all varieties of form. Consequently, as the peril connected with language is thus effectually barred, the call for any verbal inspiration (which, on separate grounds, is shown to be self-confounding) shows itself now, in a second form, to be a gratuitous delusion, since, in effect, it is a call for protection against a danger which cannot have any existence.

There is another variety of bibliolatry arising in a different way--not upon errors of language incident to human infirmity, but upon deliberate errors indispensable to divine purposes. The case is one which has been considered with far too little attention, else it could never have been thought strange that Christ should comply in things indifferent with popular errors. A few Words will put the reader in possession of my view. Speaking of the Bible, Phil. says, 'We admit that its separate parts are the work of frail and fallible human beings. We do not seek to build upon it systems of cosmogony, chronology, astronomy, and natural history. We know no reason of internal or external probability which should induce us to believe that such matters could ever have been the subjects of direct revelation.' Is that all? There is no reason, certainly, for expectations so foolish; but is there no adamant reason against them? It is no business of the Bible, we are told, to teach science. Certainly not; but that is far too little. It is an obligation resting upon the Bible, if it is to be consistent with itself, that it should refuse to teach science; and, if the Bible ever had taught any one art, science, or process of life, capital doubts would have clouded our confidence in the authority of the book. By what caprice, it would have been asked, is a divine mission abandoned suddenly for a human mission? By what caprice is this one science taught, and others not? Or these two, suppose, and not all? But an objection, even

deadlier, would have followed. It is clear as is the purpose of daylight, that the whole body of the arts and sciences composes one vast machinery for the irritation and development of the human intellect. For this end they exist. To see God, therefore, descending into the arena of science, and contending, as it were, for his own prizes, by teaching science in the Bible, would be to see him intercepting from their self-evident destination, (viz., man's intellectual benefit,) his own problems by solving them himself. No spectacle could more dishonor the divine idea. _The Bible must not teach anything that man can teach himself._ Does the doctrine require a revelation?--then nobody but God _can_ teach it. Does it require none?--then in whatever case God has qualified man to do a thing for himself, he has in that very qualification silently laid an injunction upon man to do it, by giving the power. But it is fancied that a divine teacher, without descending to the unworthy office of teaching science, might yet have kept his own language free from all collusion with human error. Hence, for instance, it was argued at one time, that any language in the Bible implying the earth to be stationary, and central to our system, could not not have been a compliance with the popular errors of the time, but must be taken to express the absolute truth. And so grew the anti-Galilean fanatics. Out of similar notions have risen the absurdities of a polemic Bible chronology, &c. [Footnote: The Bible cosmology stands upon another footing. _That_ is not gathered from a casual expression, shaped to meet popular comprehension, but is delivered directly, formally, and elaborately, as a natural preface to the history of man and his habitation. Here, accordingly, there is no instance of accommodation to vulgar ignorance; and the persuasion gains ground continually that the order of succession in the phenomena of creation will be eventually confirmed by scientific geology, so far as this science may ever succeed in unlinking the steps of the process. Nothing, in fact, disturbs the grandeur and solemnity of the Mosaical cosmogony, except (as usual) the ruggedness of the bibliolater. He, finding the English word _day_ employed in the measurement of the intervals, takes it for granted that this must mean a _nychthemeron_ of twenty-four hours; imports, therefore, into the biblical text this conceit; fights for his own opinion, as for a revelation from heaven; and thus disfigures the great inaugural chapter of human history with this single feature of a fairy-tale, where everything else is told with the most majestic simplicity. But this word, which so ignorantly he presumes to be an ordinary human day, bears that meaning only in common historical transactions between man and man; but never once in the great prophetic writings, where God comes forward as himself the principal agent. It then means always a vast and mysterious duration--undetermined, even to this hour, in Daniel. The _heptameron_ is not a week, but a shadowy adumbration of a week.] Meantime, if a man sets himself steadily to contemplate the consequences which must inevitably have followed any deviation from the usual erroneous phraseology, he will see the utter impossibility that a teacher (pleading a heavenly mission) could allow himself to deviate by one hair's breadth (and why should he wish to deviate?) from the ordinary language of the times. To have uttered one syllable for instance, that implied motion in the earth, would have issued into the following ruins:--_First_, it would have tainted the teacher with the suspicion of lunacy; and, _secondly_, would have placed him in this inextricable dilemma. On the one hand, to answer the questions prompted by his own perplexing language, would have opened upon him, as a necessity,

one stage after another of scientific cross-examination, until his spiritual mission would have been forcibly swallowed up in the mission of natural philosopher; but, on the other hand, to pause resolutely at any one stage of this public examination, and to refuse all further advance, would be, in the popular opinion, to retreat as a baffled disputant from insane paradoxes which he had not been able to support. One step taken in that direction was fatal, whether the great envoy retreated from his own words to leave behind the impression that he was defeated as a rash speculator, or stood to these words, and thus fatally entangled himself in the inexhaustible succession of explanations and justifications. In either event the spiritual mission was at an end: it would have perished in shouts of derision, from which there could have been no retreat, and no retrieval of character. The greatest of astronomers, rather than seem ostentatious or unseasonably learned, will stoop to the popular phrase of the sun's rising, or the sun's motion in the ecliptic. But God, for a purpose commensurate with man's eternal welfare, is by these critics supposed incapable of the same petty abstinence.

The same line of argument applies to all the compliances of Christ with the Jewish prejudices (partly imported from the Euphrates) as to demonology, witchcraft, &c. By the way, in this last word, 'witchcraft,' and the too memorable histories connected with it, lies a perfect mine of bibliolatrous madness. As it illustrates the folly and the wickedness of the bibliolaters, let us pause upon it.

The word _witch_, these bibliolaters take it for granted, must mean exactly what the original Hebrew means, or the Greek word chosen by the LXX.; so much, and neither more nor less. That is, from total ignorance of the machinery by which language moves, they fancy that every idea and word which exists, or has existed, for any nation, ancient or modern, must have a direct interchangeable equivalent in all other languages; and that, if the dictionaries do not show it, _that_ must be because the dictionaries are bad. Will these worthy people have the goodness, then, to translate _coquette_ into Hebrew, and _post-office_ into Greek? The fact is, that all languages, and in the ratio of their development, offer ideas absolutely separate and exclusive to themselves. In the highly cultured languages of England, France, and Germany, are words, by thousands, which are strictly untranslatable. They may be approached, but cannot be reflected as from a mirror. To take an image from the language of eclipses, the correspondence between the disk of the original word and its translated representative is, in thousands of instances, not _annular_; the centres do not coincide; the words overlap; and this arises from the varying modes in which different nations _combine_ ideas. The French word shall combine the elements, _l, m, n, o_--the nearest English word, perhaps, _m, n, o, p_. For instance, in all words applied to the _nuances_ of manners, and generally to _social_ differences, how prodigious is the wealth of the French language! How merely untranslatable for all Europe! I suppose, my bibliolater, you have not yet finished your Hebrew or Samaritan translation of _coquette_. Well, you shall be excused from _that_, if you will only translate it into English. You cannot: you are obliged to keep the French word; and yet you take for granted, without inquiry, that in the word 'witchcraft,' and in the word 'witch,' applied to the sorceress of Endor, our authorized English Bible of King James's day must be correct. And your

wicked bibliolatrous ancestors proceeded on that idea throughout Christendom to murder harmless, friendless, and oftentimes crazy old women. Meantime the witch of Endor in no respect resembled our modern domestic witch.[Footnote: 'The domestic witch.'--It is the common notion that the superstition of the 'evil eye', so widely diffused in the Southern lands, and in some, not a slumbering, but a fiercely operative superstition, is unknown in England and other Northern latitudes. On the contrary, to my thinking, the regular old vulgar witch of England and Scotland was but an impersonatrix of the very same superstition. Virgil expresses this mode of sorcery to the letter, when his shepherd says--

'Nescio quis teneros _oculus_ mihi fascinat agnos?'

Precisely in that way it was that the British witch operated. She, 'by her eye', blighted the natural powers of growth and fertility. By the way, I ought to mention, as a case parallel to that of the Bible's recognising witchcraft, and of enlightened nations continuing to punish it, that St. Paul himself, in an equal degree, recognises the 'evil eye'; that is, he uses the idea, (though certainly not meaning to accredit such an idea,) as one that briefly and energetically conveyed his meaning to those whom he was addressing. 'Oh, foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?' That is, literally, who has fascinated your senses by the evil eye? For the Greek is, 'tis umas ebaskanen?' Now the word 'ebaskanen' is a past tense of the verb 'baskaino', which was the technical term for the action of the evil eye. Without having written a treatise on the A?olic digamma, probably the reader is aware that F is V, and that, in many languages, B and V are interchangeable letters through thousands of words, as the Italian 'tavola', from the Latin 'tabula'. Under that little process it was that the Greek 'baskaino' transmigrated into the Latin 'fascino'; so that St. Paul's word, in speaking to the Galatians, is the very game word as Virgil's, in speaking of the shepherd's flock as charmed by the evil eye.] There was as much difference as between a Roman Proconsul, surrounded with eagle-bearers, and a commercial Consul's clerk with a pen behind his ear. Apparently she was not so much a Medea as an Erichtho. (See the 'Pharsalia'.) She was an 'Evocatix', or female necromancer, evoking phantoms that stood in some unknown relation to dead men; and then by some artifice (it has been supposed) of ventriloquism,[Footnote: I am not referring to German infidels. Very pious commentators have connected her with the 'engastrimithoi' (ἑνγαστρίμιθοι, ἑνγαστρίμιθοι) or ventriloquists.] causing these phantoms to deliver oracular answers upon great political questions. Oh, that one had lived in the times of those New-England wretches that desolated whole districts and terrified vast provinces by their judicial murders of witches, under plea of a bibliolatrous warrant; until at last the fiery furnace, which they had heated for women and children, shot forth flames that, like those of Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, seizing upon his very agents, began to reach some of the murderous judges and denouncers!

Yet, after all, are there not express directions in Scripture to exterminate witches from the land? Certainly; but 'that' does not argue any scriptural recognition of witchcraft as a possible offence. An imaginary crime may imply a criminal intention that is

not imaginary; but also, which much more directly concerns the interests of a state, a criminal purpose, that rests upon a pure delusion, may work by means that are felonious for ends that are fatal. At this moment, we English and the Spaniards have laws, and severe ones, against witchcraft, viz., in the West Indies, and indispensable it is that we should. The Obeah man from Africa can do no mischief to one of us. The proud and enlightened white man despises his arts; and for _him_, therefore, these arts have no existence, for they work only through strong preconceptions of their reality, and through trembling faith in their efficacy. But by that very agency they are all-sufficient for the ruin of the poor credulous negro; he is mastered by original faith, and has perished thousands of times under the knowledge that _Obi_ had been set for him. Justly, therefore, do our colonial courts punish the Obeah sorcerer, who (though an impostor) is not the less a murderer. Now the Hebrew witchcraft was probably even worse; equally resting on delusions, nevertheless, equally it worked for unlawful ends, and (which chiefly made it an object of divine wrath) it worked _through_ idolatrous agencies. It must, therefore, have kept up that connection with idolatry which it was the unceasing effort of the Hebrew polity to exterminate from the land. Consequently, the Hebrew commonwealth might, as consistently as our own, denounce and punish witchcraft without liability to the inference that it therefore recognised the pretensions of witches as real, in the sense of working their bad ends by the means which they alleged. Their magic was causatively of no virtue at all, but, being believed in, through this belief it became the occasional means of exciting the imagination of its victims; after which the consequences were the same as if the magic had acted physically according to its pretences. [Footnote: Does that argument not cover 'the New England wretches' so unreservedly denounced in a preceding paragraph?--ED.]

II. _Development_, as applicable to Christianity, is a doctrine of the very days that are passing over our heads, and due to Mr. Newman, originally the ablest son of Puseyism, but now a powerful architect of religious philosophy on his own account. I should have described him more briefly as a 'master-builder,' had my ear been able to endure a sentence ending with two consecutive trochees, and each of those trochees ending with the same syllable _er_. Ah, reader! I would the gods had made thee rhythmical, that thou mightest comprehend the thousandth part of my labors in the evasion of cacophon. _Phil_ has a general dislike to the Puseyites, though he is too learned to be ignorant, (as are often the Low-Church, or Evangelical, party in England,) that, in many of their supposed innovations, the Puseyites were really only restoring what the torpor of the eighteenth century had suffered to go into disuse. They were _reforming_ the Church in the sense sometimes belonging to the particle _re_, viz., _retroforming_ it, moulding it back into compliance with its original form and model. It is true that this effort for quickening the Church, and for adorning her exterior service, moved under the impulse of too undisguised a sympathy with Papal Rome. But there is no great reason to mind _that_ in our age and our country. Protestant zealotry may be safely relied on in this island as a match for Popish bigotry. There will be no love lost between them--be assured of _that_--and justice will be done to both, though neither should do it to her rival; for philosophy, which has so long sought only amusement in either, is in these latter days of growing profundity applying

herself steadily to the profound truths which dimly are descried lurking in both. It is these which Mr. Newman is likely to illuminate, and not the faded forms of an obsolete ceremonial that cannot now be restored effectually, were it even important that they should. Strange it is, however, that he should open his career by offering to Rome, as a mode of homage, this doctrine of development, which is the direct inversion of her own. Rome founds herself upon the idea, that to her, by tradition and exclusive privilege, was communicated, once for all, the whole truth from the beginning. Mr. Newman lays his corner-stone in the very opposite idea of a gradual development given to Christianity by the motion of time, by experience, by expanding occasions, and by the progress of civilization. Is Newmanism likely to prosper? Let me tell a little anecdote. Twenty years ago, roaming one day (as I had so often the honor to do) with our immortal Wordsworth, I took the liberty of telling him, at a point of our walk, where nobody could possibly overhear me, unless it were old Father Helvellyn, that I feared his theological principles were not quite so sound as his friends would wish. They wanted repairing a little. But, what was worse, I did not see how they could be repaired in the particular case which prompted my remark, for in that place, to repair, or in any respect to alter, was to destroy. It was a passage in the 'Excursion,' where the Solitary had described the baptismal rite as washing away the taint of original sin, and, in fact, working the effect which is called technically regeneration. In the 'Excursion' this view was advanced, not as the poet's separate opinion, but as the avowed doctrine of the English Church, to which Church Wordsworth and myself yielded gladly a filial reverence. But was this the doctrine of the English Church? That I doubted--not that I pretended to any sufficient means of valuing the preponderant opinion between two opinions in the Church; a process far more difficult than is imagined by historians, always so ready to tell us fluently what 'the nation' or 'the people' thought upon a particular question, (whilst, in fact, a whole life might be often spent vainly in collecting the popular opinion); but, judging by my own casual experience, I fancied that a considerable majority in the Church gave an interpretation to this Sacrament differing by much from that in the 'Excursion.' Wordsworth was startled and disturbed at hearing it whispered even before Helvellyn, who is old enough to keep a secret, that his divinity might possibly limp a little. I, on my part, was not sure that it did, but I feared so; and, as there was no chance that I should be murdered for speaking freely, (though the place was lonely, and the evening getting dusky,) I stood to my disagreeable communication with the courage of a martyr. The question between us being one of mere fact, (not what ought to be the doctrine, but what was the doctrine of our Church at that time,) there was no opening for any discussion; and, on Wordsworth's suggestion, it was agreed to refer the point to his learned brother, Dr. Christopher Wordsworth, just then meditating a visit to his native lakes. That visit in a short time 'came off,' and then, without delay, our dispute 'came on' for judgment. I had no bets upon the issue--one can't bet with Wordsworth--and I don't know that I should have ventured to back myself in a case of that nature. However, I felt a slight anxiety on the subject, which was very soon and kindly removed by Dr. Wordsworth's deciding, 'sans phrase,' that I, the original mover of the strife, was wrong, wrong as wrong could be. To this decision I bowed at once, on a principle of courtesy. One ought always to presume a man right within his own profession

even if privately one should think him wrong. But I could not think that of Dr. Wordsworth. He was a D.D.; he was head of Trinity College, which has my entire permission to hold its head up amongst twenty and more colleges, as the leading one in Cambridge, (provided it can obtain St. John's permission), 'and which,' says Phil, 'has done more than any other foundation in Europe for the enlightenment of the world, and for the overthrow of literary, philosophical, and religious superstitions,' I quarrel not with this bold assertion, remembering reverentially that Isaac Barrow, that Isaac Newton, that Richard Bentley belonged to Trinity, but I wish to understand it. The total pretensions of the College can be known only to its members; and therefore, Phil should have explained himself more fully. He can do so, for Phil is certainly a Trinity man. If the police are in search of him, they'll certainly hear of him at Trinity. Suddenly it strikes me as a dream, that Lord Bacon belonged to this College. Don't laugh at me, Phil, if I'm wrong, and still less (because then you'll laugh even more ferociously) if I happen to be right. Can one remember everything? Ah! the worlds of distracted facts that one ought to remember. Would to heaven that I remembered nothing at all, and had nothing to remember! This thing, however, I certainly do remember, that Milton was not of Trinity, nor Jeremy Taylor; so don't think to hoax me there, my parent! Dr. Wordsworth was, or had been, an examining chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury. If Lambeth could be at fault on such a question, then it's of no use going to Newcastle for coals. Delphi, we all know, and Jupiter Ammon had vanished. What other court of appeal was known to man? So I submitted as cheerfully as if the learned Doctor, instead of kicking me out of court, had been handing me in. Yet, for all that, as I returned musing past Rydal Water, I could not help muttering to myself--Ay, now, what rebellious thought was it that I muttered? You fancy, reader, that perhaps I said, 'But yet, Doctor, in spite of your wig, I am in the right.' No; you're quite wrong; I said nothing of the sort. What I did mutter was this--'The prevailing doctrine of the Church must be what Dr. Wordsworth says, viz., that baptism is regeneration--he cannot be mistaken as to that--and I have been misled by the unfair proportion of Evangelical people, bishops, and others, whom accident has thrown in my way at Barley Wood (Hannah More's). These, doubtless, form a minority in the Church; and yet, from the strength of their opinions, from their being a moving party, as also from their being a growing party, I prophesy this issue, that many years will not pass before this very question, now slumbering, will rouse a feud within the English Church. There is a quarrel brewing. Such feuds, long after they are ripe for explosion, sometimes slumber on, until accident kindles them into flame.' That accident was furnished by the tracts of the Puseyites, and since then, according to the word which I spoke on Rydal Water, there has been open war raging upon this very point.

At present, with even more certainty, I prophesy that mere necessity, a necessity arising out of continual collisions with sceptical philosophy, will, in a few years, carry all churches enjoying a learned priesthood into the disputes connected with this doctrine of development. Phil, meantime, is no friend to that Newmanian doctrine; and in sect.31, p.66, he thus describes it--'According to these writers' (viz., the writers 'who advocate the theory of development'), 'the progressive and gradual development of religious truth, which appears to us' (us, meaning, I suppose,

the _Old_-mannians,) 'to have been terminated by the final revelation of the Gospel, has been going on ever since the foundation of the Church, is going on still, and must continue to advance. This theory presumes that the Bible does not contain a full and final exposition of a complete system of religion; that the Church has developed from the Scriptures true doctrines not explicitly contained therein,' &c. &c.

But, without meaning to undertake a defence of Mr. Newman (whose book I am as yet too slenderly acquainted with), may I be allowed, at this point, to intercept a fallacious view of that doctrine, as though essentially it proclaimed some imperfection in Christianity. The imperfection is in us, the Christians, not in Christianity. The impression given by _Phil._ to the hasty reader is, that, according to Newmanism, the Scriptures make a good beginning to which we ourselves are continually adding--a solid foundation, on which we ourselves build the superstructure. Not so. In the course of a day or a year, the sun passes through a vast variety of positions, aspects, and corresponding powers, in relation to ourselves. Daily and annually he is _developed_ to us--he runs a cycle of development. Yet, after all, this practical result does not argue any change or imperfection, growth or decay, in the sun. This great orb is stationary as regards his place, and unchanging as regards his power. It is the subjective change in ourselves that projects itself into this endless succession of phantom changes in the object. Not otherwise on the scheme of development; the Christian theory and system are perfect from the beginning. In itself, Christianity changes not, neither waxing nor waning; but the motions of time and the evolutions of experience continually uncover new parts of its stationary disk. The orb _grows_, so far as practically we are speaking of our own benefit; but absolutely, as regards itself, the orb, eternally the same, has simply more or fewer of its digits exposed. Christianity, perfect from the beginning, had a curtain over much of its disk, which Time and Social Progress are continually withdrawing. This I say not as any deliberate judgment on development, but merely as a suspending, or _ad interim_ idea, by way of barring too summary an interdict against the doctrine at this premature stage. _Phil._, however, hardens his face against Newman and all his works. Him and them he defies; and would consign, perhaps secretly, to the care of a well-known (not new, but) old gentleman, if only he had any faith in that old gentleman's existence. On that point, he is a fixed infidel, and quotes with applause the answer of Robinson, the once celebrated Baptist clergyman, who being asked if he believed in the devil, replied, 'Oh, no; I, for my part, believe in God--don't _you_?'

Phil., therefore, as we have seen, in effect, condemns development. But, at p. 33, when as yet he is not thinking of Mr. Newman, he says, 'If knowledge is progressive, the development of Christian doctrine must be progressive likewise.' I do not see the _must_; but I see the Newmanian cloven foot. As to the _must_, knowledge is certainly progressive; but the development of the multiplication table is not therefore progressive, nor of anything else that is finished from the beginning. My reason, however, for quoting the sentence is, because here we suddenly detect _Phil._ in laying down the doctrine which in Mr. Newman he had regarded as heterodox. _Phil._ is taken red-hand, as the English law expresses it, crimson with, the blood of his offence;

assuming, in fact, an original imperfection _quoad_ the _scire_, though not _quoad_ the _esse;_ as to the '_exposition_' of the system,' though not as to the '_system_' of Christianity. Mr. Newman, after all, asserts (I believe) only one mode of development as applicable to Christianity. _Phil_. having broke the ice, may now be willing to allow of two developments; whilst I, that am always for going to extremes, should be disposed to assert three, viz:--

First. The _Philological_ development. And this is a point on which I, _Philo-Phil_. (or, as for brevity you may call me, _Phil-Phil_.) shall, without wishing to do so, vex _Phil_. It's shocking that one should vex the author of one's existence, which _Phil_. certainly is in relation to me, when considered as _Phil-Phil_. Still it is past all denial, that, to a certain extent, the Scriptures must benefit, like any other book, by an increasing accuracy and compass of learning in the _exegesis_ applied to them. But if all the world denied this, _Phil_., my parent, is the man that cannot; since he it is that relies upon philological knowledge as the one resource of Christian philosophy in all circumstances of difficulty for any of its interests, positive or negative. Philology, according to _Phil_, is the sheet-anchor of Christianity. Already it is the author of a Christianity more in harmony with philosophy; and, as regards the future, _Phil_., it is that charges Philology with the whole service of divinity. Wherever anything, being right, needs to be defended--wherever anything, being amiss, needs to be improved--oh! what a life he will lead this poor Philology! Philology, with _Phil_., is the great benefactress for the past, and the sole trustee for the future. Here, therefore, _Phil_., is caught in a fix, _habemus confitentem_. He denounces development when dealing with the Newmanites; he relies on it when vaunting the functions of Philology; and the only evasion for _him_ would be to distinguish about the modes of development, were it not that, by insinuation, he has apparently denied all modes.

Secondly. There is the _Philosophic_ development, from the reaction upon the Bible of advancing knowledge. This is a mode of development continually going on, and reversing the steps of past human follies. In every age, man has imported his own crazes into the Bible, fancied that he saw them there, and then drawn sanctions to his wickedness or absurdity from what were nothing else than fictions of his own. Thus did the Papists draw a plenary justification of intolerance, or even of atrocious persecution, from the evangelical '_Compel them to come in!_' The right of unlimited coercion was read in those words. People, again, that were democratically given, or had a fancy for treason, heard a trumpet of insurrection in the words '_To your tents, oh Israel!_' But far beyond these in multitude were those that drew from the Bible the most extravagant claims for kings and rulers. 'Rebellion was as the sin of witchcraft.' This was a jewel of a text; it killed two birds with one stone. Broomsticks were proved out of it most clearly, and also the atrocity of representative government. What a little text to contain so much! Look into Algernon Sidney, or into Locke's controversy with Sir Eobert Filmer's 'Patriarcha,'[Footnote: I mention the _book_ as the antagonist, and not the man, because (according to my impression) Sir Robert was dead when Locke was answering him.] or into any books of those days on political principles, and it will be found that Scripture was so used as to

form an absolute bar against human progress. All public benefits were, in the strictest sense of the word, precarious, as depending upon prayers and entreaties to those who had an interest in refusing them. All improvements were elcemosynary; for the initial step in all cases belonged to the Crown. 'The right divine of kings to govern wrong' was in those days what many a man would have died for--what many a man did die for; and all in pure simplicity of heart--faithful to the Bible, but to the Bible of misinterpretation. They obeyed (often to their own ruin) an order which they had misread. Their sincerity, the disinterestedness of their folly, is evident; and in that degree is evident the opening for Scripture development. Nobody could better obey Scripture as they had understood it. Change in the obedience, there could be none for the better; it demanded only that there should be a change in the interpretation, and that change would be what is meant by a development of Scripture. Two centuries of enormous progress in the relations between subjects and rulers have altered the whole reading. 'How readest thou?' was the question of Christ himself; that is, in what meaning dost thou read the particular Scripture that applies to this case? All the texts and all the cases remain at this hour just as they were for our ancestors; and our reverence for these texts is as absolute as theirs; but we, applying lights of experience which they had not, construe these texts by a different logic. There now is development applied to the Bible in one of its many strata--that stratum which connects itself most with civil polity. Again, what a development have we made of Christian truth; how differently do we now read our Bibles in relation to the poor tenants of dungeons that once were thought, even by Christian nations, to have no rights at all!--in relation to 'all prisoners and captives;' and in relation to slaves! The New Testament had said nothing directly upon the question of slavery; nay, by the misreader it was rather supposed indirectly to countenance that institution. But mark--it is Mohammedanism, having little faith in its own laws, that dares not confide in its children for developing anything, but must tie them up for every contingency by the letter of a rule. Christianity--how differently does she proceed! She throws herself broadly upon the pervading spirit which burns within her morals. 'Let them alone,' she says of nations; 'leave them to themselves. I have put a new law into their hearts; and if it is really there, and really cherished, that law will tell them--will develop for them--what it is that they ought to do in every case as it arises, when once its consequences are comprehended.' No need, therefore, for the New Testament explicitly to forbid slavery; silently and implicitly it is forbidden in many passages of the New Testament, and it is at war with the spirit of all. Besides, the religion which trusts to formal and literal rules breaks down the very moment that a new case arises not described in the rules. Such a case is virtually unprovided for, if it does not answer to a circumstantial textual description; whereas every case is provided for, as soon as its tendencies and its moral relations are made known, by a religion that speaks through a spiritual organ to a spiritual apprehension in man. Accordingly, we find that, whenever a new mode of intoxication is introduced, not depending upon grapes, the most devout Mussulmans hold themselves absolved from the restraints of the Koran. And so it would have been with Christians, if the New Testament had laid down literal prohibitions of slavery, or of the slave traffic. Thousands of variations would have been developed by time which no letter

of Scripture could have been comprehensive enough to reach. Were the domestic servants of Greece, the *θητες* (*_thetes_*), within the description? Were the *serfs* and the *ascripti glebae* of feudal Europe to be accounted slaves? Or those amongst our own brothers and sisters, that within so short a period were born subterraneously, [Footnote: See, for some very interesting sketches of this Pariah population, the work (title I forget) of Mr. Bald, a Scottish engineer, well known and esteemed in Edinburgh and Glasgow. He may be relied on. What he tells against Scotland is violently against his own will, for he is intensely national, of which I will give the reader one instance that may make him smile. Much of the rich, unctuous coal, from Northumberland and Durham, gives a deep ruddy light, verging to a blood-red, and certainly is rather sullen, on a winter evening, to the eye. On the other hand, the Scottish coal or most of it, being far poorer as to heat, throws out a very beautiful and animated scarlet blaze; upon which hint, Mr. Bald, when patriotically distressed at not being able to deny the double power of the eastern English coal, suddenly revivifies his Scottish heart that had been chilled, perhaps, by the Scottish coals in his fire-grate, upon recurring to this picturesque difference in the two blazes--'Ah!' he says gratefully, 'that Newcastle blaze is well enough for a "gloomy" Englishman, but it wouldn't do at all for cheerful Scotland.'] in Scottish mines, or in the English collieries of Cumberland, and were supposed to be *ascripti metallo*, sold by nature to the mine, and indorsed upon its machinery for the whole term of their lives; in whom, therefore, it was a treason to see the light of upper day--would *they*, would these poor Scotch and English Pariahs, have stood within any scriptural privilege if the New Testament had legislated by name and letter for this class of *douloi* (slaves)? No attorney would have found them entitled to plead the benefit of the Bible statute. Endless are the variations of the conditions that new combinations of society would bring forward; endless would be the virtual restorations of slavery that would take place under a Mahometan literality; endless would be the defeats that such restorations must sustain under a Christianity relying on no *letter*, but on the *spirit* of God's commandments, and that will understand no equivocations with the secret admonitions of the heart. Meantime, this sort of development, it may be objected, is not a light that Scripture throws out upon human life so much as a light that human life and its development throw back upon Scripture. True; but then how was it possible that life and the human intellect should be carried forward to such developments? Solely through the training which both had received under the discipline of Christian truth. Christianity utters some truth widely applicable to society. This truth is caught up by some influential organ of social life--is expanded prodigiously by human experience, and, when travelling back as an illustrated or improved text to the Bible, is found to be made up, in all its details, of many human developments. Does that argue anything disparaging to Christianity, as though *she* contributed little and man contributed much? On the contrary, man would have contributed nothing at all but for that *nucleus* by which Christianity started and moulded the principle. To give one instance--Public charity, when did it commence?--who first thought of it? Who first noticed hunger and cold as awful realities afflicting poor women and innocent children? Who first made a public provision to meet these evils?--Constantine it was, the first Christian that sat upon a throne. Had, then, rich Pagans before his time no charity--no pity?--no money available for hopeless

poverty? Not much--very little, I conceive; about so much as Shakspeare insinuates that there is of milk in a male tiger. Think, for instance, of that black-hearted reprobate, Cicero, the moralist. This moral knave, who wrote such beautiful Ethics, and _was_ so wicked--who spoke so charmingly and acted so horribly--mentions, with a petrifying coolness, that he knew of desolate old women in Rome who passed three days in succession without tasting food. Did not the wretch, when thinking of this, leap up, and tumble down stairs in his anxiety to rush abroad and call a public meeting for considering so dreadful a case? Not he; the man continued to strut about his library, in a huge toga as big as the _Times_ newspaper, singing out, ' _Oh! fortunatam natam me Consule Romam!_ ' and he mentioned the fact at all only for the sake of Natural Philosophers or of the curious in old women. Charity, even in that sense, had little existence--nay, as a duty, it had no place or rubric in human conceptions before Christianity, Thence came the first rudiments of all public relief to starving men and women; but the idea, the principle, was all that the Bible furnished, needed to furnish, or could furnish. The practical arrangements, the endless details for carrying out this Christian idea--these were furnished by man; and why not? This case illustrates only one amongst innumerable modes of development applicable to the Bible; and this power of development, in general, proves also one other thing of the last importance to prove, viz. the power of Christianity to work in co-operation with time and social progress; to work variably according to the endless variations of time and place; and _that_ is the exact _shibboleth_ of a true and spiritual religion--for, on reviewing the history of false religions, and inquiring what it was that ruined them, rarely is it found that any of them perished by external violence. Even the dreadful fury of the early Mahometan Sultans in India, before the house of Timour, failed to crush the monstrous idolatries of the Hindoos. All false religions have perished by their own hollowness, under that searching trial applied by social life and its changes, which awaits every mode of religion. One after another they have sunk away, as by palsy, from new aspects of society and new necessities of man which they were not able to face. Commencing in one condition of society, in one set of feelings, and in one system of ideas, they sank uniformly under any great change in these elements, to which they had no natural power of accommodation. A false religion furnished a key to one subordinate lock; but a religion that is true will prove a master-key for all locks alike. This transcendental principle, by which Christianity transfers herself so readily from climate to climate,[Footnote: Sagacious Mahometans have been often scandalized and troubled by the secret misgiving that, after all, their Prophet must have been an ignorant fellow. It is clear that the case of a cold climate had never occurred to him; and even a hot one had been conceived most narrowly. Many of the Bedouin Arabs complain of ablutions not adapted to their waterless condition. These evidences of oversight would have been fatal to Islamism, had Islamism produced a high civilization.] from century to century, from the simplicity of shepherds to the utmost refinement of philosophers, carries with it a necessity, corresponding to such infinite flexibility of endless development.

ON THE SUPPOSED SCRIPTURAL EXPRESSION FOR ETERNITY.

[1852.]

Forty years ago (or, in all probability, a good deal more, for we have already completed thirty-seven years from Waterloo, and my remembrances upon this subject go back to a period lying much behind that great era), I used to be annoyed and irritated by the false interpretation given to the Greek word *_aion_*, and given necessarily, therefore, to the adjective *_aionios_* as its immediate derivative. It was not so much the falsehood of this interpretation, as the narrowness of that falsehood, which disturbed me. There was a glimmer of truth in it; and precisely that glimmer it was which led the way to a general and obstinate misconception of the meaning. The word is remarkably situated. It is a scriptural word, and it is also a Greek word; from which the inevitable inference is, that we must look for it only in the *_New_* Testament. Upon any question arising of deep, aboriginal, doctrinal truth, we have nothing to do with translations. Those are but secondary questions, archaeological and critical, upon which we have a right to consult the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures known by the name of the Septuagint.

Suffer me to pause at this point for the sake of premising an explanation needful to the unlearned reader. As the *_reading_* public and the *_thinking_* public is every year outgrowing more and more notoriously the mere *_learned_* public, it becomes every year more and more the right of the former public to give the law preferably to the latter public, upon all points which concern its own separate interests. In past generations, no pains were taken to make explanations that were not called for by the *_learned_* public. All other readers were ignored. They formed a mob, for whom no provision was made. And that many difficulties should be left entirely unexplained for *_them_*, was superciliously assumed to be no fault at all. And yet any sensible man, let him be as supercilious as he may, must on consideration allow that amongst the crowd of unlearned or half-learned readers, who have had neither time nor opportunities for what is called 'erudition' or learned studies, there must always lurk a proportion of men that, by constitution of mind, and by the bounty of nature, are much better fitted for thinking, originally more philosophic, and are more capaciously endowed, than those who are, by accident of position, more learned. Such a natural superiority certainly takes precedence of a merely artificial superiority; and, therefore, it entitles those who possess it to a special consideration. Let there be an audience gathered about any book of ten thousand one hundred readers: it might be fair in these days to assume that ten thousand would be in a partial sense illiterate, and the remaining one hundred what would be rigorously classed as 'learned.' Now, on such a distribution of the readers, it would be a matter of certainty that the most powerful intellects would lie amongst the illiterate ten thousand, counting, probably, to fifteen to one as against those in the learned minority. The inference, therefore, would be, that, in all equity, the interest of the unlearned section claimed a priority of attention, not merely as the more numerous section, but also as, by a high probability, the more philosophic. And in proportion as this unlearned section widens and expands, which every year it does, in that proportion the obligation and cogency of this equity strengthens. An attention to the unlearned part of an audience, which

mysterious cipher as little accessible as Sanscrit, and which never _would_ be more accessible through any worldly attractions of alliance with power and civic grandeur or commerce, _out of_ this darkness _into_ the golden light of a language the most beautiful, the most honored amongst men, and the most widely diffused through a thousand years to come, had the immeasurable effect of throwing into the great crucible of human speculation, even then beginning to ferment, to boil, to overthrow--that mightiest of all elements for exalting the chemistry of philosophy--grand and, for the first time, adequate conceptions of the Deity. For, although it is true that, until Elias should come--that is, until Christianity should have applied its final revelation to the completion of this great idea--we could not possess it in its total effulgence, it is, however, certain that an immense advance was made, a prodigious usurpation across the realms of chaos, by the grand illuminations of the Hebrew discoveries. Too terrifically austere we must presume the Hebrew idea to have been: too undeniably it had not withdrawn the veil entirely which still rested upon the Divine countenance; so much is involved in the subsequent revelations of Christianity. But still the advance made in reading aright the divine lineaments had been enormous. God was now a holy spirit that could not tolerate impurity. He was the fountain of justice, and no longer disfigured by any mode of sympathy with human caprice or infirmity. And, if a frown too awful still rested upon his face, making the approach to him too fearful for harmonizing with that perfect freedom and that childlike love which God seeks in his worshippers, it was yet made evident that no step for conciliating his favor did or could lie through any but _moral_ graces.

Three centuries after this great epoch of the _publication_ (for such it was) secured so providentially to the Hebrew theology, two learned Jews--viz., Josephus and Philo Judaeus--had occasion to seek a cosmopolitan utterance for that burden of truth (or what they regarded as truth) which oppressed the spirit within them. Once again they found a deliverance from the very same freezing imprisonment in an unknown language, through the very same magical key, viz., the all-pervading language of Greece, which carried their communications to the four winds of heaven, and carried them precisely amongst the class of men, viz.--the enlightened and educated class--which pre-eminently, if not exclusively, their wish was to reach. About one generation _after_ Christ it was, when the utter prostration, and, politically speaking, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, threw these two learned Jews upon this recourse to the Greek language as their final resource, in a condition otherwise of absolute hopelessness. Pretty nearly three centuries _before_ Christ it was (two hundred and eighty-four years, according to the common reckoning), when the first act of communication took place between the sealed-up literature of Palestine and the Greek catholic interpretation. Altogether, we may say that three hundred and twenty years, or somewhere about ten generations of men, divided these two memorable acts of intercommunication. Such a space of time allows a large range of influence and of silent, unconscious operation to the vast and potent ideas that brooded over this awful Hebrew literature. Too little weight has been allowed to the probable contagiousness, and to the preternatural shock, of such a new and strange philosophy, acting upon the jaded and exhausted intellect of the Grecian race. We must remember, that precisely this particular range of time was that in which the Greek systems of philosophy, having thoroughly

completed their evolution, had suffered something of a collapse; and, having exhausted their creative energies, began to gratify the cravings for novelty by re modellings of old forms. It is remarkable, indeed, that this very city of Alexandria founded and matured this new principle of remodelling applied to poetry not less than to philosophy and criticism. And, considering the activity of this great commercial city and port, which was meant to act, and did act, as a centre of communication between the East and the West, it is probable that a far greater effect was produced by the Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures, in the way of preparing the mind of nations for the apprehension of Christianity, than has ever been distinctly recognised. The silent destruction of books in those centuries has robbed us of all means for tracing innumerable revolutions, that nevertheless, by the evidence of results, must have existed. Taken, however, with or without this additional result, the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures in their most important portions must be ranked amongst what are called 'providential' events. Such a king--a king whose father had been a personal friend of Alexander, the mighty civilizing conqueror, and had shared in the liberalization connected with his vast revolutionary projects for extending a higher civilization over the globe, such a king, conversing with such a language, having advantages so absolutely unrivalled, and again this king and this language concurring with a treasure so supernatural of spiritual wisdom as the subject of their ministrations, and all three concurring with political events so auspicious--the founding of a new and mighty metropolis in Egypt, and the silent advance to supreme power amongst men of a new empire, martial beyond all precedent as regarded means, but not as regarded ends--working in all things towards the unity of civilization and the unity of law, so that any new impulse, as, for instance, impulse of a new religion, was destined to find new facilities for its own propagation, resembling electric conductors, under the unity of government and of law--concurrences like these, so many and so strange, justly impress upon this translation, the most memorable, because the most influential of all that have ever been accomplished, a character of grandeur that place it on the same level of interest as the building of the first or second temple at Jerusalem.

There is a Greek legend which openly ascribes to this translation all the characters of a miracle. But, as usually happens, this vulgarizing form of the miraculous is far less impressive than the plain history itself, unfolding its stages with the most unpretending historical fidelity. Even the Greek language, on which, as the natural language of the new Greek dynasty in Egypt, the duty of the translation devolved, enjoyed a double advantage: 1st, as being the only language then spoken upon earth that could diffuse a book over every part of the civilized earth; 2dly, as being a language of unparalleled power and compass for expressing and reproducing effectually all ideas, however alien and novel. Even the city, again, in which this translation was accomplished, had a double dowery of advantages towards such a labor, not only as enjoying a large literary society, and, in particular, a large Jewish society, together with unusual provision in the shape of libraries, on a scale probably at that time unprecedented, but also as having the most extensive machinery then known to human experience for publishing, that is, for transmitting to foreign capitals all books in the readiest and the cheapest fashion, by means of its prodigious shipping.

Having thus indicated to the unlearned reader the particular nature of that interest which invests this earliest translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, viz., that in fact this translation was the earliest publication to the human race of a revelation which had previously been locked up in a language destined, as surely as the Welsh language or the Gaelic, to eternal obscurity amongst men, I go on to mention that the learned Jews selected for this weighty labor happened to be in number seventy-two; but, as the Jews systematically reject fractions in such cases (whence it is that always, in order to express the period of six weeks, they say forty days, and not, as strictly they should, forty-two days), popularly, the translators were called 'the seventy,' for which the Latin word is septuaginta. And thus in after ages the translators were usually indicated as 'The LXX,' or, if the work and not the workmen should be noticed, it was cited as The Septuagint. In fact, this earliest of Scriptural versions, viz., into Greek, is by much the most famous; or, if any other approaches it in notoriety, it is the Latin translation by St. Jerome, which, in this one point, enjoys even a superior importance, that in the Church of Rome it is the authorized translation. Evidently, in every church, it must be a matter of primary importance to assign the particular version to which that church appeals, and by which, in any controversy arising, that church consents to be governed. Now, the Jerome version fulfils this function for the Romish Church; and accordingly, in the sense of being published (vulgata), or publicly authorized by that church, it is commonly called The Vulgate.

But, in a large polemic question, unless, like the Romish church, we uphold a secondary inspiration as having secured a special privileged translation from the possibility of error, we cannot refuse an appeal to the Hebrew text for the Old Testament, or to the Greek text for the New. The word aeonios (ἄϊνιός), as purely Grecian, could not connect itself with the Old Testament, unless it were through the Septuagint translation into Greek. Now, with that version, in any case of controversy, none of us, Protestants alike or Roman Catholics, have anything whatever to do. Controversially, we can be concerned only with the original language of the Scriptures, with its actual verbal expressions textually produced. To be liable, therefore, to such a textual citation, any Greek word must belong to the New Testament. Because, though the word might happen to occur in the Septuagint, yet, since that is merely a translation, for any of us who occupy a controversial place, that is, who are bound by the responsibilities, or who claim the strict privileges of controversy, the Septuagint has no virtual existence. We should not be at liberty to allege the Septuagint as any authority, if it happened to countenance our own views; and, consequently, we could not be called on to recognise the Septuagint in any case where it should happen to be against us. I make this preliminary caveat, as not caring whether the word aeonios does or does not occur in the Septuagint. Either way, the reader understands that I disown the authority of that version as in any degree affecting myself. The word which, forty years ago, moved my disgust by its servile misinterpretation, was a word proper to the New Testament; and any sense which it may have received from an Alexandrian Jew in the third century before Christ, is no more relevant to any criticism that I am now going to suggest, than is the classical

use of the word aeon (ἄϊν?ἄϊν½) familiar to the learned in Sophocles or Euripides.

The reason which gives to this word aeonian what I do not scruple to call a dreadful importance, is the same reason, and no other, which prompted the dishonesty concerned in the ordinary interpretation of this word. The word happened to connect itself--but that was no practical concern of mine; me it had not biased in the one direction, nor should it have biased any just critic in the counter, direction--happened, I say, to connect itself with the ancient dispute upon the duration of future punishments. What was meant by the aeonian punishments in the next world? Was the proper sense of the word eternal, or was it not? I, for my part, meddled not, nor upon any consideration could have been tempted to meddle, with a speculation repellent alike by the horror and by the hopeless mystery which invest it. Secrets of the prison-house, so afflicting to contemplate steadily, and so hopeless of solution, there could be no proper motive for investigating, unless the investigation promised a great deal more than it could ever accomplish; and my own feeling as to all such problems is, that they vulgarize what, left to itself, would take its natural station amongst the freezing horrors that Shakspeare dismisses with so potent an expression of awe, in a well-known scene of 'Measure for Measure.' I reiterate my protest against being in any way decoyed into the controversy. Perhaps I may have a strong opinion upon the subject. But, anticipating the coarse discussions into which the slightest entertainment of such a question would be every moment approaching, once for all, out of reverential regard for the dignity of human nature, I beg permission to decline the controversy altogether.

But does this declination involve any countenance to a certain argument which I began by rejecting as abominable? Most certainly not. That argument runs thus--that the ordinary construction of the term aeonian, as equivalent to everlasting, could not possibly be given up when associated with penal misery, because in that case, and by the very same act, the idea of eternity must be abandoned as applicable to the counter-bliss of Paradise. Torment and blessedness, it was argued, punishment and beatification, stood upon the same level; the same word it was, the word aeonian, which qualified the duration of either; and, if eternity in the most rigorous acceptation fell away from the one idea, it must equally fall away from the other. Well; be it so. But that would not settle the question. It might be very painful to renounce a long-cherished anticipation; but the necessity of doing so could not be received as a sufficient reason for adhering to the old unconditional use of the word aeonian. The argument is--that we must retain the old sense of eternal, because else we lose upon one scale what we had gained upon the other. But what then? would be the reasonable man's retort. We are not to accept or to reject a new construction (if otherwise the more colorable) of the word aeonian, simply because the consequences might seem such as upon the whole to displease us. We may gain nothing; for by the new interpretation our loss may balance our gain; and we may prefer the old arrangement. But how monstrous is all this! We are not summoned as to a choice of two different arrangements that may suit different tastes, but to a grave question as to what is the sense and operation of the word aeonian. Let the limitation of the word disturb our previous estimate of Paradise, grant that it so disturbs that

estimate, not the less all such consequences leave the dispute exactly where it was; and if a balance of reason can be found for limiting the extent of the word aeonian, it will not be the less true because it may happen to disturb a crotchet of our own.

Meantime, all this speculation, first and last, is pure nonsense. Aeonian does not mean eternal; neither does it mean of limited duration; nor would the unsettling of aeonian in its old use, as applied to punishment, to torment, to misery, &c., carry with it any necessary unsettling of the idea in its application to the beatitudes of Paradise. Pause, reader; and thou, my favored and privileged reader, that boastest thyself to be unlearned, pause doubly whilst I communicate my views as to this remarkable word.

What is an aeon? In the use and acceptation of the Apocalypse, it is evidently this, viz., the duration or cycle of existence which belongs to any object, not individually for itself, but universally in right of its genus. Kant, for instance, in a little paper which I once translated, proposed and debated the question as to the age of our planet the Earth. What did he mean? Was he to be understood as asking whether the Earth were half a million, two millions, or three millions of years old? Not at all. The probabilities certainly lean, one and all, to the assignment of an antiquity greater by many thousands of times than that which we have most idly supposed ourselves to extract from Scripture, which assuredly never meant to approach a question so profoundly irrelevant to the great purposes of Scripture as any geological speculation whatsoever. But this was not within the field of Kant's inquiry. What he wished to know was simply the exact stage in the whole course of her development which the Earth at present occupies. Is she still in her infancy, for example, or in a stage corresponding to middle age, or in a stage approaching to superannuation? The idea of Kant presupposed a certain average duration as belonging to a planet of our particular system; and supposing this known, or discoverable, and that a certain assignable development belonged to a planet so circumstanced as ours, then in what particular stage of that development may we, the tenants of this respectable little planet Tellus, reasonably be conceived to stand?

Man, again, has a certain aeonian life; possibly ranging somewhere about the period of seventy years assigned in the Psalms. That is, in a state as highly improved as human infirmity and the errors of the earth herself, together with the diseases incident to our atmosphere, &c., could be supposed to allow, possibly the human race might average seventy years for each individual. This period would in that case represent the 'aeon' of the individual Tellurian; but the 'aeon' of the Tellurian RACE would probably amount to many millions of our earthly years; and it would remain an unfathomable mystery, deriving no light at all from the septuagenarian 'aeon' of the individual; though between the two aeons I have no doubt that some secret link of connection does and must subsist, however undiscoverable by human sagacity.

The crow, the deer, the eagle, &c., are all supposed to be long-lived. Some people have fancied that in their normal state they tended to a period of two[Footnote: I have heard the same normal duration ascribed to the tortoise, and one case became imperfectly known to myself personally. Somewhere I may have mentioned the case in print. These, at any rate, are the facts of the case: A lady (by

birth a Cowper, of the whig family, and cousin to the poet Cowper; and, equally with him, related to Dr. Madan, bishop of Peterborough), in the early part of this century, mentioned to me that, in the palace at Peterborough, she had for years known as a pet of the household a venerable tortoise, who bore some inscription on his shell indicating that, from 1638 to 1643, he had belonged to Archbishop Laud, who (if I am not mistaken) held the bishopric of Peterborough before he was translated to London, and finally to Canterbury.] centuries. I myself know nothing certain for or against this belief; but, supposing the case to be as it is represented, then this would be the aeonian period of these animals, considered as individuals. Among trees, in like manner, the oak, the cedar, the yew, are notoriously of very slow growth, and their aeonian period is unusually long as regards the individual. What may be the aeon of the whole species is utterly unknown. Amongst birds, one species at least has become extinct in our own generation: its aeon was accomplished. So of all the fossil species in zoology, which Palaeontology has revealed. Nothing, in short, throughout universal nature, can for a moment be conceived to have been resigned to accident for its normal aeon. All periods and dates of this order belong to the certainties of nature, but also, at the same time, to the mysteries of Providence. Throughout the Prophets, we are uniformly taught that nothing is more below the grandeur of Heaven than to assign earthly dates in fixing either the revolutions or the duration of great events such as prophecy would condescend to notice. A day has a prophetic meaning, but what sort of day? A mysterious expression for a time which has no resemblance to a natural day--sometimes comprehending long successions of centuries, and altering its meaning according to the object concerned. 'A time,' and 'times,' or 'half a time'--'aeon_,' or 'aeons_ of aeons_'--and other variations of this prophetic language (so full of dreadful meaning, but also of doubt and perplexity), are all significant. The peculiar grandeur of such expressions lies partly in the dimness of the approximation to any attempt at settling their limits, and still more in this, that the conventional character, and consequent meanness of ordinary human dates, are abandoned in the celestial chronologies. Hours and days, or lunations and months, have no true or philosophic relation to the origin, or duration, or periods of return belonging to great events, or revolutionary agencies, or vast national crimes; but the normal period and duration of all acts whatever, the time of their emergence, of their agency, or their reagency, fall into harmony with the secret proportions of a heavenly scale, when they belong by mere necessity of their own internal constitution to the vital though hidden motions that are at work in their own life and manifestation. Under the old and ordinary view of the apocalyptic aeon, which supposed it always to mean the same period of time--mysterious, indeed, and uncertain, as regards our knowledge, but fixed and rigorously certain in the secret counsels of God--it was presumed that this period, if it lost its character of infinity when applied to evil, to criminality, or to punishment, must lose it by a corresponding necessity equally when applied to happiness and the golden aspects of hope. But, on the contrary, every object whatsoever, every mode of existence, has its own separate and independent aeon. The most thoughtless person must be satisfied, on reflection, even apart from the express commentary upon this idea furnished by the Apocalypse, that every life and mode of being must have hidden within itself the secret why of its duration. It is impossible to believe of any duration

whatever that it is determined capriciously. Always it rests upon some ground, ancient as light and darkness, though undiscoverable by man. This only is discoverable, as a general tendency, that the aeon, or generic period of evil, is constantly towards a fugitive duration. The aeon, it is alleged, must always express the same idea, whatever that may be; if it is less than eternity for the evil cases, then it must be less for the good ones. Doubtless the idea of an aeon is in one sense always uniform, always the same, viz., as a tenth or a twelfth is always the same. Arithmetic could not exist if any caprice or variation affected these ideas--a tenth is always more than an eleventh, always less than a ninth. But this uniformity of ratio and proportion does not hinder but that a tenth may now represent a guinea, and next moment represent a thousand guineas. The exact amount of the duration expressed by an aeon depends altogether upon the particular subject which yields the aeon. It is, as I have said, a radix; and, like an algebraic square-root or cube-root, though governed by the most rigorous laws of limitation, it must vary in obedience to the nature of the particular subject whose radix it forms.

Reader, I take my leave. I have been too loitering. I know it, and will make such efforts in future to cultivate the sternest brevity as nervous distress will allow. Meantime, as the upshot of my speculation, accept these three propositions:--

A. That man (which is in effect every man hitherto,) who allows himself to infer the eternity of evil from the counter eternity of good, builds upon the mistake of assigning a stationary and mechanic value to the idea of an aeon; whereas the very purpose of Scripture in using this word was to evade such a value. The word is always varying, for the very purpose of keeping it faithful to a spiritual identity. The period or duration of every object would be an essentially variable quantity, were it not mysteriously commensurate to the inner nature of that object as laid open to the eyes of God. And thus it happens, that everything in this world, possibly without a solitary exception has its own separate aeon: how many entities, so many aeons.

B. But if it be an excess of blindness which can overlook the aeonian differences amongst even neutral entities, much deeper is that blindness which overlooks the separate tendencies of things evil and things good. Naturally, all evil is fugitive and allied to death.

C. I separately, speaking for myself only, profoundly believe that the Scriptures ascribe absolute and metaphysical eternity to one sole Being, viz., to God; and derivatively to all others according to the interest which they can plead in God's favor. Having anchorage in God, innumerable entities may possibly be admitted to a participation in divine aeon. But what interest in the favor of God can belong to falsehood, to malignity, to impurity? To invest them with aeonian privileges, is in effect, and by its results, to distrust and to insult the Deity. Evil would not be evil, if it had that power of self-subsistence which is imputed to it in supposing its aeonian life to be co-eternal with that which crowns and glorifies the good.

JUDAS ISCARIOT.

[1852.]

Everything connected with our ordinary conceptions of this man, of his real purposes, and of his ultimate fate, apparently is erroneous. That neither any motive of his, nor any ruling impulse, was tainted with the vulgar treachery imputed to him, appears probable from the strength of his remorse. And this view of his case comes recommended by so much of internal plausibility, that in Germany it has long since shaped itself into the following well-known hypothesis:--Judas Iscariot, it is alleged, participated in the common delusion of the apostles as to that earthly kingdom which, under the sanction and auspices of Christ, they supposed to be waiting and ripening for the Jewish people. So far there was nothing in Judas to warrant any special wonder or any special blame. If he erred, so did the other apostles. But in one point Judas went further than his brethren, viz., in speculating upon the reasons of Christ for delaying the inauguration of this kingdom. All things were apparently ripe for it; all things pointed to it; the expectation and languishing desires of many Hebrew saints; the warning from signs; the prophetic alarms and kindling signals raised aloft by heralds like the Baptist; the fermentation of revolutionary doctrines all over Judea; the passionate impatience of the Roman yoke; the continual openings of new convulsions and new opportunities at the great centre of Rome; the insurrectionary temper of Jewish society, as indicated by the continual rise of robber leaders, that drew off multitudes into the neighboring deserts; and, universally, the unsettled mind of the Jewish nation. These explosive materials had long been accumulated; they needed only a kindling spark. Heavenly citations to war had long been felt in the insults and aggressions of paganism; there wanted only a leader. And such a leader, if he would but consent to assume that office, stood ready in the founder of Christianity. The supreme qualifications for leadership, as revealed in the person of Jesus Christ, were evident to all parties in the Jewish community, and not merely to the religious body of his own immediate followers. These qualifications were published and expounded to the world in the facility with which everywhere he drew crowds about himself, [Footnote: As connected with these crowds, I have elsewhere noticed, many years ago, the secret reason which probably governed our Saviour in cultivating the character and functions of a hakim, or physician. Throughout the whole world of civilization at that era [1st c. B.C.], whatever might be otherwise the varieties of the government, there was amongst the ruling authorities a great jealousy of mobs and popular gatherings. To a grand revolutionary teacher, no obstacle so fatal as this initial prejudice could have offered itself. Already, in the first place, a new and mysterious body of truth, having vast and illimitable relations to human duties and prospects, presented a field of indefinite alarm. That this truth should in the second place publish itself, not through books and written discourses, but orally, by word of mouth, and by personal communication between vast mobs and the divine teacher--already that, as furnishing a handle of influence to a mob-leader, justified a preliminary alarm. But then, thirdly, as furnishing a plea for bringing crowds together, such a mode of teaching must have crowned the suspicious

presumptions against itself. One peril there was at any rate to begin with--the peril of a mob: that was certain. And, secondly, there was the doctrine taught: which doctrine was mysterious and uncertain; and in that uncertainty lay another peril. So that, equally through what was fixed and what was doubtful, there arose that 'fear of change' which by authentic warrant 'perplexes monarchs.'] in the extraordinary depth of impression which attended his teaching, and in the fear as well as hatred which possessed the Jewish rulers against him. Indeed, had it not been for the predominance of the Roman element in the government of Judea, it is pretty certain that Christ would have been crushed in an earlier stage in his career.

Believing, therefore, as Judas did, that Christ contemplated the establishment of a temporal kingdom--the restoration, in fact, of David's throne; believing, also, that all the conditions towards the realization of such a scheme met and centred in the person of Christ, when viewed in relation to the circumstances of the times; what was it that, upon any solution intelligible to Judas, neutralized so grand a scene of promise? Simply and obviously, to a man with the views of Judas, it was the character of Christ himself, sublimely over-gifted for purposes of speculation, but, like Shakspeare's great creation of Prince Hamlet, not commensurately endowed for the business of action and the sudden emergencies of life. Indecision and doubt (such was the interpretation of Judas) crept over the faculties of the Divine Man as often as he was summoned away from his own natural Sabbath of heavenly contemplation to the gross necessities of action. It became important, therefore, according to the views adopted by Judas, that his master should be precipitated into action by a force from without, and thrown into the centre of some popular movement, such as, once beginning to revolve, could not afterwards be suspended or checked. It is by no means improbable that this may have been the theory of Judas. Nor is it at all necessary to seek for the justification of such a theory, considered as a matter of prudential policy, in Jewish fanaticism. The Jews of that day were distracted by internal schisms. Else, and with any benefit from national unity, the headlong rapture of Jewish zeal, when combined in vindication of their insulted temple and temple-worship, would have been equal to the effort of dislodging the Roman legionary force for the moment from the military possession of Palestine. After which, although the restoration of the Roman supremacy could not ultimately have been evaded, it is not at all certain that a compromise might not have been welcome at Rome, such as had, in fact, existed under Herod the Great and his father.[Footnote: It was a tradition which circulated at Rome down to the days of the Flavian family, that the indulgence conceded to Judea by the imperial policy from Augustus downwards, arose out of the following little diplomatic secret:--On the rise of the Parthian power, ambassadors had been sent to Antipater, the father of Herod, offering the Parthian alliance and support. At the same moment there happened to be at Jerusalem a Roman agent, having a mission from the Roman Government with exactly the same objects. The question was most solemnly debated, for it was obvious, that ultimately this question touched the salvation of the kingdom, since to accept an alliance with either empire, would be to insure the bitter hostility of the other. With that knowledge fully before his mind, Antipater made his definitive election for Rome. The case transpired at Rome--the debate, and the issue of the debate--and eventually proved worth a throne to the Herodian family; for the honor of Rome seemed to be concerned in supporting the man who, in this sort of

judgment of Paris, had solemnly awarded the prize of superiority to the remoter potentate.] The radical power, in fact, would have been lodged in Rome; but with such external concessions to Jewish nationality as might have consulted the real interests of both parties. Administered under Jewish names, the land might have yielded a larger revenue than, as a refractory nest of insurgents, it ever did yield to the Roman exchequer; and, on the other hand, a ferocious bigotry, which was really sublime in its indomitable obstinacy, might have been humored without prejudice to the grandeur of the imperial claims. Even little Palmyra in later times was indulged to a greater extent without serious injury in any quarter, had it not been for the feminine arrogance that misinterpreted and abused that indulgence.

The miscalculation, in fact, of Judas Iscariot--supposing him really to have entertained the views ascribed to him--did not hinge at all upon political oversights, but upon a total spiritual blindness; in which blindness, however, he went no farther than at the time did probably most of his brethren. Upon them, quite as little as upon him, had as yet dawned the true grandeur of the Christian scheme. In this only he outran his brethren--that, sharing in their blindness, he greatly exceeded them in presumption. All alike had imputed to their Master views utterly irreconcilable with the grandeur of his new and heavenly religion. It was no religion at all which they as yet supposed to be the object of Christ's teaching, but a simple preparation for a pitifully vulgar scheme of earthly aggrandizement. But, whilst the other apostles had simply failed to comprehend their master, Judas had presumptuously assumed that he comprehended the purposes of Christ more fully than Christ himself. His object was audacious in a high degree, but (according to the theory which I am explaining) for that very reason not treacherous at all. The more that he was liable to the reproach of audacity, the less can he be suspected of perfidy. He supposed himself executing the very innermost purposes of Christ, but with an energy which it was the characteristic infirmity of Christ to want. His hope was, that, when at length actually arrested by the Jewish authorities, Christ would no longer vacillate; he would be forced into giving the signal to the populace of Jerusalem, who would then have risen unanimously, for the double purpose of placing Christ at the head of an insurrectionary movement, and of throwing off the Roman yoke. As regards the worldly prospects of this scheme, it is by no means improbable that Iscariot was right. It seems, indeed, altogether impossible that he, who (as the treasurer of the apostolic fraternity) had in all likelihood the most of worldly wisdom, and was best acquainted with the temper of the times, could have made any gross blunder as to the wishes and secret designs of the populace in Jerusalem.[Footnote: Judas, not less than the other apostles, had doubtless been originally chosen, upon the apparent ground of superior simplicity and unworldliness, or else of superior zeal in testifying his obedience to the wishes of his Master. But the other eleven were probably exposed to no special temptation: Judas, as the purse-bearer, was. His official duty must have brought him every day into minute and circumstantial communication with an important order of men, viz., petty shop-keepers. In all countries alike, these men fulfil a great political function. Beyond all others, they are brought into the most extensive connection with the largest stratum by far in the composition of society. They receive, and with dreadful fidelity they give back, all jacobinical impulses. They know thoroughly in what channels,

under any call arising for action, these impulses are at any time moving. They are always kept up au courant of the interior councils and ultimate objects of the most national, and, in one sense, the most powerful body in the whole community. Consciousness, which such men always have, of deep incorruptible fidelity to their mother-land, and to her interests, however ill understood, ennobles their politics, even when otherwise base. They are corrupters in a service that never can be utterly corrupt. They have therefore a power to win attention from virtuous men; and, being known to speak a representative language, they would easily, in a land so agitated and unreconciled, so wild, stormy, and ignorant as Judea, kindle in stirring minds the most worldly contagions as to principle and purpose: on the one hand, kept through these men in vital sympathy with the restless politics of the insurrectionist populace--on the other, hearing a sublime philosophy that rested for its key-note upon the advent of vast revolutions among men--what wonder that Judas should connect his daily experience by an imaginary synthesis?] This populace, however, not being backed by any strong section of the aristocracy, having no confidence again in any of the learned bodies connected with the great service of their national temple, and having no leaders, were apparently dejected, and without unity. The probability, meantime, is, that some popular demonstration would have been made on behalf of Christ, had he himself offered it any encouragement. But we, who know the incompatibility of any such encouragement with the primary purpose of Christ's mission upon earth, know of necessity that Judas, and the populace on which he relied, must equally and simultaneously have found themselves undeceived for ever. In an instant of time one grand decisive word and gesture of Christ must have put an end peremptorily to all hopes of that kind. In that brief instant, enough was made known to Judas for final despair. Whether he had ever drunk profoundly enough from the cup of spiritual religion to understand the full meaning of Christ's refusal; whether he still adhered to his worldly interpretation of Christ's mission, and simply translated the refusal into a confession that all was lost, whilst in very fact all was on the brink of absolute and triumphant consummation, it is impossible for us, without documents or hints, to conjecture. Enough is apparent to show that, in reference to any hopes that could be consolatory for him, all was indeed lost. The kingdom of this world had melted away in a moment like a cloud; and it mattered little to him that a spiritual kingdom survived, and that intellectually he might suddenly become aware of it, if in his heart there were no spiritual organ by which he could appropriate the new and stunning revelation. Equally he might be swallowed up by despair in the case of retaining his old worldly delusions, and finding the ground of his old anticipations suddenly giving way below his feet, or again in the opposite case of suddenly correcting his own false constructions of Christ's mission, and apprehending a far higher purpose; but which purpose, in the very moment of becoming intelligible, rose into a region far beyond his own frail fleshly sympathies. He might read more truly--far more truly; but what of that, if the new truth were nothing to him? The despondency of Judas might be of two different qualities, more or less selfish; indeed, I would go so far as to say, selfish or altogether unselfish. And it is with a view to this question, and under a persuasion of a wrong done to Judas by gross mistranslation disturbing the Greek text, that I entered at all upon this little memorandum. Else what I have hitherto been attempting to explain (excepting only the part relating to the hakim, which is

entirely my own suggestion) belongs to German writers. The whole construction of Iscariot's conduct, as arising, not out of perfidy, but out of his sincere belief that some quickening impulse was called for by a morbid feature in Christ's temperament--all this I believe was originally due to the Germans; and it is an important correction, for it must always be important to recall within the fold of Christian forgiveness any one who has long been sequestered from human charity, and has tenanted a Pariah grave. In the greatest and most memorable of earthly tragedies, Judas is a prominent figure. So long as the earth revolves, he cannot be forgotten. If, therefore, there is a doubt affecting his case, he is entitled to the benefit of that doubt; and if he has suffered to any extent--if simply to the extent of losing a palliation, or the shadow of a palliation--by means of a false translation from the Greek, we ought not to revise or mitigate his sentence merely, but to dismiss him from the bar. The Germans make it a question--in what spirit Iscariot lived? _My_ question is--how he died? If he were a traitor at last, in that case he was virtually a traitor always. If he perpetrated treason in the last hours of his connection, with Christ, and even a mercenary treason, then he must have been dallying with the purpose of treason during all the hours of his apostleship. If, in reality, when selling his master for money, he meant to betray him, and regarded the money as the commensurate motive for betraying him, then his case will assume a very different aspect from that impressed upon it by the German construction of the circumstances.

The _life_ of Judas, and the _death_ of Judas, taken apart, or taken jointly, each separately upon independent grounds, or both together upon common grounds, are open to doubts and perplexities. And possibly the double perplexities, if fully before us, might turn out to be self-neutralized. Taking them jointly, we might ask--Were they, this life and this death, to be regarded as a common movement on behalf of a deep and heart-fretting Hebrew patriotism, which was not the less sincere, because it ran headlong into the unamiable form of rancorous rationality and inhuman bigotry? Were they a wild degeneration from a principle originally noble? Or, on the contrary, this life and this death, were they alike the expression of a base mercenary selfishness, caught and baffled in the meshes of its own chicanery? The life, if it could be appreciated in its secret principles, might go far to illustrate the probable character of the death. The death, if its circumstances were recoverable, and could be liberated from the self-contradictory details in the received report, might do something to indicate retrospectively the character and tenor of that life. The life of Judas, under a German construction of it, as a spasmodic effort of vindictive patriotism and of rebellious ambition, noble by possibility, though erring and worldly-minded, when measured by a standard so exalted as that of Christianity, would infer (as its natural sequel) a death of fierce despair. Read under the ordinary construction as a life exposed to temptations that were petty, and frauds that were always mercenary, it could not reasonably be supposed to furnish any occasion for passions upon so great a scale as those which seem to have been concerned in the tragical end of Judas, whether the passions were those of remorse and penitential anguish, or of personal disappointment. Leaving, however, to the Germans, the task of conjecturally restering its faded lineaments to this mysterious record of a crime that never came before any human tribunal, my own purpose is narrower. I seek to recall and

to recombine the elements, not of the Iscariot's life, nor of his particular offence, but simply of his death.

The reader is probably aware, that there has always been an obscurity, or even a perplexity, connected with the death of Iscariot. Two only out of the entire five documents, which record the rise and early history of Christianity, have circumstantially noticed this event. Mark, Luke, and John, leave it undescribed. St. Matthew and the Acts of the Apostles have bequeathed to us a picturesque account of it, which, to my own belief, has been thoroughly misunderstood; and, once being misunderstood, naturally enough has been interpreted as something fearfully preternatural. The crime, though great, of Iscariot has probably been much exaggerated. It was the crime of signal and earthly presumption, seeking not to thwart the purposes of Christ, or to betray them, but to promote them by means utterly at war with their central spirit. As far as can be judged, it was an attempt to forward the counsels of God by weapons borrowed from the armory of darkness. The crime being once misapprehended as a crime, without a name or a precedent, it was inevitable that the punishment, so far as it was expounded by the death of the criminal, should, in obedience to this first erroneous preconception, be translated into something preternatural. To a mode of guilt which seemed to have no parallel, it was reasonable enough that there should be apportioned a death which allowed of no medical explanation.[Footnote: In neutral points, having no relation to morals or religious philosophy, it is not concealed by the scriptural records themselves, that even inspired persons made grave mistakes. All the apostles, it is probable, or with the single exception of St. John, shared in the mistake about the second coming of Christ, as an event immediately to be looked for. With respect to diseases, again, it is evident that the apostles, in common with all Jews, were habitually disposed to read in them distinct manifestations of heavenly wrath. In blindness, for instance, or, again, in death from the fall of a tower, they read, as a matter of course, a plain expression of the divine displeasure pointed at an individual. That they should even pause so far as to make a doubt whether the individual or his parents were the object of this displeasure, arose only from the absolute coercion to so much reserve as this which was continually obtruding itself in the cases where innocent infants were the sufferers. This, in fact, was a prejudice inalienable from their Jewish training; and as it would unavoidably lead oftentimes to judgments not only false but also uncharitable, it received, on more occasions than one, a stern rebuke from Christ himself. In the same spirit, it is probable that the symptoms attending death were sometimes erroneously reported as preternatural, when, in fact, such as every hospital could match. The death of the first Herod was regarded by the early Christians universally as a judicial expression of God's wrath to the author of the massacre at Bethlehem, though in reality the symptoms were such as often occur in obstinate derangements of the nervous system. Indeed, as to many features, the malady of the French king, Charles IX., whose nervous system had been shattered by the horrors of the St. Bartholomew massacre, very nearly resembled it; with such differences as might be looked for between an old, ruined constitution, such as Herod's, and one so youthful as that of Charles. In the Acts of the Apostles, again, the grandson of Herod (Herod Agrippa) is evidently supposed to have died by a judicial and preternatural death, whereas apparently one part of his malady was the morbus pedicularis--cases of which I have myself

circumstantially known in persons of all ranks; one, for instance, being that of a countess enormously rich, and the latest a female servant.]

This demur, moreover, of obscurity was not the only one raised against the death of Judas: there was a separate objection--that it was inconsistent with itself. He was represented, in the ordinary modern versions, as dying by a double death--viz., 1st, by a suicidal death: '_he went and hanged himself_'--this is the brief account of his death given by St. Matthew; but, 2d, by a death _not_ suicidal: in the Acts of the Apostles, we have a very different account of his death, not suggesting suicide at all, and otherwise describing it as mysteriously complex; that is, presenting us with various circumstances of the case, none of which, in the common vernacular versions (English and Continental), is at all intelligible. The elements in the case are three: that he 'fell down headlong;' that he 'burst asunder in the middle;' and that 'his bowels gushed out'--the first of these elements being unintelligible in the English expression of it, and the two others being purely and blankly impossible. These objections to the particular mode of that catastrophe which closed the career of Judas, had been felt pretty generally in the Christian church, and probably from the earliest times; and the more so on account of that deep obscurity which rested upon the nature of his offence. That a man, who had been solemnly elected into the small band of the apostles, should so far wander from his duty as to incur forfeiture of his great office--this was in itself sufficiently dreadful, and a shocking revival to the human imagination of that eldest amongst all traditions--a tradition descending to us from what date we know not, nor through what channel of original communication--the possibility that even into the heaven of heavens, and amongst the angelic hosts, rebellion against God, long before man and human frailty existed, should have crept by some way metaphysically inconceivable. What search could be sufficient, where even the eye of Christ had failed to detect any germ of evil? Still, though the crime of Judas had doubtless been profound,[Footnote: In measuring which, however, the reader must not allow himself to be too much biassed by the _English_ phrase, 'son of _perdition._' This, and the phrase which we translate 'damnation,' have been alike colored unavoidably by the particular intensity of the feeling associated with our English use of the words. Now, one great difficulty in translating is to find words that even as to mere logical elements correspond to the original text. Even _that_ is often a trying problem. But to find also such words as shall graduate and adjust their depth of feeling to the scale of another language, and that language a dead language, is many times beyond all reach of human skill.] and evidently to me it had been the intention of the early church to throw a deep pall of mystery over its extent--charity, that unique charity which belongs to Christianity, as being the sole charity ever preached to men, which 'hopeth all things,' inclined through every age the hearts of musing readers to suspend their verdict where the Scriptures had themselves practised some reserve, and (were it only by the extreme perplexity of its final and revised expressions) had left an opening, if not almost an invitation, to doubt. The doubt was left by the primitive church where Scripture had left it. There was not any absolute necessity that this should ever be cleared up to man. But it was felt from the very first that some call was made upon the church to explain and to harmonize the apparently contradictory expressions used in what may be viewed as

the official report of the one memorable domestic tragedy in the infant stage of the Christian history. Official I call it, as being in a manner countersigned by the whole confederate church, when proceeding to their first common act in filling up the vacancy consequent upon the transgression of Judas, whereas the account of St. Matthew pleaded no authority but his own. And domestic I call the tragedy, in prosecution of that beautiful image under which a father of our English church has called the twelve apostles, when celebrating the paschal feast, 'the family of Christ.' [Footnote: for the reader must not forget that the original meaning of the Latin word familia was the sum total of the famuli. Hence, whenever it is said in an ancient classic that such or such a man had a large family, or that he was kind to his family, or was loved by his family, always we are to understand not at all his wife and children, but the train and retinue of his domestic slaves. Now, the relation of the Apostles to their Master, and the awfulness of their dependency upon him, which represented a golden chain suspending the whole race of man to the heavens above, justified, in the first place, that form of expression which should indicate the humility and loyalty that is owned by servants to a lord; whilst, on the other hand, the tenderness involved in the relations expressed by the English word family, redressed what would else have been too austere in the idea, and recomposed the equilibrium between the two forces of reverential awe and of childlike love which are equally indispensable to the orbicular perfection of Christian duty.]

This early essay of the church to harmonize the difficult expressions employed in the Acts of the Apostles--an essay which, therefore, recognises at once the fact that these expressions really were likely to perplex the simple-hearted, and not merely such readers as systematically raised cavils--was brought forward in the earliest era of the church, and under the sanction of the very highest authority, viz., by one who sat at the feet of the beloved apostle; by one, therefore, who, if he had not seen Christ, had seen familiarly him in whom Christ most confided. But I will report the case in the words of that golden-mouthed rhetorician, that Chrysostom of the English Church, from whose lips all truth came mended, and who, in spite of Shakespeare himself, found it possible

'To gild refined gold, to paint the lily.
And add another perfume to the violet.'

The following is the account given by Jeremy Taylor of the whole history, in so far as it affects the Scripture report of what Judas did, and what finally he suffered:--'Two days before the passover, the Scribes and Pharisees called a council to contrive crafty ways [Footnote: Otherwise, it must naturally occur to every reader--What powers could Judas furnish towards the arrest of Jesus beyond what the authorities in Jerusalem already possessed? But the bishop suggests that the dilemma was this:--By day it was unsafe to seize him, such was the veneration of the populace for his person. If done at all, it must be done during the darkness. But, precisely during those hours, Christ withdrew into solitudes known only to his disciples. So that to corrupt one of these was the preliminary step to the discovery of that secret.] of destroying Jesus, they

not daring to do it by open violence. Of which meeting, when Judas Iscariot had notice (for those assemblies were public and notorious) he ran from Bethany, and offered himself to betray his Master to them, if they would give him a considerable reward. They agreed for thirty pieces of silver.' In a case so memorable as this, nothing is or can be trivial; and even that curiosity is not unhallowed which has descended to inquire what sum, at that era of Jewish history, this expression might indicate. The bishop replies thus:--'Of what value each piece was, is uncertain; but their own nation hath given a rule, that, when a piece of silver is named in the Pentateuch, it signifies a sicle; if it be named in the Prophets, it signifies a pound; if in the other writings of the Old Testament, it signifies a talent.' For this, besides other less familiar authority, there is cited the well-known Arius Montanus, in the Syro-Chaldaic dictionary. It is, however, self-evident that any service open to Judas would have been preposterously overpaid by thirty talents, a sum which exceeded five thousand pounds sterling. And since this particular sum had originally rested on the authority of a prophet, cited by one of the evangelists,[Footnote: Viz., St. Matthew. Upon which the bishop notices the error which had crept into the prevailing text of Jeremias instead of Zecharias. But in the fourth century, some copies had already corrected this reading; which, besides, had a traditional excuse in the proverbial saying that the spirit of Jeremiah had settled and found a resting-place in Zecharias.] 'it is probable,' proceeds the bishop, 'that the price at which Judas sold his lord was thirty pounds weight of silver [that is, about ninety guineas sterling in English money]--a goodly price for the Saviour of the world to be prized at by his undiscerning and unworthy countrymen.' Where, however, the learned writer makes a slight oversight in logic, since it was not precisely Christ that was so valued--this prisoner as against the certain loss of this prisoner--but simply this particular mode of contending with the difficulty attached to his apprehension, so that, in the worst case, this opportunity lost might be replaced by other opportunities; and the price, therefore, was not calculated as it would have been under one solitary chance.

The bishop then proceeds with the rehearsal of all the circumstances connected with the pretended trial of Christ; and coming in the process of his narrative to the conduct of Judas on learning the dreadful turn which things were taking (conduct which surely argues that he had anticipated a most opposite catastrophe), he winds up the case of the Iscariot in the following passage--'When Judas heard that they had passed the final and decretory sentence of death upon his Lord, he, who thought not it would have gone so far, repented him to have been an instrument of so damnable a machination, and came and brought the silver which they gave him for hire, threw it in amongst them, and said, 'I have sinned in betraying the innocent blood.' But they, incurious of those hell-torments Judas felt within him, because their own fires burned not yet, dismissed him.' I pause for a moment to observe that, in the expression, 'repented him to have been an instrument,' the context shows the bishop intending to represent Judas as recoiling from the issue of his own acts, and from so damnable a machination, not because his better feelings were evoked, as the prospect of ruin to his Master drew near, and that he shrank from that same thing when taking a definite shape of fulfilment, which he had faced cheerfully when at a distance--not at all: the bishop's meaning is--that Judas recoiled from his own acts at the very instant when he began to

understand their real consequences now solemnly opening upon his horror-stricken understanding. He had hoped, probably, much from the Roman interference; and the history itself shows that in this he had not been at all too sanguine. Justice has never yet been done to the conduct of Pilate. That man has little comprehended the style and manner of the New Testament who does not perceive the demoniac earnestness of Pilate to effect the liberation of Christ, or who fails to read the anxiety of the several evangelists to put on record his profound sympathy with the prisoner. The falsest word that ever yet was uttered upon any part of the New Testament, is that sneer of Lord Bacon's at 'jesting Pilate.' Pilate was in deadly earnest from first to last, and retired from his frantic effort on behalf of Christ, only when his own safety began to be seriously compromised. Do the thoughtless accusers of Pilate fancy that he was a Christian? If not, why, or on what principle, was he to ruin himself at Rome, in order to favor one he could not save at Jerusalem? How reasonably Judas had relied upon the Roman interference, is evident from what actually took place. Judas relied, secondly, upon the populace, and that this reliance also was well warranted, appears from repeated instances of the fear with which the Jewish rulers contemplated Christ. Why did they fear him at all? Simply, as he was backed by the people: had it not been for their support, Christ was no more an object of terror to them than his herald, the Baptist. But what I here insist on is (which else from some expressions the reader might fail to understand), that Jeremy Taylor nowhere makes the mistake of supposing Judas to have originally designed the ruin of his Master, and nowhere understands by his 'repentance' that he felt remorse on coming near to consequences which from a distance he had welcomed. He admits clearly that Judas was a traitor only in the sense of seeking his Master's aggrandizement by methods which placed him in revolt against that Master, methods which not only involved express and formal disobedience to that Master, but which ran into headlong hostility against the spirit of all that he came on earth to effect. It was the revolt, not of perfidious malignity, but of arrogant and carnal blindness. In respect to the gloomy termination of the Iscariot's career, and to the perplexing account of it given in the Acts of the Apostles, the bishop closes his account thus:--'And Judas went and hanged himself; and the judgment was made more notorious and eminent by an unusual accident at such deaths; for he so swelled, that he burst, and his bowels gushed out. But the Greek scholiast and some others report out of Papias, St. John's scholar, that Judas fell from the fig-tree, on which he hanged, before he was quite dead, and survived his attempt somewhat; being so sad a spectacle of deformity and pain, and a prodigious tumor, that his plague was deplorable and highly miserable; till at last he burst in the very substance of his trunk, as being extended beyond the possibilities [Footnote: Quaere, whether the true reading is not more probably 'p_a_ssibilities,' i.e., liabilities to suffering.] and capacities of nature.'

In this corrected version of Papias, we certainly gain an intelligible account of what otherwise is far from intelligible, viz., the falling headlong. But all the rest is a dismal heap of irrationalities; and the single ray of light which is obtained, viz., the suggestion of the fig-tree as an elevation, which explains the possibility of a headlong fall, is of itself an argument that some great disturbance must have happened to the text at this point, else how could so material a circumstance have silently dropped

out of the narrative? There are passages in every separate book of the canon, into which accident, or the somnolence of copyists, has introduced errors seriously disturbing the sense and the coherence. Many of these have been rectified in the happiest manner by ingenious suggestions; and a considerable proportion of these suggestions has been since verified and approved by the discovery of new manuscripts, or the more accurate collation of old ones. In the present case, a much slighter change than might be supposed will suffice to elicit a new and perfect sense from the general outline of that text which still survives. First, as to the phrase '_fell headlong_', I do not understand it of any fall from a fig-tree, or from any tree whatever. This fig-tree I regard as a purely fanciful resource; and evidently an innovation to this extent ranks amongst those conjectural audacities which shock the discreet reader, as most unsatisfactory and licentious, because purely gratuitous, when they rest upon no traces that can be indicated as still lurking in the present text. '_Fell headlong_' may stand as at present: it needs no change, for it discloses a very good and sufficient sense, if we understand it figuratively as meaning that he came to utter and unmitigated ruin, that his wreck was total, for that, instead of dedicating himself to a life of penitential sorrow, such as would assuredly have conciliated the divine forgiveness, the unhappy criminal had rushed out of life by suicide. So far, at least, all is sound and coherent, and under no further obligations to change small or great, beyond the reading '_that_', in a metaphorical sense, which, if read (as hitherto) in a literal sense, would require the very serious interpolation of an imaginary fig-tree.

What remains is equally simple: the change required involves as little violence, and the result from this change will appear equally natural. But a brief preliminary explanation is requisite, in order to place it advantageously before the reader. The ancients use the term '_bowels_' with a latitude unknown generally to modern literature, but especially to English literature. In the midst of the far profounder passion which distinguishes the English from all literatures on the modern European continent, it is singular that a fastidious decorum never sleeps for a moment. It might be imagined that this fastidiousness would be in the inverse ratio of the passion: but it is not so. In particular the French, certainly the literature which ranges at the lowest elevation upon the scale of passion, nevertheless is often homely, and even gross, in its recurrences to frank elementary nature. For a lady to describe herself as laughing '_a gorge deployee_', a grossness which with us, equally on the stage or in real life, would be regarded with horror, amongst the French attracts no particular attention. Again, amidst the supposed refinements of French tragedy, and not observe the coarser tragedy of Corneille, but amidst the more feminine and polished tragedy of Racine, there is no recoil at all from saying of such or such a sentiment, '_Il me perce les entrailles_'--it penetrates my bowels. The Greeks and Romans still more extensively use the several varieties of expression for '_the intestines_', as a symbolic phraseology for the domestic and social affections. We English even, fastidious as we are, employ the term bowels as a natural symbolization for the affections of pity, mercy, or parental and brotherly affection. At least we do so in recurring to the simplicities of the scriptural style. But, amongst the Romans, the word '_viscera_' is so naturally representative of the household affections, that at length it becomes necessary to recall an English

reader to the true meaning of this word. Through some physiological prejudice, it is true that the bowels have always been regarded as the seat of the more tender and sorrowing sympathies. But the *_viscera_* comprehended *_all_* the intestines, or (as the French term them) *_les entrailles_*. The heart even is a *_viscus_*; perhaps in a very large acceptation the brain might be regarded as a co-*_viscus_* with the heart. There is very slight ground for holding the brain to be the organ of thinking, or the heart of moral sensibilities, more than the stomach, or the bowels, or the intestines generally. But waive all this: the Romans designated the seat of the larger and nobler (*_i.e._*, the moral) sensibilities indifferently by these three terms: the *_pectus_*, *_the pr cordia_*, and the *_viscera_*; as to the *_cor_*, it seems to me that it denoted the heart in its grosser and more animal capacities: 'Molle meum levibus *_cor_* est violabile relis;' it was the seat of sexual passion; but nobler and more reflective sensibilities inhabited the *_pectus_* or *_pr cordia_*; and naturally out of these physiologic preconceptions arose corresponding expressions for wounded or ruined sensibilities. We English, for instance, insist on the disease of *_broken heart_*, which Sterne, in a well-known passage, postulates as a malady not at all less definite than phthisis, or podagra, though (as he says) not formally recognised in the bills of mortality. But it is evident that a theory which should represent the *_viscera_* as occupied by those functions of the moral sensibilities which *_we_* place in the central *_viscus_* of the heart, must, in following out that hypothesis, figure the case of these sensibilities when utterly ruined under corresponding images. Our 'broken heart' will therefore to them become ruptured *_viscera_*, or *_pr cordia_* that have burst. To burst in the middle, is simply to be shattered and ruined in the *_central_* organ of our sensibilities, which is the heart; and in saying that the *_viscera_* of Iscariot, or his middle, had burst and gushed out, the original reporter meant simply that his heart had broke. That was precisely his case. Out of pure anguish that the scheme which he meant for the sudden glorification of his Master, had recoiled (according to all worldly interpretation) in his utter ruin; that the sudden revolution, through a democratic movement, which was to raise himself and his brother apostles into Hebrew princes, had scattered them like sheep without a shepherd; and that superadded to this common burden of ruin he personally had to bear a separate load of conscious disobedience to God and insupportable responsibility; naturally enough out of all this he fell into fierce despair; his heart broke; and under that storm of affliction he hanged himself. Here, again, all clears itself up by the simple substitution of a figurative interpretation for one grossly physical. All contradiction disappears; not three deaths assault him, viz., suicide, and also a rupture of the intestines, and also an unintelligible effusion of the viscera; but simply suicide, and suicide as the result of that despondency which was figured under the natural idea of a broken heart. The incoherences are gone; the contradictions have vanished; and the gross physical absurdities, which under mistranslation had perplexed the reverential student, no longer disfigure the Scriptures.

Looking back to the foot-note on the oriental idea of the *_hakim_*, as a mask politically assumed by Christ and the evangelists, under the conviction of its indispensableness to the free propagation of Christian philosophy, I am induced, for the sake of detaining the reader's eye a little longer upon a matter so important in the

history of Christianity, if only it may be regarded as true, to subjoin an extract from a little paper written by myself heretofore, but not published. I may add these two remarks, viz., first, that the attribution to St. Luke of this medical character, probably had its origin in the simple fact, that an assumption made by all the evangelists, and perhaps by all the apostles, had happened to attract more attention in him from merely local causes. One or two of the other apostles having pursued their labors of Propagandism under the avowed character of hakims, many others in the same region would escape special notice in that character, simply because, as men notoriously ready to plead it, they had not been challenged to do so by the authorities; whilst others, in regions where the government had not become familiar with the readiness to plead such a privilege as part of the apostolic policy, would be driven into the necessity of actually advancing the plea, and would thus (like St. Luke) obtain a traditional claim to the medical title which in a latent sense had belonged to all, though all had not been reduced to the necessity of pleading it. Secondly, I would venture to suggest, that the Therapeutae, or healers, technically so called, who came forward in Egypt during the generation immediately succeeding to that of Christ, were neither more nor less than disguised apostles to Christianity, preaching the same doctrines essentially as Christ, and under the very same protecting character of hakims, but putting forward this character perhaps more prominently, or even retreating into it altogether, according to the increasing danger which everywhere awaited them from the hostile bigotry of expatriated Jews, as they gradually came to understand the true and anti-national views of those who called themselves Christians, or Nazarenes, or Galileans.

In short, abstracting altogether from the hatred to Christ, founded on eternal principles of the enmity between the worldly and the spiritual, and looking only to the political uneasiness amongst magistrates which accompanied the early footsteps of Christianity, one may illustrate it by the parallel feelings which in our own generation, amongst the Portuguese, for instance, have dogged the movements of free-masonry. We in England view this panic as irrational: and amongst ourselves it would be so; for British free-masonry conceals nothing worse than it professes. But, on the Continent, it became a mask for shrouding any or every system of anti-social doctrine, or, again, for playing into the hands of treason and conspiracy. There was always in the first place a reasonable fear of secret and perilous doctrines--Communism, for instance, under some modification, or rancorous Jacobinism. And secondly, suppose that for the present, or in the existing stage of the secret society, there really were no esoteric and mischievous doctrine propagated, there was at any rate the custom established of meeting together in secret, of corresponding by an alphabet of conventional signals, and of acting by an impenetrable organization, always applicable to evil purposes, even where it might not originally have been so applied. The machinery which binds together any secret society, as being always available for evil ends, must inevitably justify some uneasiness in all political authorities. And, under those circumstances, the public jealousy must have operated against the free movement of early Christianity: nothing could have disarmed it, except some counter-principle so managed, as to insure that freedom of public meetings which opened the sine qua non channel for the free propagation of religious truth. Such a counter-force was brought into play by Christ on that day when first he offered

himself to Judea as a _hakim_, or popular physician. Under the shelter of that benign character, at one blow he overthrew an obstacle that would else infallibly have frozen the very element in which only any system of novel teaching could attempt to move. Most diseases were by the Jews invested with more or less of a supernatural character; and in no department of knowledge was the immediate illumination from above more signally presumed than in the treatment of diseases. A physician who was thus divinely guided in the practice of his art was a _debtor_ to God and to his fellow-men for the adequate application of so heavenly a gift. And, if _he_ could not honorably withdraw from the mission with which God had charged him, far less could politicians and magistrates under any allegation of public inconveniences presume to obstruct or to make of none effect the sublime mysteries of art and sagacity with which the providence of God had endowed an individual for the relief of suffering humanity; the _hakim_ was a debtor to the whole body of his afflicted countrymen: but for that very reason he was also a creditor; a creditor entitled to draw upon the amplest funds of indulgence; and privileged to congregate his countrymen wherever he moved. Here opened suddenly a broad avenue to social intercourse, without which all communication for purposes of religious teaching would have been sealed against Christ. As a _hakim_, Christ obtained that unlimited freedom of intercourse with the populace, which, as a religious proselytizer, he never could have obtained. Here, therefore, and perhaps by the very earliest exemplification of the serpent's wisdom and foresight engrafting itself upon the holy purposes of dovelike benignity, Christ kept open for himself (and for his disciples in times to come) the freedom of public communication, and the license of public meetings. Once announcing himself, and attesting his own mission as a _hakim_, he could not be rejected or thwarted as a public oracle of truth and practical counsel to human weakness. This explains, what else would have been very obscure, the undue emphasis which Christ allowed men to place upon his _sanatory_ miracles. His very name in Greek, viz., ἰατροῦς, presented him to men under the idea of the _healer_; but then, to all who comprehended his secret and ultimate functions, as a healer of unutterable and spiritual wounds. That usurpation, by which a very trivial function of Christ's public ministrations was allowed to disturb and sometimes to eclipse far grander pretensions, carried with it so far an erroneous impression. But then, on the other hand, seventy-fold it redeemed that error, by securing (which nothing else could have secured) the benefit of a perpetual passport to the _religious_ missionary: since, once admitted as a medical counsellor, the missionary, the _hakim_, obtained an _unlimited_ right of intercourse. If medical advice, why not religious advice? And subsequently, by the continuance of the same _medical_ gifts to the apostles and their successors, all exercised the same powers, and benefited by the same privileges as _hakims_.

ON HUME'S ARGUMENT AGAINST MIRACLES.

[1839.]

Hume's argument against miracles is simply this:--Every possible event, however various in its degree of credibility, must, of necessity, be more credible when it rests upon a sufficient cause lying within the field of what is called nature, than when it does not: more credible when it obeys some mechanical cause, than when it transcends such a cause, and is miraculous.

Therefore, assume the resistance to credibility, in any preternatural occurrence, as equal to x , and the very ideal or possible value of human testimony as no more than x , in that case, under the most favorable circumstances conceivable, the argument for and against a miracle will be equal; or, expressing the human testimony by x , affected with the affirmative sign $[+x]$; and expressing the resistance to credibility on the other side of the equation, by x , affected with the negative sign $[-x]$, the two values will, in algebraical language, destroy each other, and the result will be $= 0$.

But, inasmuch as this expresses the value of human testimony in its highest or ideal form, a form which is never realized in experience, the true result will be different,--there will always be a negative result $[-y]$; much or little according to the circumstances, but always enough to turn the balance against believing a miracle.

'Or in other words,' said Hume, popularizing his argument, 'it will always be more credible that the reporter of a miracle should tell a falsehood, or should himself have been the dupe of appearances, than that a miracle should have actually occurred--that is, an infraction of those natural laws (any or all) which compose what we call experience. For, assume the utmost disinterestedness, veracity, and sound judgment in the witness, with the utmost advantage in the circumstances for giving full play to those qualities; even in such a case the value of affirmative testimony could, at the very utmost, be equal to the negative value on the other side the equation: and the result would be, to keep my faith suspended in equilibrio. But in any real case, ever likely to come before us, the result will be worse; for the affirmative testimony will be sure to fall in many ways below its ideal maximum; leaving, therefore, for the final result a considerable excess to the negative side of the equation.

SECTION II.

OF THE ARGUMENT AS AFFECTED BY THE COVERT LIMITATIONS UNDER WHICH IT IS PRESENTED.

Such is the Argument: and, as the first step towards investigating its sanity and its degree--its kind of force, and its quantity of force, we must direct our attention to the following fact, viz., that amongst three separate conditions under which a miracle (or any event whatever) might become known to us, Hume's argument is applied only to one. Assuming a miracle to happen (for the possibility of a miracle is of course left open throughout the discussion, since any argument against that would at once foreclose every question about its communicability),--then it might happen under three several sets of circumstances, in relation to our consciousness. 1st, It might happen in the presence of a single

witness--that witness not being ourselves. This case let us call Alpha. 2dly, It might happen in the presence of many witnesses,--witnesses to a vast amount, but still (as before) ourselves not being amongst that multitude. This case let us call _Beta._ And 3dly, It might happen in our own presence, and fall within the direct light of our own consciousness. This case let us call _Gamma._

Now these distinctions are important to the whole extent of the question. For the 2d case, which is the actual case of many miracles recorded in the New Testament, at once cuts away a large body of sources in which either error or deceit could lurk. Hume's argument supposes the reporter of the miracle to be a dupe, or the maker of dupes--himself deluded, or wishing to delude others. But, in the case of the thousands fed from a few loaves and small fishes, the chances of error, wilful or not wilful, are diminished in proportion to the number of observers; [Footnote: 'In proportion to the number of observers.'--Perhaps, however, on the part of Hume, some critical apologist will say--'Doubtless he was aware of that; but still the reporters of the miracle were few. No matter how many were present, the witnesses for us are but the Evangelists.' Yes, certainly, the Evangelists; and let us add, all those contemporaries to whom the Evangelists silently appealed. These make up the 'multitude' contemplated in the second case.] and Hume's inference as to the declension of the affirmative _x_, in relation to the negative _x_, no longer applies, or, if at all, with vastly diminished force. With respect to the 3d case, it cuts away the whole argument at once in its very radix. For Hume's argument applies to the _communication_ of a miracle, and therefore to a case of testimony. But, wherever the miracle falls within direct personal cognizance, there it follows that no question can arise about the value of human testimony. The affirmative _x_, expressing the value of testimony, disappears altogether; and that side of the equation is possessed by a new quantity (viz., ourselves--our own consciousness) not at all concerned in Hume's argument.

Hence it results, that of three possible conditions under which a miracle may be supposed to offer itself to our knowledge, two are excluded from the view of Hume's argument.

SECTION III.

WHETHER THE SECOND OF THESE CONDITIONS IS NOT EXPRESSLY NOTICED BY HUME.

It may seem so. But in fact it is not. And (what is more to the purpose) we are not at liberty to consider it any accident that it is not. Hume had his reasons. Let us take all in proper order: 1st, that it seems so; 2dly, that in fact it is not so; and 3dly, that is no accident, but intentional.

1st. Hume seems to contemplate such a case, the case of a miracle witnessed and attested by a multitude of persons, in the following imaginary miracle which he proposes as a basis for reasoning. Queen Elizabeth, as every body will remember who has happened to read Lord Monmouth's Memoirs, died on the night between the last day of 1602 and the first day of 1603: this could not be forgotten by

the reader, because, in fact, Lord M., who was one of Her Majesty's nearest relatives (being a younger son of her first cousin Lord Hunsdon), obtained his title and subsequent preferment as a reward for the furious ride he performed to Edinburgh (at that time at least 440 miles distant from London), without taking off his boots, in order to lay the earliest tidings of the great event at the feet of her successor. In reality, never did any death cause so much posting day and night over the high roads of Europe. And the same causes which made it so interesting has caused it to be the best dated event in modern history; that one which could least be shaken by any discordant evidence yet discoverable. Now, says Hume, imagine the case, that, in spite of all this chronological precision--this precision, and this notoriety of precision--Her Majesty's court physicians should have chosen to propagate a story of her resurrection. Imagine that these learned gentlemen should have issued a bulletin, declaring that Queen Elizabeth had been met in Greenwich Park, or at Nonsuch, on May-day of 1603, or in Westminster, two years after, by the Lord Chamberlain when detecting Guy Faux--let them even swear it before twenty justices of the peace; I for one, says Hume, am free to confess that I would not believe them. No, nor, to say the truth, would we; nor would we advise our readers to believe them.

2dly. Here, therefore, it would seem as if Hume were boldly pressing his principles to the very uttermost--that is, were challenging a miracle as untenable, though attested by a multitude. But, in fact, he is not. He only seems to do so; for, if no number of witnesses could avail anything in proof of a miracle, why does he timidly confine himself to the hypothesis of the queen's physicians only coming forward? Why not call in the whole Privy Council?--or the Lord Mayor and Common Council of London--the Sheriffs of Middlesex--and the Twelve Judges? As to the court physicians, though three or four nominally, virtually they are but one man. They have a common interest, and in two separate ways they are liable to a suspicion of collusion: first, because the same motives which act upon one probably act upon the rest. In this respect, they are under a common influence; secondly, because, if not the motives, at any rate the physicians themselves, act upon each other. In this respect, they are under a reciprocal influence. They are to be reasoned about as one individual.

3dly. As Hume could not possibly fail to see all this, we may be sure that his choice of witnesses was not accidental. In fact, his apparent carelessness is very discreet management. His object was, under the fiction of an independent multitude, to smuggle in a virtual unity; for his court physicians are no plural body in effect and virtue, but a mere pleonasm and a tautology.

And in good earnest, Hume had reason enough for his caution. How much or how little testimony would avail to establish a resurrection in any neutral [Footnote: By a neutral case is meant, 1st, one in which there is no previous reason from a great doctrine requiring such an event for its support, to expect a resurrection; 2dly, a case belonging to a period of time in which it is fully believed that miraculous agency has ceased.] case few people would be willing to pronounce off-hand, and, above all, on a fictitious case. Prudent men, in such circumstances, would act as the judges in our English courts, who are always displeased if it is attempted to elicit their opinions upon a point of law by a proposed fiction. And very reasonably;

for in these fictitious cases all the little circumstances of reality are wanting, and the oblique relations to such circumstances, out of which it is that any sound opinion can be formed. We all know very well what Hume is after in this problem of a resurrection. And his case of Queen Elizabeth's resurrection being a perfectly fictitious case, we are at liberty to do any one of three different things:--either simply to refuse an answer; or, 2dly, to give such an answer as he looks for, viz., to agree with him in his disbelief under the supposed contingency; without, therefore, offering the slightest prejudice to any scriptural case of resurrection: i. e., we might go along with him in his premises, and yet balk him of his purpose; or, 3dly, we might even join issue with him, and peremptorily challenge his verdict upon his own fiction. For it is singular enough, that a modern mathematician of eminence (Mr. Babbage) has expressly considered this very imaginary question of a resurrection, and he pronounces the testimony of seven witnesses, competent and veracious, and presumed to have no bias, as sufficient to establish such a miracle. Strip Hume's case of the ambiguities already pointed out--suppose the physicians really separate and independent witnesses--not a corporation speaking by one organ--it will then become a mere question of degree between the philosopher and the mathematician--seven witnesses? or fifty? or a hundred? For though none of us (not Mr. Babbage, we may be sure) seriously believes in the possibility of a resurrection occurring in these days, as little can any of us believe in the possibility that seven witnesses, of honor and sagacity (but say seven hundred) could be found to attest such an event when not occurring.

But the useful result from all this is, that Mr. Hume is evidently aware of the case Beta, (of last Sect.) as a distinct case from Alpha or from Gamma, though he affects blindness: he is aware that a multitude of competent witnesses, no matter whether seven or seven hundred, is able to establish that which a single witness could not; in fact, that increasing the number of witnesses is able to compensate increasing incredibility in the subject of doubt; that even supposing this subject a resurrection from the dead, there may be assigned a quantity of evidence (x) greater than the resistance to the credibility. And he betrays the fact, that he has one eye open to his own Jesuitism by palming upon us an apparent multitude for a real one, thus drawing all the credit he can from the name of a multitude, and yet evading the force which he strictly knew to be lodged in the thing; seeking the reputation of the case Beta, but shrinking from its hostile force.

SECTION IV.

OF THE ARGUMENT AS AFFECTED BY A CLASSIFICATION OF MIRACLES.

Let us now inquire whether Hume's argument would be affected by the differences in miracles upon the most general distribution of their kinds.

Miracles may be classed generally as inner or outer.

I. The inner, or those which may be called miracles for the

individual, are such as go on, or may go on, within the separate personal consciousness of each separate man. And it shows how forgetful people are of the very doctrines which they themselves profess as Christians, when we consider, on the one hand, that miracles, in this sense, are essential to Christianity, and yet, on the other hand, consider how often it is said that the age of miracles is past. Doubtless, in the sense of external miracles, all such agencies are past. But in the other sense, there are distinct classes of the supernatural agency, which we are now considering; and these three are held by many Christians; two by most Christians; and the third by all. They are

a.--_Special Providences:_ which class it is that many philosophic Christians doubt or deny.

b.--_Grace:_ both predisposing [by old theologians called _prevenient_] and effectual.

c.--_Prayer considered as efficacious._

Of these three we repeat, that the two last are held by most Christians: and yet it is evident that both presume a supernatural agency. But this agency exists only where it is sought. And even where it _does_ exist, from its very nature (as an _interior_ experience for each separate consciousness) it is incommunicable. But that does not defeat its purpose. It is of its essence to be incommunicable. And, therefore, with relation to Hume's great argument, which was designed to point out a vast _hiatus_ or inconsistency in the divine economy--'Here is a miraculous agency, perhaps, but it is incommunicable: it may exist, but it cannot manifest itself; which defect neutralizes it, and defeats the very purpose of its existence'--the answer is, that as respects these interior miracles, there is no such inconsistency. They are meant for the private forum of each man's consciousness: nor would it have met any human necessity to have made them communicable. The language of Scripture is, that he who wishes experimentally to know the changes that may be accomplished by prayer, must pray. In that way only, and not by communication of knowledge from another, could he understand it as a practical effect. And to understand it not practically, but only in a speculative way, could not meet any religious wish, but merely an irreligious curiosity.

As respects one great division of miraculous agency, it is clear, therefore, that Hume's argument does not apply. The arrow glances past: not so much missing its aim as taking a false one. The _hiatus_ which it supposes, the insulation and incommunicability which it charges upon the miraculous as a capital oversight, was part of the design: such mysterious agencies were _meant_ to be incommunicable, and for the same reason which shuts up each man's consciousness into a silent world of its own--separate and inaccessible to all other consciousnesses. If a communication is thrown open by such agencies between the separate spirit of each man and the supreme Spirit of the universe, then the end is accomplished: and it is part of that end to close this communication against all other cognizance. So far Hume is baffled. The supernatural agency is incommunicable: it ought to be so. That is its perfection.

II. But now, as respects the other great order of miracles--viz.,

the external, first of all, we may remark a very important subdivision: miracles, in this sense, subdivide into two most different orders--1st, Evidential miracles, which simply prove Christianity. 2d, Constituent miracles, which, in a partial sense, are Christianity. And, perhaps, it may turn out that Hume's objection, if applicable at all, is here applicable in a separate way and with a varying force.

The first class, the evidential miracles, are all those which were performed merely as evidences (whether simply as indications, or as absolute demonstrations) of the divine power which upheld Christianity. The second class, the constituent miracles, are those which constitute a part of Christianity. Two of these are absolutely indispensable to Christianity, and cannot be separated from it even in thought, viz., the miraculous birth of our Saviour, and his miraculous resurrection. The first is essential upon this ground--that unless Christ had united the two natures (divine and human) he could not have made the satisfaction required: not being human, then, indeed, he might have had power to go through the mysterious sufferings of the satisfaction: but how would that have applied to man? It would have been perfect, but how would it have been relevant? Not being divine, then indeed any satisfaction he could make would be relevant: but how would it have been perfect? The mysterious and supernatural birth, therefore, was essential, as a capacitation for the work to be performed; and, on the other hand, the mysterious death and consequences were essential, as the very work itself.

Now, therefore, having made this distinction, we may observe, that the first class of miracles was occasional and polemic: it was meant to meet a special hostility incident to the birth-struggles of a new religion, and a religion which, for the very reason that it was true, stood opposed to the spirit of the world; of a religion which, in its first stage, had to fight against a civil power in absolute possession of the civilized earth, and backed by seventy legions. This being settled, it follows, that if Hume's argument were applicable in its whole strength to the evidential miracles, no result of any importance could follow. It is clear that a Christianized earth never can want polemic miracles again; polemic miracles were wanted for a transitional state, but such a state cannot return. Polemic miracles were wanted for a state of conflict with a dominant idolatry, It was Christianity militant, and militant with childlike arms, against Paganism triumphant. But Christianity, in league with civilization, and resting on the powers of this earth allied with her own, never again can speak to idolatrous man except from a station of infinite superiority. If, therefore, these evidential miracles are incommunicable as respects their proofs to after generations, neither are they wanted.

Still it will be urged--Were not the miracles meant for purposes ulterior to the transitional state? Were they not meant equally for the polemic purpose of confuting hostility at the moment, and of propping the faith of Christians in all after ages? The growing opinion amongst reflecting Christians is, that they were not: that the evidential miracles accomplished their whole purpose in their own age. Something of supernatural agency, visibly displayed, was wanted for the first establishment of a new faith. But, once established, it was a false faith only that could need this external support. Christianity could not unroot itself now, though every

trace of evidential miracle should have vanished. Being a true religion, once rooted in man's knowledge and man's heart, it is self-sustained; it never could be eradicated.

But, waiving that argument, it is evident, that whatever becomes of the evidential miracles, Christianity never can dispense with those transcendent miracles which we have called constituent,--those which do not so much demonstrate Christianity as are Christianity in a large integral section. Now as to the way in which Hume's argument could apply to these, we shall reserve what we have to say until a subsequent section. Meantime, with respect to the other class, the simply evidential miracles, it is plain, that if ever they should be called for again, then, as to them, Hume's argument will be evaded, or not, according to their purpose. If their function regards an individual, it will be no just objection to them that they are incommunicable. If it regards a multitude or a nation, then the same power which utters the miracle can avail for its manifestation before a multitude, as happened in the days of the New Testament, and then is realized the case Beta of Sect. II, And if it is still objected, that even in that case there could be no sufficient way of propagating the miracle, with its evidence, to other times or places, the answer must be,--

1st. That supposing the purpose merely polemic, that purpose is answered without such a propagation.

2dly. That, supposing the purpose, by possibility, an ulterior purpose, stretching into distant ages, even then our modern arts of civilization, printing, &c., give us advantages which place a remote age on a level with the present as to the force of evidence; and that even the defect of autopsy may be compensated by sufficient testimony of a multitude, it is evident that Hume himself felt, by his evasion in the case of the imaginary Elizabethan miracle proposed by himself.

RECAPITULATION.

Now let us recapitulate the steps we have made before going on to the rest.

We have drawn into notice [Sect. II.] the case Beta,--overlooked by Hume in his argument, but apparently not overlooked in his consciousness,--the case where a multitude of witnesses overrules the incommunicability attaching to a single witness.

2dly. We have drawn into notice the class of internal miracles,--miracles going on in the inner economy of every Christian's heart; for it is essential to a Christian to allow of prayer. He cannot be a Christian if he should condemn prayer; and prayer cannot hope to produce its object without a miracle. And to such miracles Hume's argument, the argument of incommunicability, is inapplicable. They do not seek to transplant themselves; every man's personal experience in this respect is meant for himself alone.

3dly. Even amongst miracles not internal, we have shown--that if one class (the merely evidential and polemic) are incommunicable, i.e. not capable of propagation to a remote age or place, they have sufficiently fulfilled their immediate purpose by their

immediate effect. But such miracles are alien and accidental to Christianity. Christ himself reproved severely those who sought such signs, as a wicked, unbelieving generation; and afterwards he reproved, with a most pathetic reproach, that one of his own disciples who demanded such a sign. But besides these evidential miracles, we noticed also,

4thly. The constituent miracles of Christianity; upon which, as regarded Hume's argument, we reserved ourselves to the latter section: and to these we now address ourselves.

But first we premise this

Lemma:--That an Ä priori (or, as we shall show, an a posteriori) reason for believing a miracle, or for expecting a miracle, will greatly disturb the valuation of x (that is, the abstract resistance to credibility), as assumed in Hume's argument. This is the centre in which we are satisfied, lurks that ? which Hume himself suspected: and we add, that as a vast number of witnesses (according to a remark made in Sect. II.) will virtually operate as a reduction of the value allowed to x, until x may be made to vanish altogether,--so in the reverse order, any material reduction of value in x will virtually operate exactly as the multiplication of witnesses; and the case Alpha will be raised to the case Beta.

This Lemma being stated as a point of appeal in what follows, we proceed to

SECTION V.

ON HUME'S ARGUMENT, AS AFFECTED BY THE PURPOSE.

This topic is so impressive, and indeed awful, in its relation to Christianity, that we shall not violate its majesty by doing more than simply stating the case. All the known or imagined miracles that ever were recorded as flowing from any Pagan origin, were miracles--1, of ostentation; 2, of ambition and rivalry; 3, expressions of power; or, 4, were blind accidents. Not even in pretence were any of them more than that. First and last came the Christian miracles, on behalf of a moral purpose. The purpose was to change man's idea of his own nature; and to change his idea of God's nature. Many other purposes might be stated; but all were moral. Now to any other wielder of supernatural power, real or imaginary, it never had occurred by way of pretence even, that in working miracles he had a moral object. And here, indeed, comes in the argument of Christ with tremendous effect--that, whilst all other miracles might be liable to the suspicion of having been effected by alliance with darker agencies, his only (as sublime moral agencies for working the only revolution that ever was worked in man's nature) could not be liable to such a suspicion; since, if an evil spirit would lend himself to the propagation of good in its most transcendent form, in that case the kingdom of darkness would be 'divided against itself.'

Here, then, is an a posteriori reason, derived from the whole

subsequent life and death of the miracle-worker, for diminishing the value of x according to the Lemma.

SECTION VI.

ON THE ARGUMENT OF HUME AS AFFECTED BY MATTERS OF FACT.

It is a very important axiom of the schoolmen in this case--that, a posse ad esse non valet consequentia, you can draw no inference from the possibility of a thing to its reality, but that, in the reverse order, ab esse ad posse, the inference is inevitable: if it is, or if it ever has been--then of necessity it can be. Hume himself would have admitted, that the proof of any one miracle, beyond all possibility of doubt, at once lowered the x of his argument (i.e. the value of the resistance to our faith) so as to affect the whole force of that argument, as applying to all other miracles whatever having a rational and an adequate purpose. Now it happens that we have two cases of miracles which can be urged in this view: one a posteriori, derived from our historical experience, and the other a priori. We will take them separately.

1. The a priori miracle we call such--not (as the unphilosophic may suppose) because it occurred previously to our own period, or from any consideration of time whatever, but in the logical meaning, as having been derived from our reason in opposition to our experience. This order of miracle it is manifest that Hume overlooked altogether, because he says expressly that we have nothing to appeal to in this dispute except our human experience. But it happens that we have; and precisely where the possibilities of experience desert us. We know noth

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