

THE
COLLECTED WORKS
OF
THEODORE PARKER,

MINISTER OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH CONGREGATIONAL
SOCIETY AT BOSTON, U S

CONTAINING HIS
THEOLOGICAL, POLEMICAL, AND CRITICAL WRITINGS.
SERMONS, SPEECHES, AND ADDRESSES,
AND LITERARY MISCELLANIES.

EDITED BY
FRANCES POWER COBBE.

VOL. I.

A DISCOURSE OF MATTERS PERTAINING TO RELIGION.

LONDON :
TRÜBNER & CO., 60, PATERNOSTER ROW.
1863.

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OF

MATTERS PERTAINING TO RELIGION.

BY

THEODORE PARKER.

"If an offence come out of the Truth, better is it that the offence come, than the Truth
be concealed"—JEROME.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE present volume forms the first of a series intended to include all the published Works of Theodore Parker. A second volume will be issued immediately, containing his "Ten Sermons of Religion," and "Prayers."

The drawing from which the Frontispiece is taken was executed by Saulini in Rome in the spring of 1859, a few months before Mr Parker's death.

F. P. C.

Belgrave House,

Durdnam Down, Bristol.

“It is perhaps God’s will that we should be taught in this our day, among other precious lessons, not to build up our faith upon a book, though it be the Bible itself, but to realize more truly the blessedness of knowing that He, Himself, the Living God, our Father and Friend, is nearer and closer to us than any book can be,—that His voice within the heart may be heard continually by the obedient child that listens for it, and that *that* shall be our Teacher and Guide in the path of duty, which is the path of life, when all other helpers -- even the words of the best of Books—may fail us.” --*The Pentateuch critically examined, by the Right Rev. J. W. Colenso, D.D., Bishop of Natal.*

PREFACE

BY THE EDITOR.

THE progress of religious belief, from a lesser to a more enlightened stage, is carried on apparently by a series of waves of thought, which sweep over the minds of men at distant intervals. There are periods of comparative calm and stagnation, and then times of gradual swelling and upheaving of the deep, till some great billow slowly rears its crest above the surface higher and still higher to the last; when, with a mighty convulsion, amid foam and spray, and "noise of many waters," it topples over and bursts in thunder up the beach, bearing the flood-line higher than it had ever reached before. A great national reformation has been accomplished.

In the eyes of those who have watched intelligently the signs of the times, it seems that some such wave as this is even now gathering beneath us, a broader and a deeper wave than yet has ever arisen. No partial and temporary rippling of the surface is it now, but the whole mass of living thought seems slowly and steadily upheaved, and the ocean is moved to its depths. Such a phenomenon, if true, bears the highest promise ever held out to humanity, and we cannot but hail it with faith and joy, conscious that the sudden uprising of even the purest reforming sect, carrying us forward for the moment with earthquake violence, would afford no such reason for hopeful confidence in the future.

But this universal upheaving of thought, along with its vast promise of good, brings with it also forebodings of changes which it is impossible to contemplate without grave anxiety. When *this* wave breaks, if break it will, it will reach a point which has never been disturbed hitherto, and in whose conservation or engulfment some of the most sacred interests of the human race are concerned. The old temple of Traditional

Religion, the religion which rests primarily on external evidence of certain supernatural events, stands front to front with the advancing waters, and needs must bear the whole force of their incalculable weight. Already the venerable fane in which our fathers worshipped so long, seems menaced with destruction, while one after another its bulwarks and corner-stones are sapped and submerged, and the sands on which it is built are shifting on every side. In the judgment of many its doom seems inevitable, unless not merely some partial lull and subsidence of the waves takes place, but the whole tide of human thought for ages turns back and sets in an opposite direction.

These solemn forebodings are not unnaturally scorned by those whose trust in the old creed has remained hitherto undisturbed. Every man's peculiar Church must needs be to *his* mind "founded on a rock," and impregnable to "the gates of hell." But to others equally naturally the creed they have themselves found untenable seems sure to prove in the end untenable to all who bring to its examination equal freedom and earnestness, and they note how as years go on every advance in philosophy and every discovery in science seems to bear in one and the same direction. Looking back over a few decades, the change in the state of all controversies on religion becomes remarkable, and the wild raids of professed "infidels" and timid attacks of latitudinarians in past times were found to be superseded by an orderly and resolute invasion, all the more formidable that the hostile bands approach from the most opposite quarters. It seems to be but a question of time, when the leaguer will be complete, and after outposts and trenches have fallen one by one into the hands of the enemy, the old towers themselves will fall, undermined by a deeper philosophy than their builders knew, and shattered by shot and shell from every cohort in the camp of knowledge. Underground, there works the ever-progressing conviction that a supernatural revelation, miracles, prophecies, infallible books, and infallible churches, are things *in themselves* nearly, if not utterly, incredible. And overhead there hurtle in the air (so fast that we can scarce note them as they pass) the missiles from every battalion of science, striking deadly blows wherever they can be brought to bear on the defences of the supposed revelation. The astronomy, the geology, the chronology, and ethnology of our time have at least *seemed* always to contradict, and never to corroborate, the Book which is yet claimed

to come directly from the Great Author of Nature; and instead of external authentications and internal verifications of its various parts, every critical explorer brings us back new specimens of anachronisms, contradictions, and difficulties without number, till the authorship and date of all the more important histories are involved in hopeless obscurity. Everywhere and on all sides the results of inquiry are the same, or if now and then the besieged regain with much shouting some vantage ground too lightly claimed by the enemy, they are soon driven back from whole lines of trenches in another direction. Though books appear every month to assure us that "Scripture and science" are "not at variance," and that the "Testimony of the Rocks" is in favour of the Mosaic Cosmogony; yet the urgency with which the asseveration is reiterated and the wildness of the hypotheses to which their authors have recourse to reconcile what ought to require no reconciliation, leave us an impression the direct contrary to that which they intend. Why are there, we ask, no volumes pouring from the press, corresponding to the rapid stream of advancing knowledge, and calling on us to observe "triumphant verifications of Scripture from the recent discoveries" in this, that, or the other science? It is certainly not for lack of will that no such books are written, or written only to bring corroboration to histories no more doubted than that of Thucydides.

The truth is, after all, simple enough. Those grand and noble books which make up the Bible and constitute the "Great Sheaf" in the whole harvest of human thought, even those books cannot be weighed in the balance, or measured by the standard of God's omniscience. Call them human and fallible, and they seem *almost* divine. But call them divine and infallible, and seek to find in them that knowledge of nature which, when they were written, only Nature's God possessed, and we do them wrong and despite, and obscure all their rightful claims to admiration. Nay, to try them as even historically accurate, *according to our philosophy of history*, is an injustice and anachronism. It is an anachronism to expect that men, who in the very extreme of their piety and reverence attributed every remarkable occurrence, every thunder-storm, or victory, or cure of disease, or wise legislation, or composition of noble poetry, to direct Divine interposition—men to whom secondary causes were nothing and first causes everything, should, in the capacity of historians, supply us with statements of facts unrefracted by

the coloured media of their imaginations; and detail for our cautious scepticism evidences which they never dreamed of requiring for their own simple-minded and ever ready belief. And passing beyond the Bible to the creeds of the churches, we find it equally impracticable to fit the thoughts of one age into the faith of another. The theological scheme which men composed when they believed the earth to be a plane, the centre of the universe, finds no place for itself in our modern cosmology, and the tremendous drama supposed to have been acted on that mighty stage, before the appalled and gazing Hosts of Heaven, becomes inconceivable played upon our little planet, one of the smallest of the many worlds revolving round one of the millions of suns of the unknown myriads of starry clusters. Modern Astronomy has not so much contradicted isolated statements in the Hebrew Scriptures as left the whole Nicene Theology without standing-room.

In every direction it would seem as if the battle of Traditionalism were lost, nor will the one great compromise offered by its noblest defenders suffice to save it. It will not be enough to abandon the infallibility of sacred books, and claim only Divine Inspiration and perfection for the moral and spiritual part of Christianity. Divinely true, divinely perfect as is much of that moral and spiritual part; *there* also the human and the fallible are to be found, and weightier than the blows which are struck at either the philosophy or the science of the Bible are those directed against doctrines offensive to the conscience and paralyzing to the heart. Nor are these morally objectionable doctrines only matters of unimportance and detail, such as Old Testament stories and precepts of earlier ages, corrocted afterwards by a purer teaching. The deepest denial of all rises from the heart of humanity against fundamental dogmas, whose elimination from Christianity would almost identify it with Theism—the dogmas of the Fall, the Atonement, a Personal Devil, and an Eternal Hell.

So wide and vast is this upheaving wave of thought of which we have spoken, that other traditional creeds beside Christianity seem simultaneously threatened by its advance. Mahometanism is visibly running out the last sands of its existence; Judaism itself is undergoing a change; and the vast faith of India, whose origin is lost in the night of time, will probably before another century is over have fallen to rise no more. Not from *external* causes are these and the other religions of the East

perishing away. The outward energies at work against them, the European missions and efforts at proselytism, are almost ludicrously inefficient to move a feather of their gigantic weight. But from *within* the change everywhere appears; the old life is gone, a new one is gradually arising, and that not by the formation of purer sects,¹ but by the gradual enlightenment of the masses. Now, this vast movement throughout the world may *possibly* be of a more transitory nature than it now appears. The wave by which we are ourselves upborne is hardly in our power to measure aright, and it may be within the compass of events that it may subside ere long, leaving things everywhere nearly as they have been in the centuries gone by. In particular, as regards Christianity and the English branch thereof, it may be that all that is true in modern criticism and philosophy may be capable of adaptation, in ways we see not now, to its fundamental ideas; and the Church, by enlarging its formularies, may be found capable of absorbing them all, and arising with renewed life like a giant refreshed. These things *may* be so, we say, but it must be admitted that it is hard for us to see how any such reconciliation can take place. The tendency observable is all the other way. At the very utmost, so vast a modification of the popular creed must in such case ensue, as to render it hardly recognizable by its present adherents, while the interval of transition must be one of danger and difficulty, almost equal to that of the entire destruction of the old and reconstruction of a new belief. To enable men to pass through such transition with safety, an independent standing ground for faith in God and duty would be as needful as in the case of the most complete cataclysm and reformation.

But if the contrary prove true, if (as to all human prevision seems most probable) it be found impossible to achieve any compromise between the old and the new, then it is clear that a catastrophe of vast importance is inevitably approaching. The Churches of Christendom, and above all the Protestant Churches, have hitherto stood upon the honest belief of intelligent men. Whatever hypocrisy or pious frauds may at

¹ A remarkable exception, however, is the extension of the "Brahmo Somaj," or "Church of the One God," in Bengal, founded by Rammohun Roy, and now numbering 14 branch churches, holding the purest Theistic Creed, and applying it with noble energy to the moral progress of the nation, to the obliteration of caste, the instruction of the lower orders, and the elevation of woman.

any time have been used for their support, we are persuaded they have hurt rather than helped them. But if the time ever come when this state of things can go on no longer, when there must be a defect either in the honesty or the intelligence of the adherents of the Churches, then a fatal change will pass over them. The tree whose root is dead, or whose stem is hollow, may continue to put forth leaves for a few years, but it must wither at last. The symptoms of such approaching decay in the Christian Churches will doubtless follow in natural sequence; and the refusal of the higher class of minds to adopt the ministry as a profession will be succeeded rapidly by the further and further depreciation of the mental status of the Church, and by a growing public sense of its hollowness and incapacity to meet the problems of the age. When this deteriorating process has reached a certain length, all the public and private interests involved in the Churches' conservation, all the vast *vis inertia* of such an institution, so long solidly established on English soil, and rooted alike in English prejudices and English sacred affections—all these securities, so often quoted as guaranteeing its immutable maintenance, must give way at last and fail. There is no durable foundation for a religion whatsoever, save the sincere belief of its adherents.

If these things be true of Traditional Christianity, then, as we have said, a solemn catastrophe is slowly, but surely, approaching. The great Ship which has been the Ark of humanity so long, and which even now unfurls its sails so proudly to the winds, that great and noble ship is, perhaps, in our own time settling slowly down and sinking under the waters of an unfathomable sea. A mournful and a terrible sight it would be, were we not assured that all the souls it bears are for ever safe, and that all its freight of precious truths will float up again with unerring safety, even from the forgotten depths of time.

The task of him who would most essentially benefit his race in a time like this, must be to prepare men to meet unharmed the inevitable future. He must supply them with a faith which will remain undisturbed when the great change arrives.

The perils of finding ourselves standing alone without a God to love or a law to obey, while the frail structure of the creed of our youth fell around us, like a tent on Lebanon, before the blast of the storm—these perils may be known to many of us, and happy are they who have survived them in full

spiritual and moral life. Happy are they who slowly and painfully have built up stone by stone for themselves from the foundation a shelter for their souls; who have begun perchance with naught, save the resolution

“ I will be just and wise and mild,
Since in me lies such power,”

and then have found that in the hard struggles of the higher self after victory over temptation, they have become conscious that there was ONE present at the fight—One who could aid them with Almighty help, “strengthening them with might by His Spirit in the inner man”—One who when the battle was done would take His soldier to an eternal home. Happy are they who have learned such things; but *they* know best through what dangers they have passed, and to which they were consigned by the teachers who bade them hold by a creed full of contradictions and difficulties, or else abandon all hope that God would hear their prayers. To them, above all, it will seem terrible that the masses of men, the uneducated, the over-tried sons of toil, should have to pass through such perils; not one by one as now, but, as it may soon be, by thousands and millions, enhancing all each others’ difficulties, and liable to the most fearful aberrations. In view of such a cataclysm, many would fain, with cowardly hearts, strive to put off the evil day and keep away from men’s minds all such questions. But it is not in their hands to do so. The tide cannot be stopped by any Canute’s decree. It is the great divinely-ordered progress of thought which has brought us to this pass, and we may take courage from the knowledge that He who caused it will guide us through. We must not, dare not, doubt that it will be to a larger, higher, purer truth the human race is being led onward; and that that truth is *safer* even than all the well-tried errors of the past. The old Ragnarok, the “Twilight of the Gods,” in which our heathen forefathers believed, may be coming now; but there will be a glorious sunrise afterwards. The true “Ages of Faith” are not behind us, but before.

The task, then, as we have said, of the religious teacher of our time, is to prepare and strengthen men for the future; to give them such faith in God and reverence for His law, *independently* of traditional creeds, as shall avail when these creeds are overwhelmed. He must enable every man to say with the brave Bishop of Natal, “I should tremble at the results of my

inquiries, were it not that I believe firmly in a God of righteousness and truth and love. Should all else give way beneath me, I feel that His everlasting arms are still under me. *That* truth I see with my spirit's eyes, once opened to the light of it, as plainly as I see the sun in the heavens; and that truth, more or less distinctly apprehended, has been the food of living men, the strength of brave souls that yearn for light, and battle for the right and true, the support of struggling and sorrow-stricken hearts, in all ages of the world, in all climes, under all religions." The lesson for ever repeated by Christian teachers that, save within the shadow of their churches, no prayer can be offered with hope of acceptance on high—that false and fatal lesson must be disproved and for ever discarded. The very opposite teaching must be given,—that in the solemn search for truth, to which every strong soul must sooner or later betake itself, the help of God, regarded as simply the **LORD OF TRUTH**, and not the Patron of this or that theological system, is the one thing needful for our success. When we most of all *want* God's spirit to guide us, and God's law to keep us in that path of duty wherein alone the mental eye is unclouded, we shall not then be left to lament that we have lost them hopelessly. We shall rather find, on the contrary, with relief indescribable, that the hands from which the fetters have fallen for ever are those which rise the most freely in supplication to heaven. Our teacher must do this for us, he must accomplish the task which Rénan lays down as the especial one of our age, "Transporter la religion par delà le surnaturel, séparer la cause à jamais triomphante de la religion, de la cause perdue du miracle."¹ In a word, the teacher whom we need must find for us the true foundation of faith, and must build thereon a fortress within, and behind the old tottering walls of tradition, so that whensoever these may crumble and fall the souls of men may dwell secure, viewing the ruin around them without dismay, while their faith in God and in His righteous law remains undisturbed for ever. Thus shall that teacher prove himself a Preserver and Renovator of Faith, a **BUILDER**, not a Destroyer. Incidentally, and to make his work secure, he must needs dig deep and clear away much rubbish; but he does it for the purpose of restoration. The destructives are his antagonists, who would fain leave humanity with no faith, save the one which all their efforts can never repair, and

¹ La Chaire d'Hebreu au Collège de France. Par Ernest Rénan, p. 30.

who for its maintenance would deprive us of that reliance on conscience and the religious sentiment whereon alone the ultimate ground of *any* faith, even of their own, is to be found.

While contemplating, however, the noble task which might belong to such a teacher as we have supposed, we are arrested by a singular difficulty which it is clear would meet him from the side of those who ought naturally to be his allies. The wide-spread upheaving of thought of which we have spoken has brought out, along with its great and deep benefits, a phase of feeling which may now be traced pervading the higher order of minds of all nominal sections of opinion, orthodox no less than heterodox. Beside the counter-revolution of those who hold tenaciously by the past in proportion as they perceive it to be slipping away from them; beside the far more deplorable error of those who in every religious reformation of the world make an advancing creed the pretext for a retrograde morality; beside all these, there exists a class of minds who have impatiently carried beyond the limits of reason the tendencies of the age, who have abandoned, not only a definite faith, but the hopes of finding any definite faith whatever. Very great and very true is the impression which has been felt in our day of the mystery which surrounds human life on all sides, of the fallibility of all human knowledge, and of the ineffable, impenetrable Majesty of that awful Being whose nature our forefathers presumed to parcel out and analyze as a chemist might do the water or the air. We no longer look on the different creeds of the world, as the martyrs did of old, as being absolutely true or absolutely false, the service of God himself or of the Devil himself. We perceive them to be only steps upward in an infinite ascent, only the substitution for a lower of a higher but still all imperfect ideal of the Holy One. Doubtless we are nearer to the true judgment now. Doubtless also it was well that of old, in the days of the stake and the rack, men should have seen these things differently, for few indeed could have borne to die clearly discerning their persecutors to be only partially mistaken in their own creed; the creed for which they were enduring torture and agony,—only one of the thousand “little systems” of earth

“Which have their day, and cease to be,”

a “broken light” from the inaccessible Sun of Truth. If a

few sublime Socratic souls might have been found contented thus to bear all things sooner than renounce that one ray of purer light which had been granted to them, yet never could ordinary men and timid women, the rank and file of the army of martyrs, have fought the good fight under such banners. It was needful for them to discern in outward objective dogmas a distinction of good and evil, which in truth existed subjectively in the fidelity or unfaithfulness of their own souls to such light as they possessed. For them our modern breadth of thought would have seemed culpable latitudinarianism, and our habit of pouring the new wine of our own ideas into the old bottles of sacred formulae a mockery and a snare. Ignatius and Polycarp, Latimer and Hooper, would have bitterly despised the alchemy which can "distil Astral Spirits out of dead churches," and find something in Paganism and something in Popery transmutable at will into Christianity and Protestantism. But we in our day have reached a different pass. We seem to have quitted the region of light and darkness, truth and falsehood, and to have come to a land

"Where it is always afternoon."

There is among the highest order of minds a disposition to accept finally a condition which may be designated as one of reverential scepticism. They doubt not only whether any true religious creed has yet been found, but whether a mind penetrated with due modesty should seek to find one. While the age vaunts itself of being peculiarly one of religious earnestness, it has thus come to pass that it is peculiarly one of religious despair. We have ceased to think that a great intellect can possess a great faith.

A sort of direful fashion has set in to praise whatever seems vaguest in doctrine and weakest in faith, as if *therefore* it were necessarily wisest and most philosophic. We look distrustfully on any one who has not dissolved away in some mental crucible all solid belief in a Personal God, and a conscious immortality into certain fluid and gaseous ideas of Eternities and Immensities. We assume it contentedly as proven that the "limitations of religious thought" make it as hopeless for us to find a faith which will keep alive our souls as an elixir *vite* to keep alive our bodies. We wander to and fro hopelessly through the wilderness of doubt, and if any come to tell us of a land flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lauds,

which they have found beyond, we dismiss them with a complacent sigh, even if they bring back from their Canaan the noblest fruits.

There is surely great error in this state of feeling. Though infallible knowledge is not for man, though we have neither faculties to receive it nor language to convey it, yet it is far indeed from established, that our powers fall short of attaining such a share of knowledge of Divine things as may suffice for the primary wants of our souls. We need such knowledge for the higher part of our nature, as much as we need bread and clothing for the lower. It is the greatest want of the greatest creature, and if it indeed have no supply, then is the analogy of the universe broken off. There is a presumption of incalculable force, that these cravings which arise in the profoundest depths of our souls, which we can never put away, and on which all our moral health depends, are not to be for ever denied their natural satisfaction, while the ravens are fed and the grass of the field drinks in the dew. We have, indeed, asked hitherto for too much. We have called for whole systems of theology, dissecting with blasphemous audacity the mysteries of our awful Maker's nature and attributes. We have cried like children for the moon of an unattainable infallibility. But because these things are denied us, are we therefore to despair of knowing those fundamental truths which we must either gain or else morally and spiritually die? It would be to assume the main point in question, to argue that a Father in Heaven must needs make Himself and His righteous law known to His children. But it is a simple induction from the order of the universe, to conclude that the soul of man is not the only thing left without its food, its light, its guide, its sole-sufficing end and aim.

If, then, it be not improbable that a religion is to be found supplying us with such knowledge, but on the contrary, a thing to be predicted from man's nature and the order of the world; then, he who comes forward to tell us he has found this needful knowledge is not to be hastily dismissed as a dreamer. His special faith may be true or false, but some such faith as his is what we have to look for with well-grounded hope of success.

It is in this light, then, as a teacher of those cardinal truths of religion which are needful for our souls' higher life—those truths which we have reason to trust are within our powers to

know,—as a builder up of faith—that faith which will remain unshaken upon the rock of human nature itself, when time shall have levelled every edifice built on the shifting sands of tradition; it is thus that Theodore Parker claims to be heard.

A few brief words concerning his doctrines and his life may, perhaps, be useful, by enabling the reader hitherto unacquainted with his writings to apprehend their bearings more perfectly. These writings, however, are so clear and honest, and that noble life was so simple in its absolute devotion to its holy purpose, that small space will suffice to speak for both.

There are four bases logically possible for a religion,—a living inspired Head, an infallible Church, an authoritative Book, an individual Consciousness. Of these four, Parker chose the last, leaving such creeds as Mormonism and Lamaism on the first, Romanism on the second, Calvinism on the third, and scores of intermediate churches shifting illogically between all four. The reasons for his rejection of the first three bases of religion are set forth at length in his writings, as also for his reliance on the veracity of Consciousness, corroborated for the individual by the consciousness of the wise and good of all ages.¹

Standing on this ground of Consciousness, he preached the great doctrine of Theism, the ABSOLUTE GOODNESS OF GOD. Every man is conscious of revering and loving certain moral characteristics, and of hating and despising certain others. Here, then, we find the assurance that He who made us to feel such reverence on one side and such contempt on the other,

¹ It is, perhaps, needful to guard against the accusation so constantly reiterated against the adherents of Consciousness as a basis of religious faith, that they *actually* stand on the lessons of Christianity, while *professedly* disavowing their authority. The truth is, that the hypothesis of Darwin (whether true or false, as regards the genesis of animal species) very aptly represents the natural history of the various creeds of mankind. Each one rises out of another, which chronologically preceded it—the strongest and noblest types being the parents of offspring, which reproduce in still higher forms their special excellencies. He who would pretend in our day to stand free from all obligations to Christianity, would boast as absurdly as he who should deny his obligations to his parents, his ancestors, and all the antecedents of his family and nation. But, in like manner, he who thinks that St John could have written his Gospel without a Plato before him, or St Paul his Epistles without a Zeno, would think also that Newton might have written the Principia had no Pythagoras or Euclid preceded him. Consciousness, as a basis of theology, is *strengthened*, not discredited, by every evidence that the greatest saints and sages of all time have corroborated its truths. The highest philosophy asks no man to *originate or invent* the truths of theology, but only when such truths are presented to him in any mode, to possess the consciousness of their veracity.

is Himself all that He has caused us to revere and love, and never has been or can be aught that by the constitution of our nature we hate or despise. The difference between the characters ascribed to God by traditional creeds and by Theism lies in this, that the traditional creeds, though attributing every *epithet* of honour to Him, yet in effect neutralize them all by delineations of His dealings with mankind wholly at variance with the natural sense of such epithets, insomuch that the words "Good" and "Merciful," when applied to God, have often come to bear as conventional a sense as the titles of honour appropriated to the petty royalties of earth. Theism, on the contrary, confessedly rests its conception of the Divine character on such consciousness as He has Himself given us of what is Good and Just. This consciousness is as yet all imperfect and incomplete. God must be *more* good than our conception of goodness, as the heavens are higher than the earth. But *so far as it goes*, our consciousness is true, and *negatively* it must be absolutely true. God's character—could all its awful splendours be revealed to us, God's dealings with His creatures—could all their scope and purport from eternity to eternity be unveiled before our eyes, might never bear one blot or contain one act which in our heart of hearts we could regard as cruel or unjust,—nay, that we could fail to adore as infinitely good and merciful.

Thus Theism teaches that God is absolutely, infinitely, eternally good, *in our sense of goodness*; not good only to angels, Jews, and Christians,—a few elect out of a lost world; not good only in Time, and tremendous in the Day of Wrath, when Time shall be no more,—but good to all, good for ever, able and willing to bring back every creature He has made to be folded at last in His eternal love.

And in the most awful of all mysteries, the mystery of Sin and its forgiveness, this same Absolute Goodness of God is our hope and our refuge. We need no other, and (as Channing said well) "a broader and a surer the universe cannot supply." Theism teaches that God, the Just Ruler, must punish sin, but it also assures us that God, the Good One, can only do so in the highest love. In His government, Retribution and Correction are one and the same. The sins of a finite being—finite in number and graduated in degree—are necessarily finite also, and deserving of finite retribution. The sins of a creature of God, made by Him in His own image, are necessarily capable

of correction and susceptible of final purification. The repentant sinner seeks the restoration of his soul to the peace of Divine love, but he leaves the punishment of his offences to God's wisdom and God's justice. No "substitute" can ever bear it for him, no "conversion" of his own can evade it. The doom of sin is not an infinite *risk* with a large margin for escape. It is the *certainty* of a complete, albeit finite, retribution.

In God, the "Parent of Good, Almighty," we have both parents in One. All the power and care and forethought and inexorable loving severity which we attribute to the Fatherly character is fulfilled in Him. And all the inexhaustible forgiving love and tenderness which a mother's heart reveals, is His also. Like a father, He supplies our bodily wants and the spiritual food for the higher needs of our souls. Like a mother, He bestows on us the flowers and fruits of earth and all the thousand innocent joys, which are needless for mere existence, but are given to make us happy, to win our hearts to confidence and thankfulness. Too long has the Catholic Church separated off this *Mother Side* of Deity into another object of worship; and more fatal still has been the error of the Reformed Churches, who in rejecting the Madonna, have rejected all that she imaged forth of the Divine mansuetude and tenderness. God is Himself and alone (as Parker often rightly addressed Him in his prayers) "THE FATHER AND MOTHER OF THE WORLD." Theism bids us adore Him with the mingled sentiments of reverence and love due to both relations. Nay, it bids us behold in His sole ineffable Unity all that men have dimly shadowed out in the creeds of the past, the "Lord of Light," the "Mover" of all things, the "Greatly Wise Lord," the "All-Father," the "Eternal One," and, above all, the triune God of Christendom, the God who in Himself alone is to us Creating, Redeeming, and Sanctifying God.

Such is the first great doctrine of Theism, THE ABSOLUTE GOODNESS OF GOD.

And the second is like it and flows out of it.

God is ever present in the souls of His creatures. He presides over and governs the world of matter, and He is no less present and active in the world of spirit. As He influences and constrains unconscious matter, so He inspires and helps free and conscious man. There is but one *kind* of inspiration possible, albeit many *degrees* thereof. It is the action of the

Highest on the souls of His creatures, affording moral help through the conscience, and spiritual light through the intellect. We call the first *Grace*, the second *Inspiration*, but they are one and the same; "the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"—the power by which we are "strengthened with might by God's Spirit in the inner man." This Divine action cannot be accidental or miraculous, but normal and universal as gravitation itself; the most natural of all things, a fact implied in the relation of the Father of Spirits to His children; of the Creator to the creature which lives and moves and has its being in Him.

This is the second great doctrine of Theism, THE IMMANENCE OF GOD IN THE SOUL, or, in other words, the normal character of Inspiration. It is the key-stone of Parker's peculiar theology, and from it he deduced all his further propositions.

Thirdly, Inspiration being natural and universal, it is a thing of all nations and ages. *Every* good and perfect gift has come down from the Father of Lights, whether it was bestowed three thousand years ago or to-day, in Palestine or England. It was a real inspiration of God which taught Isaiah and Paul; and we may accept all their holy words which touch our consciences and kindle our piety as being truly God's teaching, worthy of all reverence and love. And it was also a real inspiration which taught Plato and Milton; and whatever words of theirs were great and holy, and touch our consciences and kindle our piety, they also we may take as God's teaching with reverence and love.

"The same great Inspiration through all the ages roll'd,
Breaking through Moses' tawdry lips and Plato's mouth of gold."

Thus the world is not robbed of its Divine Scriptures, but *every* good and true and helpful book becomes for us a Divine Scripture.

Fourthly, Inspiration is limited by the capacity and by the faithfulness of the souls which receive it. "As we draw nigh to Him so He draws nigh to us," said Seneca. As the soul is large by nature and education, so large can its inspiration be. "The cup of ocean is full as the harebell." But none can be infallibly, universally, absolutely inspired. Perfect inspiration could be received only by perfect beings fulfilling absolutely all the laws of mind and morals. In man there must always remain somewhat merely human, personal, fallible. The light

which comes pure from the Sun of Truth is refracted as it enters the atmosphere of our thoughts, and receives from it colours of all kinds—doubly refracted when it is reproduced in human language. There is somewhat of Divine and somewhat of human in the noblest thoughts and words of man. As God aids him morally by His grace, and yet never makes him *impeccable*, so He aids him intellectually by inspiration, yet never makes him *infallible*. Thus all the limitations and errors of the Bible are explained without either destroying its value or forcing us to do violence to reason and our moral instincts; they are recognized as the human element which inevitably blended with the Divine. And thus also is it explained how he, who of all the human race most perfectly fulfilled the conditions under which inspiration is granted to man; he, the best beloved of all the sons of God, whose coming was to the life of humanity what regeneration is to the life of the individual, may have erred concerning many things, concerning demoniacs, and the end of the world, and the prophecies he connected with himself, and yet may have spoken, on the Mount of Olives and by the well-side of Samaria, the deepest truths God ever taught to His creatures; lessons as immediately Divine as any voice of thunder from the sky could have proclaimed.

Fifthly, From the universality of Inspiration, Parker deduced the corollary of the trustworthiness of all facts of consciousness, which can be shown to be common to the human race under normal conditions of development. Such truths are necessarily given to the consciousness by Divine aid, they are written on the soul of man by that hand which writes no falsehood.

Thus, our Moral Intuitions are Divine. They reveal to us the immutable and eternal laws which are resumed in the righteous will of God, and which He has taught to His rational creatures, that through voluntary obedience to them we may attain to the highest end of our being, even an eternal approach to holiness and to Himself.

And the idea of an Immortal Life is Divine. It is a fact of consciousness given in the nature of man, and appearing under every circumstance of race and creed and age. We may trust to it as God's implanting, the promise of a world wherein our ideal of God's goodness, so often tried with

mysteries of evil and sin and suffering here, will be fulfilled and overpassed beyond our highest dreams.

Sixthly and lastly, From the doctrine that God is for ever present and active in the souls of His creatures, it follows that it is possible for man to obtain communion with Him at all times. Prayer (for spiritual blessings) is no self-acting delusion. It is a real drawing nigh of the soul to God. There *is* "One who heareth prayer," and who is ever near us waiting to hear and bless it. The relation between the creature and the Creator, unconscious in the material part, and at best a dim sympathy in the intellectual love of truth and the æsthetic sense of beauty, becomes conscious and vivid in the moral and spiritual when the will of man bows itself freely before the will of God, and the finite and infinite spirits meet in the awful communion of intense Prayer. It is the most sacred of all mysteries,—the most solemn thing in all man's life, the greatest reality of his existence. The help and light to be gained through such prayer is a natural thing, not a miraculous one. We do not ask God to change His laws, but to fulfil them. It is the law of spirit, that as we draw to Him so He draws to us. The magnetic bar which has lost its power, regains it when we hang it in the plane of the meridian. The plant which was sickly, weak, and white, growing in the shade, acquires health and verdure in the sunshine. If we bring our pale, faded souls within the rays of God's warmth we may say with confidence, "Heal us, O Father! for we *know* that it is Thy will."

The creed which we have now summed up so briefly has few articles :

AN EVER PRESENT GOD WHO IS ABSOLUTELY GOOD

A MORAL LAW WRITTEN IN THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF MAN.

THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

THE REALITY OF SPIRITUAL PRAYER.

This is the entire theology of Theodore Parker. It contains no doctrines of a Fall, an Incarnation, a Trinity, an Atonement, a Devil, or a Hell,—no Original Sin, and no Imputed Righteousness. Its Morality is summed up in the Two Great Commandments of the Law, and its "Theory of Reconciliation" in the parable of the "Prodigal Son."

To this religion, at once spiritual and rational, Parker gave the name of THEISM,—a name antithetic to Atheism alone, and comprehensive of every worshipper of God; a name not understood,

like the elder Deism, to signify the exclusion of Christianity, but the inclusion of it in one great Absolute Religion.

Theism differs thus, on the one hand, from all such Atheistic, Pantheistic, or Deistic systems as either tell us that there is no God, or that He is an Impersonal Power, or that He is a Great First Cause removed from all reach of human prayers. All such systems as these, even such as admit the existence of God and assume the name of Religions, yet eliminate from religion that which is its vital element—the belief in a real intercourse of prayer and assistance, of repentance and forgiveness, of obedience and guidance, between man and God.

And Theism differs, on the other hand, from all such Christian creeds as profess to tell us of an ever present God, yet affirm all our certain knowledge of Him to be derived from the evidence of tradition concerning long past supernatural events. All such creeds, while admitting a spiritual intercourse between God and the soul, distort and trammel such intercourse by false and unnatural representations of our relation to Him, and by setting at variance the emotions of piety and the dictates of reason. Thus while the popular creed (albeit nourishing in its disciples the purest spirituality) opposes itself continually to their intellects and moral instincts, and Pantheism and Deism (albeit professedly meeting the claims of the intellect and moral instincts) exclude spirituality—the religion which Parker taught combines all that is noblest in both systems,—the spirituality which springs from belief in a real intercourse between God and the soul, and the intellectual and moral harmony of a creed confessedly founded on human consciousness.

In so far as it can be proved to do this, in so far does Parker's creed command our highest consideration, for it is precisely to the union of a Rational and a Spiritual faith that the hopes of men are directed now in a manner hitherto unknown. We have learned, at last, to recognize that the Intellect is a Divine gift, even as the Religious Feelings are Divine gifts, and that it is not only a senseless but an *impious* endeavour to sacrifice the one for the other. And, on the other hand, we have learned that a conscious communion between man and God is the essence of religion, and that any creed which excludes it,—be it never so philosophic in all beside,—is of less value than any creed which enables men to attain it,—be it

never so poor and irrational in all beside. Thus then, for religion's own sake, we ask for an intellectual faith; and for all the dearest interests of the soul, we ask that that intellectual faith shall ratify the spiritual part of our religion. Hitherto, with the exception of a few philosophers, men have commonly sought and found in their traditional creeds the means of attaining such spirituality as they desired, and have been content to give up reason for their sakes. Every religion, perhaps, has enabled some of its votaries to attain to a real intercourse with God, and, like the churches of Latin and Copt, Greek and Maronite, clustered around the Holy Sepulchre, each *opens into* the true sanctuary, which not one of them all can claim as its own, or monopolize for itself. But for us, in our time, it has come to pass that there is no entrance possible into the fane, save through the vestibule of a creed which shall preserve inviolate all the rights of the intellect and the moral instincts. When we have found *this* way to the Holy Place, we may press forward with God's saints of every age and creed, even into the innermost shrine of a conscious communion with Him. When we have arrived *there*, even the way we came will become indifferent.

Such then, in brief, is the Theology expounded in these volumes. Parker never claimed for it, and none will claim for him, that it is a perfect system, absolutely true and complete in all its parts. Such things are not for man, and the sooner we dismiss the pretenders to them the better. It will still be the best and wisest of existing theologies if it afford us a chart of the great ocean of thought, to be more and more fully filled up by explorers for ages to come, and yet sufficient now to enable us to steer our barks to the haven. We believe that there are signs enough within the churches, and without them, to justify the anticipation that such a theology will do a noble work; that those who have abandoned all existing creeds in despair, will be able here to find a reasonable and a welcome faith; and that it will legitimize to their own minds the aspirations of thousands more, who are yet within the pale of traditionalism, but daily find that it is the THEISM IN CHRISTIANITY which is their bread of life; and that all beyond is a difficulty and a stumblingblock. Reville says well, "Pour nous aussi, au moment où les édifices et les traditions séculaires menacent de s'écrouler, quand on se demande avec anxiété

s'ils n'écraseront pas sous leurs décombres et ceux qui les ébranlent et ceux qui les défendent, un homme tel que Parker est un prophète de consolation et d'espérance."¹

In the hope that thus it may prove, these Works of Theodore Parker are published in England.

The chief interest of these books is, of course, a theological one; and to discourses immediately directed to that subject, the first three volumes of the present series are devoted. It was, however, a leading principle of their author, that religion was no concern for the church and sabbath-day alone, but for all the pursuits and affairs of man. Accordingly, we find him applying his faith to every good work which his hand found to do. In his own pulpit, and over the whole country, he laboured to arouse the consciences of his countrymen to their national sins, their unjust wars, their unrighteous politics, the miseries of the poor, the degradation of women, and above all, the one monster crime of slavery, from which America is now purging herself through seas of blood. Among the sermons and lectures he delivered on these topics, three volumes of the present series have been arranged as Discourses of Politics, of Slavery, and of Sociology. Beyond these, again, as a man of vast learning and fine literary taste, Parker wrote a variety of papers on matters of scholarship and history, collected in two volumes of Critical and Miscellaneous Writings. The first of these is already known in England; the second will consist of articles now first collected from various sources, many of them of great interest and beauty.

As in this long series of works the greater part consists of detached addresses, it will be anticipated that the great fundamental truths, which it was the task of his life to enforce, were frequently reproduced. A large portion of the matter now collected was taken down by shorthand writers from extempore sermons and orations. These facts will account for occasional repetitions, and for the expressions, perhaps, sometimes all too vivid, of sarcasm and scorn, against the errors of Calvinistic theology and proslavery politics. To the congregation, whose prayers he had led with profoundest reverence, the eloquent outbursts of his subsequent discourse would naturally assume a wholly different character from that they bear to us, who read coldly the notes

¹ Revue des Deux Mondes, 1 Octobre, 1861, p. 716.

of the same discourses, unaware how it was the very greatness of his reverence for things truly holy, which inflamed his Luther-like soul with iconoclastic zeal.

As to the extraordinary clearness and didactic lucidity of Parker's style (strangely resembling that of old Hugh de St Victor, in his monkish Latin), there is no need to apologize for it. "I always think," said he, "that I am addressing, *not* the highest minds, but the simplest and most uneducated among my congregation; and I strive to say everything so that *they* may understand me." Thus truly did he preach his great gospel of God's goodness to the poor; and in a way, perhaps, which would be safe to few theologians. Always we find him stating the major term of his syllogism, "God is infinitely good. Now, what follows?"

It would seem as if there were two forms of the love of truth among men. In the one it is an affirmative love, a forcible grasp thereof, which affords a fulcrum strong enough to move the world; yet often leaving the holder without any accurate sense of the limitations of his creed, and without much power to appreciate the creeds of others. In the other, it is a negative love of truth, which takes the form of a hatred of error, and induces the man to spend his life in stripping his own creed leaf by leaf, like a rose, of its external and more questionable doctrines, while he sees vividly the collateral truths in the creeds of others. Theodore Parker belonged essentially to the first order of minds. None have preached with nobler, manlier faith the affirmative truths of absolute religion. In treating of the popular theology, it must be avowed that, to the majority of Englishmen, his wide human sympathies will seem to fall short in this one point, and that he has sometimes appeared to confound the Christianity of the churches generally with Calvinism, and to have drawn Calvinism itself either from the grim treatises of the old Puritan divines, or from living exponents of their doctrine, not to be paralleled on this side the Atlantic. It is due to one so great in his simple integrity as Parker, that even those who owe him most of gratitude should thus avow where they find his limitations.

On the side of some of the deeper mysteries of experimental religion, of repentance and regeneration, Parker said and wrote but little. He ever strove to give his hearers the fullest, richest faith in the infinite love and goodness of God; and then he left that divine alchemy to do its work and infuse a holier

and purer life into their souls. Even to those who came to him for counsel he commonly acted thus; he lifted their eyes to God, and then bade them in His light behold their duties.

Happily for those who might regret that he had told us no more of his thoughts on these matters, we possess in Newman's Book of the Soul, the noblest exposition of the practical doctrines of a deeply spiritual Theism.

Such, then, are the writings of Theodore Parker now presented to the public. It will be for the reader to judge for himself of their prophetic power and truth, their glowing eloquence, their profound and varied learning, and of that supreme honesty of purpose which made Lowell say of him,

"Every word that he speaks has been fiercely furnaceed
In the blast of a life which has struggled in earnest."

Of the life and actions of Parker little need here be said. The concluding volume of this series will contain his few autobiographical remains, and possibly the Memoir shortly to be published by his friends in America. A few words may, however, be not inappropriately prefixed to his writings; for of him, more than of most men, might it be said that his doctrines and his life were one. What he preached to the world he had first found in the depth of his own consciousness, and that which he preached he lived out in his own noble life. The great lessons of the Absolute Religion truly penetrated his whole being. He seemed always to live in the light of God's love, and to be able to work for his fellows with the unwavering faith and tireless energy of one who actually beheld in vision the foregleams of an immortality, wherein all souls shall be redeemed and glorified.

Theodore Parker was born in 1810, near Lexington, Massachusetts. His parents were of the yeoman class, and old Puritan stock. His grandfather had fired the first shot in the war of Independence. From childhood he was a laborious student; at twenty-four, after passing through Harvard University, he knew ten languages, and before his death he is said to have acquired no less than twenty. His vocation was little doubtful. "In my early boyhood," he says, "I felt I was to be a minister." In 1837 he was ordained and appointed to the Unitarian Church at West Roxbury, near Boston. Very soon

the emancipation from all fetters of thought which he had always sought, brought him to conclusions far beyond his fellow-Unitarians. "The worship of the Bible as a Fetish hindered me at every step." He wrote two sermons of the Historical and Moral Contradictions in the Bible, but hesitated for a year to preach them, lest he should "weaken men's respect for true religion by rudely showing them that they worshipped an idol." But at length he could wait no longer, and to ease his conscience preached his two sermons. His hearers told him "of the great comfort they had given them." "I continued," he says after this, "my humble studies, and as fast as I found a new truth I preached it. At length, in 1841, I preached a discourse of the Transient and Permanent in Christianity." This was the crisis. The other ministers, both Trinitarian and Unitarian, were profoundly indignant, and so far as in them lay excommunicated him. "Some of them would not speak to me in the street, and in their public meetings they left the benches where I sat down." Then he delivered in Boston the lectures which eventually were published in an enlarged form as "Discourses of Matters Pertaining to Religion,"—the book of which the present volume is a reprint of the fourth edition.

In September, 1843, Parker came to Europe, and after a year's travel returned to Boston, strengthened in heart and health. On the 16th February, 1845, he entered on the ministry of that congregation (the 28th Congregational Society), which he served with unwearied energy till that fatal morning, fourteen years afterwards, when his excessive labours brought on bleeding from the lungs, and his place knew him no more.

The present volumes will convey but a partial idea of the extent of Parker's labours during the years of his ministry, the sermons he preached, the orations and lectures he delivered through the States, the books he wrote, the studies he prosecuted, and, above all, the philanthropic and anti-slavery labours which he originated and aided. His congregation, which eventually became the largest in Boston, was foremost in every project of social improvement in the city, and the most outspoken and daring of the abolition party. They formed, under Parker's presidency, a committee of vigilance for the aid of slaves, and in the course of a year succeeded in passing four hundred coloured men and women into Canada. The Fugitive

Slave Bill he openly announced he would resist by force, and in 1851 he sheltered in his house a man and wife who formed part of his congregation, and whose master sought to reclaim them. He wrote his sermon that week with his pistol in his desk before him! In the same year another negro, named Sims, was arrested in Boston, and Parker's efforts for his relief, his attendance on him to the vessel in which he was borne back to slavery, and his discourses afterwards, roused so much animosity, that a prosecution against him was commenced, and only relinquished when it was found that his imprisonment would be a triumph for his cause. It was on this occasion he prepared the elaborate "Defence" to be reprinted in the 10th volume of this series,—also the splendid sermons "on Conscience," and on "the Laws of God and the Statutes of Man."

His courage in the anti-slavery cause, and indeed in every cause he had at heart, was such as might be expected of the preacher of such a faith. Obnoxious beyond any other man in America, both on account of his religion and his politics, he never once failed to go wherever his voice or his presence could be of use, delivering lectures in all parts of the country, and entering meetings where he was an object of bitterest rancour. On one such an occasion we have been told by an eye-witness that he was standing in a gallery at a large pro-slavery meeting in New York, when one of the orators tauntingly remarked, "I should like to know what Theodore Parker would say to this!" "Would you like to know?" cried he, starting forward into view,—"I'll tell you what Theodore Parker says to it!" Of course there instantly arose a tremendous clamour and threats of killing him and throwing him overboard. Parker simply squared his broad chest, and looking to the right and the left, said, undauntedly, "Kill me? Throw me overboard? you shall do no such thing. Now I'll tell you what I say to this matter." His bravery quelled the riot at once.

Parker's intellectual endowments were of the highest class, and enabled him to defend his religious creed with the power of a clear head and an eloquent tongue. The peculiar characteristic of his mental faculties seemed to be a singular lucidity and clearness of arrangement of facts and ideas. These great natural gifts, combined with so much daring originality of thought, would have been perilous had he not laboured to supply himself with such a ballast of deep and solid learning

as served to keep his mind steadily balanced. It has been already said that he understood ten languages. Of their literature, ancient and modern, his amazing knowledge will be sufficiently proved by the notes appended to the present volume. It would probably be difficult to parallel, save in Germany, a scholarship at once so varied and so recondite. For the carefulness and minuteness thereof also, let his recension of De Wette's treatise on the Old Testament testify.

But if God had endowed Parker with a noble intellect and he had honestly multiplied his five talents to ten, there was yet a greater gift which he possessed in still richer measure. The strong, clear head was second to the warm, true heart. Parker loved his friends with a devotion of which men in our day so rarely give proof, that we claim it as the privilege of a woman to know its happiness, albeit such love becomes as much the manliness of a man as the womanliness of a woman. His tenderness to his wife and to all around him broke out in a thousand little gentle cares and delicate thoughtfulnesses continually. No man was ever more beloved in the happy circle admitted to the intimacy of his home, and every mail brought him from far away lands letters of gratitude and affection. His immense power of human sympathy made itself felt so strongly, that it is said no clergyman of any creed, in our day, ever received so many confidences and confessions. No wonder that when the end of that loving life drew near he said to the writer, "I would fain be allowed to stay a little longer here if it pleased God,—the world is so interesting and friends so dear!" At the last of all, when his noble intellect was sinking under the clouds of approaching night, his tender affections were still lingering, anxiously careful for the gentle wife weeping by his side, and he dreamed that he had found comfort for her, telling us with brightening looks that though he was dying in Florence there was another Theodore Parker in America who would carry on his work and be her support and consolation

Parker was brave, eloquent, learned, and warm-hearted all in an exceptional degree. He was also a man of fine poetic taste and love of art, and of the most refined and winning manners. There seemed no one human pursuit of an elevated kind in which he could not take interest. The element of pure joyous wit and humour was overflowing in him. Even

in his graver writings this sometimes breaks out in freaks of sarcasm irrepressible, as where he argues that there can be no Devil since no print of his hoofs has been found in the Old Red Sandstone,—and that men are after all more well-disposed than the contrary, since “even South Carolina senators are *sober all the forenoon!*” But of course it was in private life that his playful humour naturally overflowed. We have seen letters to his intimate friends as full of pure drollery as Sydney Smith could have penned. One we remember, for instance, in which he answered his correspondent’s accounts of a journey from Rome to Naples by *his* remarkable discoveries and ethnological and antiquarian speculations on a trip down the railway two stations from Boston. In another epistle he parodied some foolish over-illustrated biography then in vogue by extracting all the little woodcuts of advertisements of houses, steamers, &c., from the newspapers, and introducing them solemnly as “The House he was born in,” “His berceauette,” “His perambulator;”—and finally “His Mother,” being the well-known lady with half her hair dyed and the remainder grey!

All this versatility gave an inexpressible charm to Parker’s character. In conversing with him one chord after another was struck, and each seemed richer and sweeter than the last. At one moment perhaps he was told of some moral results of his labours, or some poor backwoodsman wrote him a letter (we have seen a few out of many such), saying how his sermons were the food of the higher life to the writer and the rough comrades assembled weekly to hear them in their log-huts in the forests of the Far West. Then Parker’s eyes would brighten, and the tears start into them, till he turned the subject to hide his emotion, and in a moment he would jest like a boy at some passing trifle with peals of richest laughter. And growing grave again, as some deeper subject opened, he would pour out his strange hoards of learning, all arranged in his own orderly fashion, as if he had constructed a table of it, beforehand, in his memory. Never far away were noble, sacred words of love and faith. One of the most religious women we ever knew, said to us, “It was good only to *see* Mr Parker in his church on Sunday, before we heard him. It made us all know that he felt the presence of God. We saw it in his face, so full of solemn joy as he rose to lead our prayers.”

Perhaps we have dwelt somewhat too fully on these details

of Parker's character; but as it is impossible for mankind wholly to refrain from forming an estimate of the root of a man's faith by the product of life which it may bear, it has seemed well thus to display, in some degree, how singularly complete and rounded was that nature which this teacher of Theism displayed. All religions, which have importantly influenced the world, have probably been qualified to produce some special virtue in eminent perfection. But the one which shall approve itself as truly divine, must nourish not only isolated merits, but all the possible virtues and faculties of human nature, such as it has been constituted by the Creator. The creeds stand self-condemned, which dwarf or kill any stem or branch, or flower or even leaflet of true humanity,—which make men emaciate and lacerate the bodies God has so wonderfully made;—or prefer hideous and monotonous churches and edifices of charity to the example of a world of endless beauty and variety;—or regard distrustfully every fresh discovery of science, instead of resting satisfied that all truth is God's truth, and to nothing but error can it be dangerous;—or check and crush their natural domestic affections, instead of regarding each one of them as a step, lent to help us up from earth to heaven;—all these creeds stand self-condemned. They may be the service of some unknown being, but they assuredly do not succeed in harmonizing the soul with the Creator of *this* world, the Divine Author of Human Nature. Nay more, the creed which should freeze all the joyous flow of wit and jest, and teach (without shadow of historical authority) that its Ideal Man "seldom smiled and never laughed"—that creed also is condemned. God who has made the playful lamb and singing lark, the whispering winds which rustle in the summer trees, and the ocean waves' "immeasurable laugh"—that same God gave, in His mercy, jest and glee and merriment to man; and here also, as in the joys of the senses and the intellect and the affections, "to enjoy is to obey." Theodore Parker's faith, at least, bore this result,—it brought out in him one of the noblest and most complete developments of our nature which the world has seen; a splendid devotion, even to death, for the holiest cause, and none the less a most perfect fulfilment of the minor duties and obligations of humanity. Though the last man in the world to claim faultlessness for himself, he was yet to all mortal eyes absolutely faithful to the resolution of his boyhood to devote himself to God's immediate service. Living

in a land of special personal inquisition, and the mark for thousands of iniquical scrutinies, he yet lived out his allotted time, beyond the arrows of calumny, and those who knew him best said that the words they heard over his grave seemed intended for him; "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!" The lilies, which were his favourite flowers, and which loving hands laid on his coffin, were not misplaced thereon. Truly if men *cannot* gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles, then must the root of that most fruitful life have been a sound one.

At last the end came. The eloquent orations he had poured forth so freely for every righteous cause, and the incessant travelling at all seasons to deliver them, wheresoever he was called, brought out the tendencies of hereditary disease. The last journey he ever made in America was in the midst of a northern winter, and when he was already ill, to perform a funeral service in a friend's family, or rather to comfort the mourners with his sympathy, and speak to them (as he knew so well how to do) of God's great love in their affliction. He returned home much worse, but refused to give up working, and prepared as usual his sermon for the week. He had never spared himself at any time. The words of a hymn he often called for in his church fitted well his brave unwearied spirit:

"Shall I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
Or sail'd through bloody seas?"

Or another, of Whittier's, which he liked equally well.

"Hast thou through life's empty noises
Heard the solemn steps of time,
And the low mysterious voices
Of another clime?
Not to ease and aimless quiet
Doth the inward answer tend,
But to works of love and duty
As thy being's end;
Earnest toil and strong endeavour
Of a spirit, which within
Wrestles with familiar evil
And besetting sin,
And without with tireless vigour,
Steadfast heart and purpose strong,
In the power of faith assaileth
Every form of wrong."

Had he understood the gravity of his danger he would doubtless have accepted the duty, however dissonant to his habits, of greater care for himself. But it was hard for the strong heart lodged in the powerful frame to believe that its beatings were already numbered, or that it was needful *yet* to check labours whose full harvest daily filled his bosom. How often this same mistake is made by the choicest spirits of the world, and how inexorable is the law which stops the hand *too* ready for its holy work, we need not pause to repeat. The Life Beyond must explain it all. At best a man only finds his place and fits himself to fill it, either in the company of the Prophets or the humbler ranks of philanthropy, when he has gained almost the summit of mortal life, and all beyond must be declivity and decay. It is little marvel then if those whose hearts are truest to their labours "work while it is called the day," even with self-wasteful energy, dreading the inevitable approach of *Age*—if not yet of *Death*, of the day when our "windows shall be darkened and the grasshopper a burden," even before the final closing of that night "when no man can work."

Theodore Parker's fourteen years of apostleship were over. On Sunday morning, January 9th, 1859, he wrote to his congregation,—“I shall not speak to you to-day, for this morning a little after four o'clock I had a slight attack of bleeding in the lungs or throat. I hope you will not forget the contribution to the poor. I don't know when I shall again look upon your welcome faces, which have so often cheered my spirit when my flesh was weak.” He *never* saw them (at least from his pulpit) again. Compelled to seek a warmer climate, he sailed with his wife and friends for Santa Cruz, where he spent the winter, and then passed through England on his way to Switzerland, where he sojourned awhile with his friend Professor Desor of Neufchâtel, and then passed on to Rome as the cold weather drew near. Friends gathered round him, dear and congenial friends whom he had known and loved at home, and for a while he seemed to do well. But as the spring drew near it became evident that the sands of life were running out; he sank rapidly and hopelessly. His horror of the oppression and turpitude of the Papal government was so great that he could not endure to die in Rome, and made his friends (among whom was a physician, Dr Appleton, devoted altogether to his care) carry him away to pass his last hours in a free country.

As he passed out of the Roman territory and saw the Italian tricolor waving by the road-side, the dying man raised himself feebly in his carriage and lifted his hat to the emblem of liberty. By the time he had reached Florence the fatigue of the journey had left him but a little residue of days to live. He knew it. He had wished to be spared, and felt, as he had said years before in his Sermon of the Immortal Life, "It is selfish to wish for death when there is so much need of us here." But when the time came he was calm as a child. The writer, who, although aided by his words and honoured by his friendship for many years, had never seen him till that hour, found him on his bed of death, conscious of the inevitable future, but looking at it as peacefully as if it had been a summons to his home across the ocean. "You know I am not afraid to die," he said; and here a smile, the most beautiful we ever saw on a human countenance, broke over his face. "You know I am not afraid to die, but I would fain have lived a little longer to finish my work. God gave me large powers, and I have but half used them." *Half* used them! And he said this on his death-bed, whither he had been brought in the prime of manhood by *over* use of them, by the utter sacrifice of his health and strength in the cause of Truth and Right! He lingered on a few days, gently falling asleep, as it seemed, and dreaming, after the wont of the dying, that he was going on a journey, going home after his long wanderings, and only wakening, at intervals, to give a few parting gifts to friends (among others the bronze inkstand, from which these pages are written), and to comfort his wife, and say tenderest words of thanks for the little offerings of flowers, or aught beside we brought him. Now and then he would rouse himself, and speak his old brave thoughts, answering, as if to a familiar and welcome voice, if we named sacred things. Once, for example, when he asked the day of the week, and we said, "It is Sunday, a blessed day, is it not, dear friend?" "Yes!" he said, with sudden energy; "when one has got over the superstition of it, a *most* blessed day." Gradually and without pain the end came on, and on the 10th of May, 1860, he passed away from earth in perfect peace.

We cannot regard such an end otherwise than with solemn thankfulness, that God allows such men to live and work and die among us, to show us what man may do and be in this life, and to raise our thoughts to what *must* be the life to come,

for souls which have made earth itself a holy place. His most gifted countrywoman reached Florence too late to pay to her great fellow-abolitionist a last tribute of the respect and regard which outstripped all limits of creed. At her request the writer gave her all the details of his last hours, and repeated (doubtless with faithless tears) the words above quoted, concerning his unfinished labours, adding, "To think that life is over—that work is stopped!" "And do you think," said she, raising her eyes with a flash of rebuke, "do *you* think;—did *he* think that Theodore Parker has no work to do for God *now*?"

It must be so. He who recalled his soldier in the heat of the battle must have a nobler command for him on high; yet we must miss him here, and sorely his country misses him in her hour of trial. He was a great and a good man; the greatest and best, perhaps, which America has produced. He was great in many ways,—in original genius, in learning, in eloquence, and in a courage and honesty which no danger could daunt or check. In time to come his country will glory in his name, and the world will acknowledge all his gifts and powers. His true greatness, however, will in future ages rest on this—that God revealed Himself to his faithful soul, in His most adorable aspect—that he preached with undying faith, and lived out in his consecrated life, the lesson he had thus been taught—that he was worthy to be the *Prophet* of the greatest of all truths, the ABSOLUTE GOODNESS OF GOD, the central truth of the universe.

When it was all over, and the great soul had gone home to God, we saw him lying, as it were, asleep, a pale flush still on his face, and his head (that noble head!) resting under a crown of the rich pink and white roses of Tuscany. The strong man, dead in the flower of manhood, seemed only slumbering on a warm summer day. Never was the "rapture of repose" more legible upon the face of death. It seemed as if God had said, "Well done, good and faithful servant! Well hast thou spent thy talents ten times ten!" A few days later we followed him, to hear, as he had desired, the Beatitudes of the Gospels read for his sole funeral service, over his grave, in the beautiful Campo Santo of Florence. It seemed well that he should sleep in such a spot, under a sky as cloudless as his faith, and where the cypresses of Italy, like nature's spires, stand pointing from a bright world below to a yet brighter heaven. As

we passed along the streets of the grand old city we perceived that the tricolor banners were hung from every window for some victory or festival, and the people were passing in throngs to the churches, whose bells were pealing joyfully. At first it struck like a dissonance to our hearts, and then we remembered what Theodore Parker had been and still must be in a higher life than ours; and we said one to another, "For us, too, this is a festa-day, the solemn Feast of an Ascension."

P R E F A C E

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE following pages contain the substance of a series of five lectures delivered in Boston, during the last autumn, at the request of several gentlemen. In preparing the work for the press I have enlarged on many subjects, which could be but slightly touched in a brief lecture. It was with much diffidence that I then gave my opinions to the public in that form ; but considering the state of theological learning amongst us, and the frequent abuse of the name of Religion, I can no longer withhold my humble mite.

It is the design of this work to recall men from the transient shows of time, to the permanent substance of Religion ; from a worship of Creeds and empty Belief, to a worship in the Spirit and in Life. If it satisfy the doubting soul, and help the serious inquirer to true views of God, Man, the Relation between them, and the Duties which come of that relation ; if it make Religion appear more congenial and attractive, and a Divine Life more beautiful and sweet than heretofore—my end is answered. I have not sought to pull down, but to build up ; to remove the rubbish of human inventions from the fair temple of Divine Truth, that men may enter its shining gates and be blessed now and for ever.

I have found it necessary, though painful, to speak of many popular delusions, and expose their fallacy and dangerous character, but have not, I trust, been blind to “the soul of goodness in things evil,” though I have taken no great pains to speak smooth things, or say Peace, Peace, when there was no peace. The subject of Book IV. might seem to require a greater space than I have allowed it, but a cursory examination of many points there hinted at

would require a volume, and I did not wish to repeat what is said elsewhere, and therefore have referred to an "Introduction to the Old Testament on the basis of De Wette," which is now in the press, and will probably come before the public in a few months. Some of the thoughts here set forth have also appeared in the *Dial* for 1840—1842. I can only wish that the Errors of this book may find no favour, but perish speedily, and that the Truths it humbly aims to set forth may do their good and beautiful work.

WEST ROXBURY, MASS.
7th May, 1842.

PREFACE

TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

It is now fourteen years since I prepared the first edition of this volume. In that time laborious Germans, some of them men of great genius, have investigated the history of the first and second centuries of the Christian Era with an amount of learning, patience, sagacity, and freedom of thought never before directed to that inquiry. Partly by their help, and partly by my own investigations, I have been led to conclude that the fourth Gospel is not the work of John the Disciple of Jesus, but belongs to a later period, and is of small historical value. This conclusion and its consequences will appear in some alterations made in this volume, which I have carefully revised in the light of the theological science of the present day. I know there are Truths in the Book which must prevail; the Errors connected therewith I invite men to expose and leave them to perish, that the Truths may the more readily do their work. I commit both to the Justice of Mankind.

BOSTON, Dec. 25, 1855.

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THE INTRODUCTION.

“To false Religion we are indebted for persecutors, zealots, and bigots; and perhaps human depravity has assumed no forms, at once more odious and despicable, than those in which it has appeared in such men. I will say nothing of persecution; it has passed away, I trust, for ever; and torture will be no more inflicted, and murder no more committed, under pretence of extending the spirit and influence of Christianity. But the temper which produced it still remains; its parent bigotry is still in existence; and what is there more adapted to excite thorough disgust, than the disposition, the feelings, the motives, the kind of intellect and degree of knowledge, discovered by some of those, who are pretending to be the sole defenders and patrons of religious truth in this unhappy world, and the true and exclusive heirs of all the mercy of God? It is a particular misfortune, that when gross errors in religion prevail, the vices of which I speak show themselves especially in the clergy; and that we find them ignorant, narrow-minded, presumptuous, and, as far as they have it in their power, oppressive and imperious. The disgust which this character in those who appear as ministers of religion naturally produces, is often transferred to Christianity itself. It ought to be associated only with that form of religion by which these vices are occasioned.”—ANDREWS NORTON, *Thoughts on true and false Religion*, second edition, p. 15, 16.

THE INTRODUCTION.

THE history of the world shows clearly that Religion is the highest of all human concerns. Yet the greatest good is often subject to the worst abuse. The doctrines and ceremonies that represent the popular religion at this time, offer a strange mingling of truth and error. Theology is often confounded with Religion; men exhaust their strength in believing, and so have little Reason to inquire with, or solid Piety to live by. It requires no prophet to see that what is popularly taught and accepted as Religion is no very divine thing; not fitted to make the world purer, and men more worthy to live in it. In the popular belief of the present, as of all time, there is something mutable and fleeting; something also which is eternally the same. The former lies on the surface, and all can see it; the latter lies deep, and often escapes observation. Our popular theology is mainly based on the superficial and transient element. It stands by the forbearance of the sceptic. They who rely on it, are always in danger and always in dread. A doubt strongly put, shakes the pulpits of New England, and wakens the thunder of the churches; the more reasonable the doubt the greater the alarm. Do men fear lest the mountains fall: Tradition is always uncertain. "Perhaps yes, perhaps no," is all we can say of it. Yet it is made the basis of Religion. Authority is taken for Truth, and not Truth for Authority. Belief is made the Substance of Religion, as Authority its Sanction and Tradition its Ground. The name of Infidel is applied to the best of men; the wisest, the most spiritual and heavenly

of our brothers. The bad and the foolish naturally ask, If the name be deserved, what is the use of Religion, as good men and wise men can be good and wise, heavenly and spiritual, without it? The answer is plain—but not to the blind.

Practical Religion implies both a Sentiment and a Life. We honour a phantom which is neither life nor sentiment. Yes, we have two Spectres that often take the place of Religion with us. The one is a Shadow of the Sentiment; that is our creed, belief, theology, by whatever name we call it. The other is the Ghost of Life; this is our ceremonies, forms, devout practices. The two Spectres by turns act the part of Religion, and we are called Christians because we assist at the show. Real Piety is expected of but few. He is called a Christian that bows to the Idol of his Tribe, and sets up also a lesser, but orthodox Idol in his own Den. One word of the Prophet is true of our religion—Its voice is not heard in the streets. Our theology is full of confusion. They who admit Reason to look upon it confound the matter still more, for a great revolution of thought can set affairs right.

Religion is separated from Life; divorced from bed and board. We think to be religious without love for men, and pious with none for God; or, which is the same thing, that we can love our neighbour without helping him, and God without having an idea of Him. The prevailing theology represents God as a being whom a good man must hate; Religion is something alien to our nature, which can only rise as Reason falls. A despair of Man pervades our Theology. Pious men mourn at the famine in our churches; we do not believe in the inspiration of goodness now; only in the tradition of goodness long ago. For all theological purposes, God might have been buried after the ascension of Jesus. We dare not approach the Infinite One face to face; we whine and whimper in our brother's name, as if we could only appear before the Omnipresent by Attorney.

Our reverence for the Past is just in proportion to our ignorance of it. We think God was once everywhere in the World and in the Soul; but has now crept into a corner, as good as dead; that the Bible was his last word. Instead of the Father of All for our God, we have two

Idols ; the Bible, a record of men's words and works ; and Jesus of Nazareth, a man who lived divinely some centuries ago. These are the Idols of the religious ; our standard of truth ; the gods in whom we trust. Mammon, the great Idol of men not religious—who overtops them both, and has the sincerest worshippers—need not now be named. His votaries *know* they are idolaters ; the other worship in ignorance, their faith fixed mainly on transient things.

I know there are exceptions to this rule. Saints never fail from the earth. Reason will claim some deserted niche in every church. But wise men grieve over our notions of Religion—so poor, so alien to Reason. Pious men weep over our practice of Religion—so far from Christianity. What passes for Christianity in our times is not reasonable ; no man pretends it. It can only be defended by forbidding a reasonable man to open his mouth. We go from the street to the church. What a change ! Reason and good sense and manly energy, which do their work in the world, have here little to do ; their voice is not heard. The morality, however, is the same in both places ; it has only laid off its working dress, smoothed its face, put on its Sunday clothes.

The popular theology is hostile to man ; tells us he is an outcast ; not a child of God, but a spurious issue of the devil. He must not even pray in his own name. His duty is an impossible thing. No man can do it. He deserves nothing but damnation. Theology tells him that is all he is sure of. It teaches the doctrine of immortality ; but in such guise that, if true, it is a misfortune to mankind. Its Heaven is a place no man has a right to. Would a good man willingly accept what is not his ? Pray for it ? This theology rests on a lie. Men have made it out of assumptions. The conclusions came from the premises ; but the premises were made for the sake of the conclusions. Each vouches for the other's truth. But what else will vouch for either ? The historical basis of popular doctrines, such as Depravity, Redemption, Resurrection, the Incarnation—is it formed of Facts or of No-Facts ? Who shall tell us ? Do not the wise men look after these things ? One must needs blush for the patience of mankind.

But has Religion only the bubble of Tradition to rest on ; no other sanction than Authority ; no substance but Belief ? They know little of the matter who say it. Did Religion begin with what we call Christianity ? Were there no saints before Peter ? Religion is the first spiritual thing man learned ; the last thing he will abandon. There is but one Religion, as one Ocean ; though we call it Faith in our church, and Infidelity out of our church.

It is my design in these pages to recall men from the transient Form to the eternal Substance ; from outward and false Belief to real and Inward Life ; from this partial Theology and its Idols of human device, to that universal Religion and its ever-living Infinite God ; from the temples of human Folly and Sin, which every day crumble and fall, to the inner Sanctuary of the Heart, where the still small voice will never cease to speak. I would show men Religion as she is—most fair of all God's fairest children. If I fail in this, it is the head that is weak, not the heart that is wanting.

BOOK I.

“Who is there almost that has not opinions planted in him by education time out of mind, which by that means came to be as the municipal laws of the country, which must not be questioned, but are then looked on with reverence, as the standard of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, when perhaps these so sacred opinions are but the oracles of the nursery, or the traditional glib talk of those who pretend to inform our childhood, who receive them from hand to hand without ever examining them?”

These ancient pre-occupations of our minds, these several and almost sacred opinions, are to be examined if we will make way for truth, and put our minds in that freedom which belongs and is necessary to them. A mistake is not the less so, and will never grow into a truth, because we have believed it a long time, though perhaps it be the harder to part with, and an error is not the less dangerous, nor the less contrary to truth, because it is cried up and had in veneration by any party.”—LOCKE, *in* KING'S *Life of him*, second edition, Vol. I. p. 188, 192.

BOOK I.

OF RELIGION IN GENERAL: OR A DISCOURSE OF THE
RELIGIOUS ELEMENT AND ITS MANIFESTATIONS.

CHAPTER I.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELIGIOUS ELEMENT IN MAN,
AND THE EXISTENCE OF ITS OBJECT.

As we look on the world which Man has added to that which came from the hand of its Maker, we are struck with the variety of its objects, and the contradiction between them. There are institutions to prevent crime; institutions that of necessity perpetuate crime. This is built on Selfishness; would stand by the downfall of Justice and Truth. Side by side therewith is another, whose broad foundation is universal Love,—love for all that are of woman born. Thus we see palaces and hovels, jails and asylums for the weak, arsenals and churches, huddled together in the strangest and most intricate confusion. How shall we bring order out of this chaos; account for the existence of these contradictions? It is serious work to decompose these phenomena, so various and conflicting; to detect the one cause in the many results. But in doing this, we find the root of all in Man himself. In him is the same perplexing antithesis which we meet in all his works. These conflicting things existed as ideas in him before they took their present and concrete shape. Discordant causes have produced effects not harmonious. Out of Man these institutions have grown; out of his passions, or his judgment; his senses, or his soul. Taken together they are

the exponent which indicates the character and degree of development the race has now attained ; they are both the result of the Past and the prophecy of the Future.

From a survey of Society, and an examination of human nature, we come at once to the conclusion, that for every institution out of Man except that of Religion, there is a cause within him, either fleeting or permanent ; that the natural wants of the body, the desire of food and raiment, comfort and shelter, have organized themselves, and instituted agriculture and the mechanic arts ; that the more delicate principles of our nature, love of the Beautiful, the True, the Good, have their organization also ; that the passions have their artillery, and all the gentler emotions somewhat external to represent themselves, and reflect their image. Thus the institution of Laws, with their concomitants, the Court-house and the Jail, we refer to the Moral Sense of mankind, combining with the despotic selfishness of the strong, whose might often usurps the place of Justice. Factories and Commerce, Railroads and Banks, Schools and Shops, Armies and Newspapers, are quite easily referred to something analogous in the wants of Man ; to a lasting principle, or a transient desire which has projected them out of itself. Thus we see that these institutions out of Man are but the exhibitions of what is in him, and must be referred either to eternal principles, or momentary passions. Society is the work of Man. There is nothing in society which is not also in him.

Now there is one vast institution, which extends more widely than human statutes ; claims the larger place in human affairs ; takes a deeper hold on men than the terrible pomp of War, the machinery of Science, the panoply of Comfort. This is the institution of Religion, coeval and co-extensive with the human race. Whence comes this ? Is there an eternal principle in us all, which legitimately and of necessity leads to this ; or does it come, like Piracy, War, the Slave-trade, and so much other business of Society, from the abuse, misdirection, and disease of human nature ? Shall we refer this vast institution to a passing passion which the advancing race will outgrow, or does it come from a principle in us deep and lasting as Man ?

To this question, for many ages, two answers have been

given—one foolish and one wise. The foolish answer, which may be read in Lucretius and elsewhere, is, that Religion is not a necessity of Man's nature, which comes from the action of eternal demands within him, but is the result of spiritual disease, so to say; the effect of fear, of ignorance, combining with selfishness; that hypocritical Priests and knavish Kings, practising on the ignorance, the credulity, the passions, and the fears of men, invented for their own sake, and got up a religion, in which they put no belief and felt no spiritual concern. But judging from a superficial view, it might as well be said that food and comfort were not necessities of our nature, but only cunning devices of butchers, mechanics, and artists, to gain wealth and power. Besides, it is not given to hypocrites under the mitre, nor over the throne, to lay hold on the world and move it. Honest conviction and living faith are needed for that work. To move the world of men firm footing is needed. The hypocrite deceives few but himself, as the attempts at pious frauds, in ancient and modern times, abundantly prove.

The wise answer is, that this institution of Religion, like Society, Friendship, and Marriage, comes out of a principle deep and permanent in the constitution of man; that as humble, and transient, and partial institutions come out of humble, transient, and partial wants, and are to be traced to the senses and the phenomena of life; so this sublime, permanent, and universal institution came out from sublime, permanent, and universal wants, and must be referred to the Soul, the religious Faculty, and so belongs among the unchanging realities of life. Looking, even superficially, but with earnestness, upon human affairs, we are driven to confess, that there is in us a spiritual nature, which directly and legitimately leads to Religion; that as Man's body is connected with the world of Matter; rooted in it; has bodily wants, bodily senses to minister thereto, and a fund of external materials wherewith to gratify these senses and appease these wants; so Man's soul is connected with the world of Spirit; rooted in God; has spiritual wants, and spiritual senses, and a fund of materials wherewith to gratify these spiritual senses and appease these spiritual wants. If this be so, then do not religious institutions come equally from Man?

Must it not be that there is nothing in Religion, more than in Society, which is not implied in him ?

Now the existence of a religious element in us, is not a matter of hazardous and random conjecture, nor attested only by a superficial glance at the history of Man, but this principle is found out, and its existence demonstrated in several legitimate ways.

We see the phenomena of worship and religious observances; of religious wants and actions to supply those wants. Work implies a hand that did, and a head that planned it. A sound induction from these facts carries us back to a religious principle in Man, though the induction does not determine the nature of this principle, except that it is the cause of these phenomena. This common and notorious fact of religious phenomena being found everywhere, can be explained only on the supposition that Man is, by the necessity of his nature, inclined to Religion; that worship, in some form, gross or refined, in act, or word, or thought, or life, is natural and quite indispensable to the race. If the opposite view be taken, that there is no religious principle in Man, then there are permanent and universal phenomena without a corresponding cause, and the fact remains unexplained and unaccountable.

Again, we feel conscious of this element within us. We are not sufficient for ourselves; not self-originated; not self-sustained. A few years ago, and we were not; a few years hence, and our bodies shall not be. A mystery is gathered about our little life. We have but small control over things around us; are limited and hemmed in on all sides. Our schemes fail. Our plans miscarry. One after another our lights go out. Our realities prove dreams. Our hopes waste away. We are not where we would be, nor what we would be. After much experience, men powerful as Napoleon, victorious as Cæsar, confess, what simpler men knew by instinct long before, that it is not in Man that walketh to direct his steps. We find our circumference very near the centre, everywhere. An exceedingly short radius measures all our strength. We can know little of material things; nothing but their phenomena. As the circle of our knowledge widens its ring, we feel our

ignorance on more numerous points, and the Unknown seems greater than before. At the end of a toilsome life, we confess, with a great man of modern times, that we have wandered on the shore, and gathered here a bright pebble, and there a shining shell—but an ocean of Truth, boundless and unfathomed, lies before us, and all unknown. The wisest Ancient knew only this, that he knew nothing. We feel an irresistible tendency to refer all outward things, and ourselves with them, to a Power beyond us, sublime and mysterious, which we cannot measure, nor even comprehend. We are filled with reverence at the thought of this power. Outward matters give us the occasion which awakens consciousness, and spontaneous nature leads us to something higher than ourselves, and greater than all the eyes behold. We are bowed down at the thought. Thus the sentiment of something superhuman comes natural as breath. This primitive spiritual sensation comes over the soul, when a sudden calamity throws us from our habitual state; when joy fills our cup to its brim; at “a wedding or a funeral, a mourning or a festival;” when we stand beside a great work of nature, a mountain, a waterfall; when the twilight gloom of a primitive forest sends awe into the heart; when we sit alone with ourselves, and turn in the eye, and ask, What am I? Whence came I? Whither shall I go? There is no man who has not felt this sensation; this mysterious sentiment of something unbounded.

Still further, we arrive at the same result from a philosophical analysis of Man's nature. We set aside the Body with its senses as the man's house, having doors and windows; we examine the Understanding, which is his handmaid; we separate the Affections, which unite man with man; we discover the Moral Sense, by which we can discern between right and wrong, as by the body's eye between black and white, or night and day; and behind all these, and deeper down, beneath all the shifting phenomena of life, we discover the RELIGIOUS ELEMENT OF MAN. Looking carefully at this element; separating this as a cause from its actions, and these from their effects; stripping this faculty of all accidental circumstances peculiar to the age, nation, sect, or individual, and pursuing a sharp and final analysis till the subject and predicate can no longer be separated; we find as the ultimate fact, that the religious element first

manifests itself in our consciousness by a feeling of need, of want; in one word, by a SENSE OF DEPENDENCE.¹ This primitive feeling does not itself disclose the character, and still less the nature and essence, of the Object on which it depends; no more than the senses disclose the nature of their objects; no more than the eye or ear discovers the essence of light or sound. Like them, it acts spontaneously and unconsciously, soon as the outward occasion offers, with no effort of will, forethought, or making up the mind.

Thus, then, it appears that induction from notorious facts, consciousness spontaneously active, and a philosophical analysis of our nature, all lead equally to some religious element or principle as an essential part of Man's constitution. Now, when it is stated thus nakedly and abstractedly that Man has in his nature a permanent religious element, it is not easy to see on what grounds this primary faculty can be denied by any thinking man, who will notice the religious phenomena in history, trust his own consciousness, or examine and analyze the combined elements of his own being. It is true, men do not often say to themselves, "Go to now. Lo, I have a religious element in the bottom of my heart." But neither do they often say, "Behold, I have hands and feet, and am the same being that I was last night or forty years ago." In a natural and healthy state of mind, men rarely speak or think of what is felt unconsciously to be most true, and the basis of all spiritual action. It is, indeed, most abundantly established, that there is a religious element in Man.

¹ The religious and moral elements mutually involve each other in practice; neither can attain a perfect development without the other; but they are yet as distinct from one another as the faculties of sight and hearing, or memory and imagination. Perhaps all will not agree with that analysis which makes a *sense of dependence* the ultimate fact of consciousness in the case. This is the statement of Schleiermacher, not to mention more ancient authorities. See his *Christliche Glaube nach der Grundsätzen der ev. Kirche*, B. I. § 4, p. 15, et seq. in his Works, 1 Abt. B. III., Berlin, 1835. Of course a sense of infinite as well as finite dependence is intended. Others may call it a *consciousness of the Infinite*; I contend more for the *fact* of a religious element in man than for the above analysis of that element. This theory has been assailed by several philosophers, amongst others by Hegel. See his *Philosophie der Religion*, 2nd improved edition, B. I. p. 87, et seq., in B. XI. of his Works, Berlin, 1840, B. XVII. p. 279, et seq.; Rosenkrantz, *Leben Hegels*, Berlin, 1841, p. 341, et seq. See also Breitschneider, *Handbuch der Dogmatik*, Leip. 1838, Vol. I., § 12, 6. See *Studien und Kritiken*, für Oct. 1846, p. 845, et seq. for a defence of the opinion of Schleiermacher.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE SENTIMENT, IDEA, AND CONCEPTION OF GOD.

Now the existence of this religious element, our experience of this sense of dependence, this sentiment of something without bounds, is itself a proof by implication of the existence of its object,—something on which dependence rests. A belief in this relation between the feeling in us and its object independent of us, comes unavoidably from the laws of Man's nature; there is nothing of which we can be more certain.¹ A natural want in Man's constitution implies satisfaction in some quarter, just as the faculty of seeing implies something to correspond to this faculty, namely, objects to be seen, and a medium of light to see by. As the tendency to love implies something lovely for its object, so the religious consciousness implies its object. If it is regarded as a sense of absolute dependence, it implies the Absolute on which this dependence rests, independent of ourselves.

Spiritual, like bodily faculties, act jointly and not one at a time, and when the occasion is given from without us, the Reason, spontaneously, independent of our forethought and volition, acting by its own laws, gives us by intuition an IDEA of that on which we depend. To this idea we give the name of GOD or GODS, as it is represented by one or several separate conceptions. Thus the existence of God is implied by the natural sense of dependence; implied in

¹ The truth of the human faculties must be assumed in all arguments, and if this be admitted we have then the same evidence for spiritual facts as for the maxims or the demonstrations of Geometry. On this point see some good remarks in Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, Andover, 1838, 2 vols. 8vo, Vol. II. p. 135, et seq. If any one denies the trustworthiness of the human faculties, there can be no argument with him; the axioms of morals and of mathematics are alike nonsense to such a reasoner. Demonstration presupposes something so certain it requires no demonstrating. So *Reasoning* presupposes the trustworthiness of *Reason*.

the religious element itself; it is expressed by the spontaneous intuition of Reason.

Now men come to this Idea early. It is the logical condition of all other ideas; without this as an element of our consciousness, or lying latent, as it were, and unrecognized in us, we could have no *ideas* at all. The senses reveal to us something external to the body, and independent thereof, on which it depends; they tell not what it is. Consciousness reveals something in like manner, not the human spirit, in me, but its absolute ground, on which the spirit depends.¹ Outward circumstances furnish the occasion by which we approach and discover the Idea of God; but they do not furnish the Idea itself. That is a fact given by the nature of Man. Hence some philosophers have called it an innate idea; others, a reminiscence of what the spirit knew in a higher state of life before it took the body. Both opinions may be regarded as rhetorical statements of the truth that the Idea of God is a fact given by Man's nature, and not an invention or device of ours. The belief in God's existence therefore is natural, not against nature. It comes unavoidably from the legitimate action of the intellectual and the religious faculties, just as the belief in light comes from using the eyes, and belief in our existence from mere existing. The knowledge of God's existence, therefore, may be called in the language of Philosophy, an INTUITION OF REASON; or in the mythological language of the elder Theology,² a REVELATION FROM GOD.

If the above statement be correct, then our belief in God's existence does not depend on the *à posteriori* argument,

¹ I use the word Spirit to denote all the faculties not material—as distinguished from Body.

² English writers have rarely attempted to account philosophically for the origin of the Idea of God. They have usually assumed this, and then defended it by the various arguments. See Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding*, Book I. ch. IV., and Cousin's *Psychology*, Henry's Translation, Hartford, 1834, p. 46, et seq., and 181, et seq. See some valuable remarks in Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, &c., Vol. II. p. 143, et seq. See the *Christian Examiner* for January, 1840, p. 309, et seq., and the works there cited. See also the article of President Hopkins in *American Quarterly Observer*, No. II., Boston, 1833, and Ripley's *Philosophical Miscellanies*, Vol. I. p. 40, et seq., and 203, et seq. Some valuable thoughts on this subject may also be found in De Wette, *Das Wesen des Christlichen Glaubens, vom Standpunkte des Glaubens dargestellt*, Basel, 1846, § 4, et ant. See too Wirth, *die speculative Idee Gottes*, Stuttgart, 1845; and Sengler, *die Idee Gottes*, Heidelberg, 1845.

on considerations drawn from the order, fitness, and beauty discovered by observations made in the material world; nor yet on the *à priori* argument, on considerations drawn from the eternal nature of things, and observations made in the spiritual world. It depends primarily on no *argument* whatever; not on *reasoning* but *Reason*. The fact is given outright, as it were, and comes to the man, as soon and as naturally as the consciousness of his own existence, and is indeed logically inseparable from it, for we cannot be conscious of ourselves except as *dependent* beings.¹

This intuitive perception of God is afterwards fundamentally and logically established by the *à priori* argument, and beautifully confirmed by the *à posteriori* argument; but we are not left without the Idea of God till we become metaphysicians and naturalists, and so can discover it by much thinking. It comes spontaneously, by a law, of whose action we are, at first, not conscious. The belief always precedes the proof, intuition giving the thing to be reasoned about. Unless this intuitive function be performed, it is not possible to attain a knowledge of God. For all arguments to that end must be addressed to a faculty which cannot originate the Idea of God, but only confirm it when given from some other quarter. Any argument is vain when the logical condition of all argument has not been complied with.² If the reasoner, as Dr. Clarke has done,³ presuppose that his opponent has "no transcendent idea of God," all his reasoning could never produce it, howsoever capable of confirming and legitimating that idea if already existing in the consciousness. As we may speak of sights to the blind, and sounds to the deaf, and convince them that things called sights and sounds actually exist,

¹ This doctrine seems to be implied in the writings of the Alexandrian fathers.

² Kant has abundantly shown the insufficiency of all the *philosophical arguments* for the existence of God, the physico-theological, the cosmological, and the ontological. See the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 7th edition, p. 444, et seq. But the fact of the Idea given in man's nature cannot be got rid of. It is not a little curious that none of the Christian writers seem to have attempted an *ontological* proof of the existence of God till the eleventh century, when Anselm led the way. See Bouchitté *Histoire des Preuves de l'Existence de Dieu depuis les Temps les plus reculés jusqu'au Monologium d'Anselme*, in the *Mém. de l'Acad. des Sciences Morales, &c.*, Tom. I *Savants Etrangères*, Paris, 1841, p. 395, et seq., and his second *Mémoire*, p. 461, et seq., which brings the history down to that time. Tom. II, p. 59, et seq., 77, et seq.

³ In his *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*.

but can furnish no *Idea* of those things when there is no corresponding sensation, so we may convince a man's understanding of the soundness of our argumentation, but yet give him no *Idea* of God unless he have previously an intuitive sense thereof. Without the intuitive perception, the metaphysical argument gives us only an idea of abstract Power and Wisdom; the argument from design gives only a limited and imperfect Cause for the limited and imperfect effects. Neither reveals to us the Infinite God.

The *Idea* of God then transcends all possible external experience, and is given by intuition, or natural revelation, which comes of the joint and spontaneous action of reason and the religious element.¹ Now *theoretically* this *Idea* involves no contradiction and is perfect: that is, when the proper conditions are complied with, and nothing disturbs the free action of the spirit, we receive the *Idea* of a Being, infinite in Power, Wisdom, and Goodness; that is, infinite, or perfect, in all possible relations.² But *practically*, in the majority of cases, these conditions are not observed; men attempt to form a complex and definite *conception* of God. The primitive *Idea*, eternal in Man, is lost sight of. The *conception* of God, as men express it in their language, is always imperfect; sometimes self-contradictory and impossible. Human actions, human thoughts, human feelings, yes, human passions and all the limitations of mortal men, are collected about the *Idea* of God. Its primitive simplicity and beauty are lost. It becomes self-destructive; and the *conception* of God, as many minds set it forth, like that of a Griffin, or Centaur, or "men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders," is self-contradictory; the notion of a being who, from the very nature of things, could not exist. They for the most part have been called Atheists who denied the popular *conception* of God, showed its inconsistency, and proved that such a being could not be.³ The

¹ The *Idea* of God, like that of Liberty and Immortality, may be called a *judgment à priori*, and from the necessity of the case, transcends all objective experience, as it is logically anterior to it.

² See Cudworth's Intellectual System, Chap. IV. § 8—10, Vol. I. p. 213, et seq.

³ The best men have often been branded as Atheists. The following benefactors of the world have borne that stigma. Thales, Anaxagoras, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Xenophanes, and both the Zeno's, Cicero, Seneca, Abulard, Galileo, Kepler, Des Cartes, Leibnitz, Wolf, Locke, Cudworth, Samuel

early Christians and all the most distinguished and religious philosophers have borne that name, simply because they were too far before men for their sympathy, too far above them for their comprehension, and because, therefore, their Idea of God was sublimer and nearer the truth than that held by their opponents.

Now the *conception* we form of God, under the most perfect circumstances, must, from the nature of things, fall short of the reality. The Finite can form no adequate conception or imagination of the Infinite. All the conceptions of the human mind are conceived under the limitation of Time and Space; of dependence on a cause exterior to itself;

Clarke, Jacob Bohme; Kant, and Fichte, and Schelling, and Hegel, are still under the ban. See some curious details of this subject in Reimann's *Historia Atheismi, &c.*, 1725, a dull book but profitable. See also a Dissertation by Buchwaldius, *De Controversiis recentioribus de Atheismo*, Viteb. 1716, 1 vol. quarto, and "Historical Sketch of Atheism," by Dr Pond, in *American Biblical Repository*, for Oct. 1839, p. 320, et seq.

Possevin, in his *Bibliotheca*, puts Luther and Melanethon among the Atheists. Mersenne (in his *Comment. in Genesios*) says, that in 1622 there were 50,000 Atheists in Paris alone, often a dozen in a single house. *Biographie Universelle*, Tom. XXVIII p. 390. See some curious details respecting the literary treatment of the subject in J. G. Walch's *Philosophisches Lexicon*, 2d ed., Leip. 1733. pp. 134—146. Dr Woods, in his translation of Knapp's *Theology* (New York, 1831, 2 vols. 8vo), in a note borrowed from Hahn's *Lehrbuch des Christ. Glaubens*, p. 175, et seq., places Dr PRIESTLEY among the modern Atheists, where also he puts De La Mettrie, Von Holbach (or La Grange), Helvetius, Diderot, and d'Alembert. Such catalogues are instructive. But see Clarke's *Classification of Atheists* at the beginning of the discourse, in his *Works*, Vol. II. p. 521, et seq.

The charge of impiety is always brought against such as differ from the public faith, especially if they rise above it. Thus Hicks declared Tillotson "*the gravest Atheist that ever was.*" Discourse on Tillotson and Burnet in Leehler, *Gesch. Englischen Deismus*, Stuttgart, 1841, p. 150, et seq. In 1697, Peter Browne, for a similar abuse of Toland, was rewarded with the office of a Bishop. —Ib. p. 195. A curious old writer says, "among the Grecians of old, those Secretaries of Nature, which first made a tender of the natural causes of lightnings and tempests to the rude ears of men, were blasted with the reproach of Atheists, and fell under the hatred of the untutored rabble, because they did not, like them, receive every extraordinary in nature as an immediate expression of the power and displeasure of the Deity." Spencer, *Preface* to his *Discourse concerning Prodiges*, London, 1665. Diodorus Siculus, Lib 1, p. 75 (ed. Rhodoman), relates an instructive case. A Roman soldier, in Egypt, accidentally *killed a cat* —killed a god, for the cat was a popular object of worship. The people rose upon him, and nothing could save him from a violent death at the hands of the mob. All religious persecutions, if it be allowed to compare the little with the great, may be reduced to this one denomination. *The heretic, actually or by implication, killed a consecrated cat, and the Orthodox would fain kill him.* But as the same thing is not sacred in all countries (for even asses have their worshippers), the cat-killer, though an abomination in Egypt, would be a great saint in some lands where *dogs* are worshipped.

while the Infinite is necessarily free from these limitations. A man can comprehend no form of being but his own finite form, which answers to the Supreme Being even less than a grain of dust to the world itself. There is no conceivable ratio between Finite and Infinite.¹ Our human personality² gives a false modification to all our conceptions of the Infinite. But if, not resting in a merely sentimental consciousness of God, which is vague, and alone leads rather to pantheistic mysticism than to a *reasonable* faith, we take the fact given in our nature—the primitive Idea of God, as a Being of infinite Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, involves no contradiction. This is, perhaps, the most faithful expression of the Idea that words can convey. This language does not define the nature of God, but distinguishes our Idea of him from all other ideas and conceptions whatever. Some great religious souls have been content with this native Idea; have found it satisfactory both to Faith and Reason, and confessed with the ancients, that no man by searching could perfectly find out God. Others project their own limitations upon their conception of God, making him to appear such an one as themselves; thus they reverse the saying of Scripture, and creating a phantom in their own image, call it God. Thus, while the Idea of God, as a fact given in man's nature, and affording a consistent representation of its Object, is permanent and alike in all; while a merely sentimental consciousness or feeling of God, though vague and mysterious, is always the same in itself; the popular Conception of God is of the most various and evanescent character, and is not the same in any two ages or men. The Idea is the substance; the concep-

¹ M. Cousin thinks God is comprehensible by the human spirit, and even attempts to construct the "intellectual existence" of God. Creation he makes the easiest thing in the world to conceive of! See his Introduction to the History of Philosophy, Linberg's Translation, pp 132—143. See also Ripley, l. e. Vol. I. p. 271, et seq. One would naturally think human presumption could go no further; but this pleasing illusion is dispelled by the perusal of some of his opponents.

² Zenophanes saw further into the secret than some others, when he said, that if Horses or Lions had hands and were to represent each his Deity, it would be a *Horse* or a *Lion*, for these animals would impose their limitations on the Godhead just as man has done. See the passage in Eusebius, *Præp. Ev.* XIII. 13, and Clemens Alex. *Strom.* V. 14

The late excellent Dr Arnold goes to the other extreme, and says, "*It is only of God in Christ that I can, in my present state of being, conceive anything at all.*" (1) *Life, &c.*, New York, 1845, Chap. VII. Letter 61, p. 212.

tion is a transient phenomenon, which at best only imperfectly represents the substance. To possess the Idea of God, though latent in us, is unavoidable; to feel its comfort is natural; to dwell in the Sentiment of God is delightful; but to frame an adequate Conception of Deity, and set this forth in words, is not only above human capability, but impossible in the nature of things. The abyss of God is not to be fathomed save by Him who is All-in-all.¹

CHAPTER III.

POWER OF THE RELIGIOUS ELEMENT.

Now this inborn religious Faculty is the basis and cause of all Religion. Without this internal religious element, either Man could not have any religious notions, nor become religious at all, or else religion would be something foreign to his nature, which he might yet be taught mechanically from without, as bears are taught to dance, and parrots to talk; but which, like this acquired and unnatural accomplishment of the beast and the bird, would divert him from his true nature and perfection, rendering him a monster, but less of a man than he would be without the superfetation of this Religion upon him. Without a moral faculty, we could have no duties in respect to men; without a religious faculty, no duties in respect of God. The foundation of each is in Man, not out of him. If man have not a religious element in his nature, miraculous or other "revelations" can no more render him religious than fragments of sermons and leaves of the Bible can make a Lamb religious when mixed and eaten with its daily food. The Law, the Duty, and the Destiny of Man, as of all God's creatures, are writ in himself, and by the Almighty's hand.²

¹ See Parker's Sermons of Theism, Atheism, and the Popular Theology, Boston, 1853, Sermon I.

² See the treatise of Cicero on the foundation of duties in the essay *De Legibus*.

The religious element existing within us, and this alone, renders Religion the duty, the privilege, and the welfare of mankind. Thus Religion is not a superinduction upon the race, as some would make it appear; not an after-thought of God interpolated in human affairs, when the work was otherwise complete; but it is an original necessity of our nature; the religious element is deep and essentially laid in the very constitution of Man.

I. Now this religious element is universal. This may be proved in several ways. Whatever exists in the fundamental nature of one man, exists likewise in all men, though in different degrees and variously modified by different circumstances. Human nature is the same in the men of all races, ages, and countries. Man remains always identical, only the differing circumstances of climate, condition, culture, race, nation, and individual, modify the manifestations of what is at bottom the same. Races, ages, nations, and individuals, differ only in the various degrees they possess of particular faculties, and in the development or the neglect of these faculties. When, therefore, it is shown that the religious sentiment exists as a natural principle in any one man, its existence in all other men, that are, were, or shall be, follows unavoidably from the unity of human nature.

Again, the universality of the religious element is confirmed by historical arguments, which also have some force. We discover religious phenomena in all lands, wherever Man has advanced above the primitive condition of mere animal wildness. Of course there must have been a period in his development when the religious faculties had not come to conscious activity: but after that state of spiritual infancy is passed by, religious emotions appear in the rudest and most civilized state; among the cannibals of New Zealand and the refined voluptuaries of old Babylon; in the Esquimaux fisherman and the Parisian philosopher. The subsequent history of men shows no period in which

bus, Lib. I. It may surprise some men that a Pagan should come at the truth which lies at the bottom of all moral obligation, while so many Christian moralists have shot wide of the mark. See the discussion of the same subject, and a very different conclusion, in Paley's *Moral Philosophy*, and Dymond's *Essays*. See the heathen witnesses collected in Taylor, *Elements of the Civil Law*, Lond. 1786, p. 100, et seq.

these phenomena do not appear; Man worships, feels dependence and accountability, religious fear or hope, and gives signs of these spiritual emotions all the world over. No nation with fire and garments has been found so savage that they have not attained this; none so refined as to outgrow it. The widest observation, therefore, as well as a philosophical deduction from the nature of Man, warrants the conclusion that this sentiment is universal.¹

But at first glance there are some apparent exceptions to this rule. A few persons from time to time arise and claim the name of Atheist. But even these admit they feel this religious tendency; they acknowledge a sense of dependence, which they refer, not to the sound action of a natural element in their constitution, but to a disease thereof, to the influence of culture, or the instruction of their nurses, and count it an obstinate disease of their mind, or else a prejudice early imbibed and not easily removed.² Even if some one could be found who denied that he ever felt any religious emotion whatever, however feebly—this would prove nothing against the universality of its existence, and no more against the general rule of its manifestation, than the rare fact of a child born with a single arm proves against the general rule, that Man by nature has two arms.³

Again, travellers tell us some nations with considerable civilization have no God, no priests, no worship, and therefore give no sign of the existence of the religious element in them. Admitting they state a fact, we are not to conclude the religious element is wanting in the savages; only that they, like infants, have not attained the proper stage, when we could discover signs of its action. But

¹ Empirical observation alone would not teach the *universality* of this element, unless it were detected *in each man*, for a generalization can never go beyond the facts it embraces; but observation, so far as it goes, confirms the abstract conclusion which we reach independent of observation

² See Hume's *Natural History of Religion*, Introduction. Essays, Lond. 1822, Vol II. p. 379

³ One of the most remarkable Atheists of the present day is M. Comte, author of the valuable and sometimes profound work *Cours de Philosophie positive*, Paris, 1830—42, 6 vols 8vo. He glories in the name, but in many places gives evidence of the religious element existing in him in no small power. See Cudworth's *Intellectual System*, &c., Ch. IV. § 1—5. Some one says "No man is a consistent Atheist—if such be possible—who admits the existence of any general law."

these travellers are often mistaken.¹ Their observations have, in such cases, been superficial, made with but a slight knowledge of the manners and customs of the nation they treat. And, besides, their prejudice blinded their eyes. They looked for a regular worship, doctrines of religion, priests, temples, images, forms, and ceremonies. But there is one stage of religious consciousness in which none of these signs appear; and yet the religious element is at its work. The travellers, not finding the usual signs of worship, denied the existence of worship itself, and even of any religious consciousness in the nation. But if they had found a people ignorant of cookery and without the implements of that art, it would be quite as wise to conclude from this negative testimony that the nation never ate nor drank. On such evidence, the early Christians were convicted of Atheism by the Pagans, and subsequently the Pagans by the Christians.²

¹ It seems surprising that so acute a philosopher as Locke (*Essays*, B. I. ch. 4, § 8) should *prove a negative by hearsay*, and assert on such evidence as Rhoe, Jo. de Léry, Matimère, Torry, Ovington, &c., that there were "whole nations amongst whom there was to be found no notion of a God, no religion." See the able remarks of his friend Shaftesbury—who is most unrighteously reckoned a speculative enemy to religion—against this opinion, in his *Characteristics*, Lond. 1758, Vol. IV. p. 81, et seq., 8th Letter to a Student, &c. Steller declares the Kamschatkans have no idea of a Supreme Being, yet gives an account of their mythology! See Pritchard, *Researches into the Physical History of Mankind*, Lond. 1841, et seq., Vol. IV. p. 499. So intelligent a writer as Mr Noiton says that "*in the popular religion of the Greeks and Romans there was no recognition of God.*" *Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels*, Boston, 1837, et seq., Vol. III p. 13. This example shows the caution with which we are to read less exact writers, who deny that certain savages have any religion. See examples of this sort collected, for a different purpose, in *Mombodo, Origin and Progress of Language*, 2nd ed., Edinburgh, 1774, Vol. I. book II. chap. 3, where see *much more evidence to show that races of men exist with tails*. Some writers seem to think Christianity is never safe until they have shown, as they fancy, that man cannot, by the natural exercise of his faculties, attain a knowledge of even the simplest and most obvious religious truths. Some foolish books have been based on this idea, which is yet the staple of many sermons. See on this head the valuable remarks of M. Comte ubi supra, Vol. V. p. 32, et seq.

It is not long since the whole nation of the Chinese were accused of Atheism, and that by writers so respectable as Le Père de Sainte Marie, and Le Père Longobardi. See, who will, Leibnitz's refutation of the charge, *Opp ed. Dutschens*, Vol. IV. part 1. p. 170, et seq.

² Winslow, with others, at first declared the American Indians had no religion or knowledge of God, but he afterwards corrected his mistake. See *Francis's Life of Eliot*, p. 32, et seq. See also Catlin's *Letters, &c.*, on the North American Indians, New York, 1841, Vol. I. p. 156. Even Meiners, *Kritische Geschichte der Religionen*, Vol. I. p. 11, 12, admits there is no nation without

There is still one other case of apparent exception to the rule. Some persons have been found, who in early childhood were separated from human society and grew up towards the years of maturity in an isolated state, having no contact with their fellow-mortals. These give no signs of any religious element in their nature. But other universal faculties of the race, the tendency to laugh, and to speak articulate words, give quite as little sign of their existence.¹ Yet when these unfortunate persons are exposed to the ordinary influence of life, the religious, like other faculties, does its work. Hence we may conclude it existed, though dormant until the proper conditions of its development were supplied.

These three apparent exceptions serve only to confirm the rule that the religious sentiment, like the power of attention, thought, and love, is universal in the race. Yet it is plain that there was a period in which the primitive wild man, without language or self-consciousness, gave no sign of any religious faculty at all, still the original element lay in this baby-man.

However, like other faculties, this is possessed in different degrees by different races, nations, and individuals, and at particular epochs of the world's or the individual's history acquires a predominance it has not at other times. It seems God never creates two races, nations, or men, with precisely the same endowments. There is a difference, more or less striking, between the intellectual, æsthetic, and moral development of two races, or nations, or even between two men of the same race and nation. This difference seems to be the effect, not merely of the

religious observances. See in Pritchard, l. c. Vol. I. p. 188, the statements relative to the Esquimaux, and his correction of the erroneous and ill-natured accounts of others. If any nation is destitute of religious opinions and observances, it must be the Esquimaux, and the Bushmans of South Africa, who seem to be the lowest of the human race. But it is clear, from the statement of travellers and missionaries, that both have religious sentiments and opinions. The Heathen philosophers admitted it as a fact *universally acknowledged* that there was a God

¹ See a collection of the most remarkable of these cases in Jahn's Appendix Hermeneuticæ, &c., Viennæ, 1815, Vol. II. p. 208, et seq., and the authors there cited. Monbodo, Ancient Metaphysics, &c., Edinburgh, 1779, et seq., Vol. III. book ii. chap. 1, and Appendix, chap. 3. Col. Sleeman's account of "Wolves nurturing Children in their Dens," Plymouth, England, 1852. Windsor's Papuans, Lond. 1853. Capt. Gibson's communication to the American Geog. Soc., Dec. 1853.

different circumstances whereto they are exposed, but also of the different endowments with which they set out. If we watch in history the gradual development and evolution of the human race, we see that one nation takes the lead in the march of mind, pursues science, literature, and the arts; another in war, and the practical business of political thrift, while a third nation, prominent neither for science nor political skill, takes the lead in Religion, and in the comparative strength of its religious consciousness surpasses both.

Three forms of monotheistic Religion have, at various times, come up in the world's history. Two of them at this moment perhaps outnumber the votaries of all other religions, and divide between them the more advanced civilization of mankind. These three are the Mosaic, the Christian, and the Mahometan; all recognizing the unity of God, the religious nature of Man, and the relation between God and Man. All of these, surprising as it is, came from one family of men, the Shemitic, who spoke, in substance, the same language, lived in the same country, and had the same customs and political institutions. Even that wide-spread and more monstrous form of Religion, which our fathers had in the wilds of Europe, betrays its likeness to this Oriental stock; and that form, still earlier, which dotted Greece all over with its temples, filling the isles of the Mediterranean with its solemn and mysterious chant, came apparently from the same source.¹ The beautiful spirit of the Greek, modified, enlarged, and embellished what Oriental piety at first called down from the Euxyrea. The nations now at the head of modern civilization have not developed independently their power of creative religious genius, so to say; for each form of worship that has prevailed with them was originally derived from some other race. These nations are more scientific than religious; reflective rather than spontaneous; utilitarian more than reverential; and, so far as history relates, have never yet created a permanent form of Religion which has extended to other families of men. Their faith, like their

¹ This Orientalism of the religious opinions among the Europeans has led to some very absurd conceits, see a notorious instance in Davis's *Mythology of the Druids*. See also *La Religion des Gaulois, &c.*, par le R. P. Dom [Jacques Martin], Paris, 1727, 2 vols 4to.

choicer fruits, is an importation from abroad, not an indigenous plant, though now happily naturalized, and rendered productive in their soil. Of all nations hitherto known, these are the most disposed to reflection, literature, science, and the practical arts; while the Shemitish tribes in their early age were above all others religious, and have had an influence in religious history entirely disproportionate to their numbers, their art, their science, or their laws. Out of the heart of this ancient family of nations flowed forth that triple stream of pious life, which even now gives energy to the pulsations of the world. Egypt and Greece have stirred the intellect of mankind; and spoken to our love of the Grand, the Beautiful, the True, to faculties that lie deep in us. But this Oriental people have touched the Soul of men, and awakened reverence for the Good, the Holy, the Altogether Beautiful, which lies in the profoundest deep of all. The religious element appears least conspicuous, it may be, in some nations of Australia—perhaps the most barbarous of men. With savages in general it is in its infancy, like all the nobler attributes of Man,¹ but as they develop their nature, this faculty becomes more and more apparent.

II. Again; this element is indestructible in human nature. It is not in the power of caprice within, nor external circumstances, war or peace, freedom or slavery, ignorance or refinement, wholly to abolish or destroy it. Its growth may be retarded, or quickened; its power misdirected, or suffered to flow in its proper channel. But no violence from within, no violence from without, can ever destroy this element. It were as easy to extirpate hunger and thirst from the sound living body, as this element from the spirit. It may sleep. It never dies. Kept down by external force to-day, it flames up to heaven in streams of light to-morrow. When perverted from its natural course, it writes, in devastation, its chronicles of wrongs,—a horrid page of human history, which proves its awful power, as the strength of the human muscle is proved by the distortions of the maniac. Sensual men, who hate the restraints of Religion, who know nothing of its en-

¹ M. Comte takes a very different view of the matter, and has both fact and philosophy against him.

couragements, strive to pluck up by the roots this plant which God has set in the midst of the garden. But there it stands—the tree of Knowledge, the tree of Life. Even such as boast the name of Infidel and Atheist find, unconsciously, repose in its wide shadow, and refreshment in its fruit. It blesses obedient men. He who violates the divine law, and thus would wring this feeling from his heart, feels it, like a heated iron, in the marrow of his bones.

III. Still further; this religious element is the strongest and deepest in human nature. It depends on nothing outside, conventional or artificial. It is identical in all men; not a similar thing, but the same. Superficially, man differs from man, in the less and more; but in the nature of the primitive religious element all agree, as in whatever is deepest. Out of the profoundest abyss in man proceed his worship, his prayer, his hymn of praise. The history of the world shows us what a space Religion fills. She is the mother of philosophy and the arts; has presided over the greatest wars. She holds now all nations with her unseen hand; restrains their passions, more powerful than all the cunning statutes of the lawgiver; awakens their virtue; allays their sorrows with a mild comfort, all her own; brightens their hopes with the purple ray of faith, shed through the sombre curtains of necessity.

Religious emotion often controls society, inspires the lawgiver and the artist—is the deep-moving principle; it has called forth the greatest heroism of past ages; the proudest deeds of daring and endurance have been done in its name. Without Religion, all the sages of a kingdom cannot build a city; but with it, how a rude fanatic sways the mass of men. The greatest works of human art have risen only at Religion's call. The marble is pliant at her magic touch, and seems to breathe a pious life. The chiselled stone is instinct with a living soul, and stands there, silent, yet full of hymns and prayers; an embodied aspiration, a thought with wings that mock at space and time. The Temples of the East, the Cathedrals of the West; Altar and Column and Statue and Image,—these are the tribute Art pays to her. Whence did Michael Angelo, Phidias, Praxiteles, and all the mighty sons of Art,

who chronicled their awful thoughts in stone, shaping brute matter to a divine form, building up the Pyramid and Parthenon, or forcing the hard elements to swell into the arch, aspire into the dome or the fantastic tower,—whence did they draw their inspiration? All their greatest wonders are wrought in Religion's name. In the very dawn of time, Genius looks through the clouds and lifts up his voice in hymns and songs and stories of the Gods; and the Angel of Music carves out her thanksgiving, her penitence, her prayers for Man, on the unseen air, as a votive gift for her. Her sweetest note, her most majestic chant, she breathes only at Religion's call. Thus it has always been. A thousand men will readily become celibate monks for Religion. Would they for Gold, or Ease, or Fame?

The greatest sacrifices ever made are offered in the name of Religion. For this a man will forego ease, peace, friends, society, wife, and child, all that mortal flesh holds dearest; no danger is too dangerous, no suffering too stern to bear, if Religion say the word. Simeon the Stylite will stay years long on his pillar's top; the devotee of Budha tear off his palpitating flesh to serve his God. The Pagan idolater, bowing down to a false image of stone, renounces his possessions, submits to barbarous and cruel rites, shameful mutilation of his limbs; gives the first-born of his body for the sin of his soul; casts his own person to destruction, because he dreams Baal, or Saturn, Jehovah, or Moloch, demands the sacrifice. The Christian idolater, doing equal homage to a lying thought, gives up Common Sense, Reason, Conscience, Love of his brother, at the same fancied mandate; is ready to credit most obvious absurdities; accept contradictions; do what conflicts with the moral sense; believe dogmas that make life dark, eternity dreadful, Man a worm, and God a tyrant; dogmas that make him count as cursed half his brother men, because told such is his duty, in the name of Religion. In this name Thomas More, the ablest head of his times, will believe a bit of bread becomes the Almighty God, when a lewd priest but mumbles his juggling Latin and lifts up his hands. In our day, heads as able as Thomas More's believe doctrines quite as absurd, because taught as Religion and God's command. In its behalf, the

foolishest teaching becomes acceptable; the foulest doctrines, the grossest conduct, crimes that, like the fabled banquet of Thyestes, might make the sun sicken at the sight and turn back affrighted in his course,—these things are counted as beautiful, superior to Reason, acceptable to God. The wicked man may bless his brother in crime; the unrighteous blast the holy with his curse, and devotees shall shout “Amen,” to both the blessing and the ban.

On what other authority have rites so bloody been accepted; or doctrines so false to reason, so libellous of God? For what else has Man achieved such works, and made such sacrifice? In what name but this, will the man of vast and far outstretching mind, the counsellor, the chief, the sage, the native king of men, forego the vastness of his thought, put out his spirit’s eyes, and bow him to a drivelling wretch who knows nothing but treacherous mummerly and juggling tricks? In Religion this has been done from the first false prophet to the last false priest, and the pride of the Understanding is abashed; the supremacy of Reason degraded; the majesty of Conscience trampled on; the beautifulness of Faith and Love trodden down into the mire of the streets. The hand, the foot, the eye, the ear, the tongue, the most sacred members of the body; judgment, imagination, the overmastering faculties of mind; justice, mercy, and love, the fairest affections of the soul,—all these have been reckoned a poor and paltry sacrifice, and lopped off at the shrine of God as things unholy. This has been done, not only by Pagan polytheists, and savage idolaters, but by Christian devotees, accomplished scholars, the enlightened men of enlightened times.

These melancholy results, which are but aberrations of the religious element, the disease of the baby, not the soundness of mankind, have often been confounded with Religion itself, regarded as the legitimate fruit of the religious faculty. Hence men have said, Such results prove that Religion itself is a popular fury; the foolishness of the people; the madness of mankind. They prove a very different thing. They show the depth, the strength, the awful power of that element which thus can overmaster all the rest of Man—Passion and Conscience, Reason and Love. Tell a man his interest requires a sacrifice, he hesitates; convince him his Religion demands it, and crowds

rush at once, and joyful, to a martyr's fiery death. It is the best things that are capable of the worst abuse; the very abuse may test the value.¹

CHAPTER IV.

THE IDEA OF RELIGION CONNECTED WITH SCIENCE AND LIFE.

THE legitimate action of the religious element produces reverence. This reverence may ascend into Trust, Hope, and Love, which is according to its nature; or descend into Doubt, Fear, and Hate, which is against its nature: it thus rises or falls, as it coexists in the individual, with wisdom and goodness, or with ignorance and vice. However, the legitimate and normal action of the religious element leads ultimately, and of necessity, to reverence, absolute trust, and perfect love of God. These are the result only of its sound and healthy action.

Now there can be but one kind of Religion, as there can be but one kind of time and space. It may exist in different degrees, weak or powerful; in combination with other emotions, love or hate, with wisdom or folly, and thus it is superficially modified, just as Love, which is always the same thing, is modified by the character of the man who feels it, and by that of the object to which it is directed. Of course, then, there is no difference but of words between *revealed* Religion and *natural* Religion, for all actual Religion is revealed in us, or it could not be felt, and all revealed Religion is natural, or it would be of no use.²

¹ On this theme, see the forcible and eloquent remarks of Professor Whewell, in his *Sermons on the Foundation of Morals*, 2nd edition, p. 28, et seq., a work well worthy, in its spirit and general tone, of his illustrious predecessors, "the Latitude men about Cambridge." See also Mr Parker's *Sermon Of the Relation between the Ecclesiastical Institutions, and the Religious Consciousness of the American People*, 1855, and that *Of the Function of a Teacher of Religion*, 1855; *Sermons of Theism, Atheism, and the Popular Theology*, 1855, *Sermons III., IV., V., VI.*

² This distinction between natural and revealed religion is very old; at least

What is of use to a man comes upon the plane of his consciousness, not merely above it, or below it. We may regard Religion from different points of view, and give corresponding names to our partial conceptions, which we have purposely limited, and so speak of natural and revealed Religion; Monotheistic, Polytheistic, or Pantheistic, Pagan, Jewish, Christian, Mahometan Religion. But in these cases the distinction, indicated by the terms, belongs to the thinker's mind, not to Religion itself, the object of thought. Historical phenomena of Religion vary in the more and less. Some express it purely and beautifully; others mingle foreign emotions with it, and but feebly represent the pious feeling.

To determine the question what is Absolute, that is, perfect Religion, Religion with no limitation, we are not to gather to a focus the scattered rays of all the various forms under which Religion has appeared in history, for we can never collect the Absolute from any number of imperfect phenomena; and, besides, in making the search and forming an eclecticism from all the historical religious phenomena, we presuppose in ourselves the criterion by which they are judged, namely, the Absolute itself, which we seek to construct, and thus move only in a circle, and end where we began. To answer the question, we must go back to the primitive facts of religious consciousness within us. Then we find religion is VOLUNTARY OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW OF GOD, INWARD AND OUTWARD OBEDIENCE to that law he has written on our nature, revealed in various ways through Instinct, Reason, Conscience, and the Religious emotions. Through it we regard Him as the absolute object of Reverence, Faith, and Love.¹ This obedience may be unconsci-

as old as the time of Origen. But it is evidently a distinction in *form* not in *substance*. The terms seem to have risen from taking an exclusive view of some *positive* and *historical* form of religion. All *religions* claim to have been *miraculously revealed*.

¹ The above definition or Idea of Religion is not given as the only or the best that can possibly be given, but simply as my own, the best I can find. If others have a better I shall rejoice at it. I will give some of the more striking definitions that have been set forth by others. Plato: "A Likeness to God, according to our ability." John Smith: "God is First Truth and Primitive Goodness. True Religion is a vigorous efflux and emanation of both upon the Spirit of man, and therefore is called a Participation of the Divine Nature. . . . Religion is a heaven-born thing; the seed of God in the spirits of men whereby they

ous, as in little children who have known no contradiction between duty and desire; and perhaps involuntary in the perfect saint, to whom all duties are desirable, who has ended the contradiction by willing himself God's will, and thus becoming one with God. It may be conscious, as with many men whose strife is not yet over. It seems the highest and completest mode of Religion must be self-conscious,—free goodness, free piety, and free, self-conscious trust in God.¹

Now there are two tendencies connected with Religion; one is speculative: here the man is intellectually employed in matters pertaining to Religion, to God, to Man's religious nature, and his relation and connection with God. The result of this tendency is Theology. This is not Religion itself. It is men's Thought about Religion; the Philosophy of divine things; the Science of Religion. Its sphere is the mind of men. Religion and Theology are no more to be confounded than the stars with astronomy.²

While the religious element, like the intellectual or the moral, or human nature itself, remains ever the same, the Religious Consciousness of mankind is continually progressive; and so Theology, which is the intellectual expression

are formed to a similitude and likeness of Himself." Kant: "Reverence for the moral law as a divine command." Schelling. "The union of the Finite and the Infinite." Fichte "Faith in a moral government of the world." Hegel: "Morality becoming conscious of the free universality of its concrete essence." This will convey no idea to one not acquainted with the peculiar phraseology of Hegel. It seems to mean, Perfect mind becoming conscious of itself. Schliermacher "Immediate self-consciousness of the absolute dependence of all the finite on the infinite." Hase: "Striving after the Absolute, which is in itself unattainable; but by love of it man participates of the divine perfection." Wollaston "An obligation to *do* what ought not to be omitted, and to *forbear* what ought not to be done." Jeremy Taylor "The whole duty of man, comprehending in it justice, charity, and sobriety." For the opinions of the ancients, see a treatise of Nitzsch, in *Studien und Kritiken* for 1828, p. 527, et seq.

¹ See Parker's Sermons of Theism, &c., Seim. V. and VI.

² Much difficulty has arisen from this confusion of Religion and Theology; it is one proximate cause of that rancorous hatred which exists between the *theological* parties of the present day. Each connects Religion exclusively with its own sectarian theology. But there were great men before Agamemnon, good men before Moses. Theology is a natural product of the human mind. Each man has some notion of divine things—that is, a *theology*; if he collect them into a system, it is a *system of theology*, which differs in some points from that of every other man living. There is but one Religion, though many theologies. See de Wette, *Ueber Religion und Theologie*, Part I. Ch. I.—III.; Part II. Ch. I.—III., his *Dogmatik*, § 4—8.

thereof, advances, like all other science, from age to age. The most various theological doctrines exist in connection with religious emotions, helping or hindering man's general development. The highest notion I can form of Religion is this, which I called the Absolute Religion: conscious service of the Infinite God by keeping every law he has enacted into the constitution of the Universe,—service of Him by the normal use, discipline, development, and delight of every limb of the body, every faculty of the spirit, and so of all the powers we possess.

The other tendency is practical; here the man is employed in acts of obedience to Religion. The result of this tendency is Morality. This alone is not Religion itself, but one part of the life Religion demands. There may be Morality deep and true with little or no purely religious consciousness, for a sharp analysis separates between the religious and moral elements in a man.¹ Morality is the harmony between man's action and the natural law of God. It is a part of Religion which includes it "as the Sea her waves." In its highest form Morality doubtless implies Religious emotions, but not necessarily the self-consciousness thereof. For though Piety, the love of God, and Benevolence, the love of Man, do logically involve each other, yet experience shows that a man may see and observe the distinction between right and wrong, clearly and disinterestedly, without consciously feeling, as such, reverence, or love of God; that is, he may be truly moral up to a certain point, without being consciously religious, though he cannot be truly religious without at the same time being moral also. But in a harmonious man, the two are practically inseparable as substance and form. The merely moral man, in the actions, thoughts, and feelings which relate to his fellow-mortal, obeys the eternal law of duty, revealed in his nature, as such, and from love of that law,

¹ It seems plain that the ethical and religious element in Man are not the same; at least, they are as unlike as Memory and Imagination, though, like these, they act most harmoniously when in conjunction. It is true we cannot draw a line between them as between Sight and Hearing, but this inability to tell where one begins and the other ends, is no argument against the separate existence of the faculties themselves. See Kant, *Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*; 2nd ed 1794, Pref. p. iii., et seq. Still Religion and Morality are to be distinguished by their *centre* rather than their *circumference*, by their *type* more than their *limit*.

without regard to its Author. The religious man obeys the same law, but regards it as the will of God. One rests in the law, the other only in its Author.¹

Now in all forms of Religion there must be a common element which is the same thing in each man ; not a similar thing, but just the same thing, different only in degree, not in kind, and in its direction towards one or many objects, in both of which particulars it is influenced in some measure by external circumstances. Then since men exist under most various conditions, and in widely different degrees of civilization, it is plain that the religious consciousness must appear under various forms, accompanied with various doctrines, as to the number and nature of its Objects, the Deities ; with various rites, forms, and ceremonies, as it means to appease, propitiate, and serve these Objects ; with various organizations, designed to accomplish the purposes which it is supposed to demand ; and, in short, with apparently various and even opposite effects upon life and character. As all men are at bottom the same, but as no two nations or ages are exactly alike in character, circumstances, or development, so, therefore, though the religious element be the same in all, we must expect to find that its manifestations are never exactly alike in any two ages or nations, though they give the same name to their form of worship. If we look still more minutely, we see that no two men are exactly alike in character, circumstances, and development, and therefore that no two men can exhibit their Religion in just the same way, though they kneel at the same altar, and pronounce the same creed. From the difference between men, it follows that there must be as many different subjective conceptions of God, and forms of Religion, as there are men and women who think about God, and apply their thoughts and feelings to life. Hence, though the religious faculty be always the same in all, the Doctrines of Religion, or theology ; the Forms of Religion, or mode of worship ; and the Practice of Religion, which is Morality, cannot be the same thing in any two men, though one mother bore them, and they were educated in the same way. The conception we form of God ; our notion about

¹ See Mr Parker's Ten Sermons, Sermons I. to V.

Man ; of the relation between him and God ; of the duties which grow out of that relation, may be taken as the exponent of all the man's thoughts, feelings, and life. They are therefore alike the measure and the result of the total development of a man, an age, or race. If these things are so, then the phenomena of Religion—like those of Science and Art—must vary from land to land, and age to age, with the varying civilization of mankind; must be one thing in New Zealand, and the first century, and something quite different in New England, and the fifty-ninth century. They must be one thing in the wise man, and another in the foolish man. They must vary also in the same individual, for a man's wisdom, goodness, and general character, affect the phenomena of his Religion. The Religion of the boy and the man, of Saul the youth, and Paul the aged, how unlike they appear. The boy's prayer will not fill the man's heart ; nor can the stripling son of Zebedee comprehend that devotion and life which he shall enjoy when he becomes the Saint mature in years.

CHAPTER V.

THE THREE GREAT HISTORICAL FORMS OF RELIGION.

LOOKING at the religious history of mankind, and especially at that portion of the human race which has risen highest in the scale of progress, we see that the various phenomena of Religion may, for the present purpose, be summed up in three distinct classes or types, corresponding to three distinct degrees of civilization, and almost inseparable from them. These are FETTERISM, POLYTHEISM, and MONOTHEISM. But this classification is imperfect, and wholly external, though of use for the present purpose. It must be borne in mind that we never find a nation in which either mode prevails alone. Nothing is truer than this, that minds of the same spiritual growth

see the same spiritual truth. Thus, a savage Saint, living in a nation of Idolaters or Polytheists, worships the one true God, as Jesus of Nazareth has done. In a Christian land superstitious men may be found, who are as much Idolaters as Nebuchadnezzar or Jeroboam.

I. Fetichism denotes the worship of visible objects, such as beasts, birds, fish, insects, trees, mountains, the stars, the sun, the moon, the earth, the sea, and air, as types of the infinite Spirit. It is the worship of Nature.¹ It includes many forms of religious observances that prevailed widely in ancient days, and still continue among savage tribes. It belongs to a period in the progress of the individual, or society, when civilization is low, the manners wild and barbarous, and the intellect acts in ignorance of the causes at work around it; when Man neither understands nature nor himself. Some writers suppose the human race started at first with a pure Theism; for the knowledge of truth, say they, must be older than the perception of error in this respect. It seems the sentiment of Man would lead him to the ONE God. Doubtless it would if the conditions of its highest action were perfectly fulfilled. But as this is not done in a state of ignorance and barbarism, therefore the religious sentiment mistakes its object, and sometimes worships the symbol more than the thing it stands for.

In this stage of growth, not only the common objects above enumerated, but gems, metals, stones that fell from heaven,² images, carved bits of wood, stuffed skins of

¹ It will probably be denied by some, that these objects were worshipped as symbols of the Deity. It seems, however, that even the most savage nations regarded their Idols only as Types of God. On this subject, see Constant, Religion, &c, Paris, 1824, 5 vols 8vo; Philip Van Limburg Brauer, Histoire de la Civilization morale et religieuse des Grecs, &c, Groningues, 1833—42, 8 vols 8vo, Vol. II. Ch. IX. X. et alibi; Oldendorp, Geschichte der Mission—auf—St Thomas, &c., Barby, 1777, p. 318, et seq.; Du Culte des Dieux fétiches [par De Brosses, Paris], 1770, 1 vol 12mo, Movers, Untersuchung über die Religion und der Gottheiten der Phonizier, Bonn, 1841, 2 vols 8vo; Comte, Cours de Philosophie positive, Vol. V, Stubr, Allg. Gesch. der Religionsformen, Berlin, 1838, 2 vols. 8vo, Meimers, ubi supra; and the numerous accounts of the savage nations, by missionaries, travellers, &c. Catlin, ubi supra, Vol. I. p. 35, et seq., p. 88, et seq., p. 156, et seq., &c.

² These *Stone-fetiches* are called *Baetylia* by the learned. Cybele was worshipped in the form of a black stone, in Asia Minor. Theophrast. Charact. 16. Lucian, Pseudomant. § 30. The ancient Laplanders also worshipped large

beasts, like the *medicine-bags* of the North-American Indians, are reckoned as divinities, and so become objects of adoration.¹ But in this case the visible object is idealized; not worshipped as the brute thing it really is, but as the type and symbol of God. Nature is an Apparition of the Deity, God in a mask. Brute matter was never an object of adoration. Thus the Egyptians who worshipped the Crocodile, did not worship it as a Crocodile, but as a symbol of God, "an appropriate one," says Plutarch, "for it alone, of all animals, has no tongue, and God needs none to speak his power and glory." Similar causes, it may be, led to the worship of other animals. Thus the Hawk was a type of divine foresight; the Bull of strength; the Serpent of mystery. The Savage did not worship the Buffalo, but the Manitou of all Buffaloes, the universal cause of each particular effect. Still more, there is something mysterious about the animals. Their instinctive knowledge of coming storms, and other events; the wondrous foresight of the Beaver, the Bee; the sagacity of the Dog; the obscurity attending all their emotions, helped, no doubt, to procure them a place among powers greater than human. It is the Unknown which men worship in common things; at this stage, man, whose emotions are understood, is never an object of adoration.²

Fetichism is the infancy of Religion. Here the religious

stones called *Scythæ*. See Scheffer's Lapland. In the time of Pausanias, at Phœne, in Achaia, there were nearly thirty square stones, called by the names of the Gods, and worshipped. Opp., ed. Lips. 1838, Vol. II. Lib. vii. ch. 22, p. 618. Rough stones, he adds, formerly received divine honours universally in Greece. The erection of such is forbidden in Levit. xxvi. 1, et al. On this form of worship, see some curious facts collected by Michelet, *Hist. de France*, Liv. I. Eclaircissements, *Oeuvres*, Ed. Bruxelles, 1840, Tom III. p. 51, 55, 61, seq. 93 (note 1.). The erection of *Bacyllia* is forbidden by several councils of the Church, e. g. C. *Arclat*, II. Can. 23, C. *Autosiod*. Can. 3; C. *Talet*. XII. Can. 11.

¹ See Catlin, *ubi supra*. See also Legis, *Fundgraben des Alten Nordens*, Leip., 1829, 2 vols. 8vo, and his *Alkuna*, *Nordische und Nord-Slawische Mythologie*, Leip., 1831, Vol. I. 8vo. Mone, *Geschichte der Heidenthums in Nordlichen Europa*, Leip., 1822, 2 vols. 8vo. See Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, Gott. 1835, for this worship of Nature in the North.

² But see the causes of Animal worship assigned by Diod. Sic. Lib. I. p. 76, ed. Rhodoman; the remarks of Cicero, *De Nat. Deorum*, *Tusc. V.* et al.; Plutarch, *De Iside et Osir.*, p. 72, et seq., et al., Wilkinson, *Manners, &c.*, of Ancient Egypt, 2nd Series, Vol. I. p. 104, seq., and Porphyry, *De Abst.* IV. 9, cited by him. Jean Paul says, that "in the beast men see the Isis-veil of a Deity," a thought which Hegel has expanded in his *Philos. der Religion*. See Creutzer, *Symbol*. 3rd ed. Vol. I. p. 30, et seq.

consciousness is still in the arms of rude, savage life, where sensation prevails over reflection. It is a deification of Nature, "All is God, but God himself." It loses the Infinite in the finite; worships the creature more than the Creator. Its lowest form—for in this lowest deep there is a lower deep—is the worship of beasts; the highest the sublime, but deceitful, reverence which the old Sabæan paid the host of Heaven, or which some Grecian or Indian philosopher offered to the Universe personified, and called Pan, or Brahma. Then all the mass of created things was a Fetiche. God was worshipped in a sublime and devout, but bewildering, Pantheism. He was not considered as distinct from the Universe. Pantheism and Feticism are nearly allied.¹

In the lowest form of this worship, so far as we can gather from the savage tribes, each individual has his own peculiar Fetiche, a beast, an image, a stone, a mountain, or a star, a concrete and visible type of God. For it seems in this state that all, or most, external things, are supposed to have a life analogous in kind to ours, but more or less intense in degree. The concrete form is but the veil of God, like that before Isis in Egypt. There are no priests, for each man has access to his own Deity at will. Worship and prayer are personal, and without mediators. The age of the priesthood, as a distinct class, has not come. Worship is entirely free; there is no rite, estab-

¹ In consequence of the opinion in feticistic nations, that external things have a mysterious life, M. Comte, *ubi supra*, Vol. V. p. 36, et seq., *discovers traces of it in animals*. When a savage, a child, or a dog, first hears a watch tick, each supposes it endowed with life, "whence results, by natural consequence, a Feticism, which, at bottom, is common to all three!" Here he confounds the *sign* with the *cause*.

Pliny has a curious passage in which he ascribes to the Elephant *Æquitas*, Religio quoque Siderum; Solisque ac Lunæ Veneratio. Nat. Hist. Lib. VIII. ch. 1. The notion that beasts had a moral sense appears frequently among the ancients. Ulpian says *jus naturale* is common to all animals. Origen says that Celsus taught that there was no difference between the Soul of a man and that of Emmets, Bees, &c. Lib. II. Cels. Cont. Clement of Alex (Stromt. VI. 14, p. 705, 706, ed. Potter) says God gave the Heathen the sun, moon, and stars, that they might worship them, such worship being the way to that of God himself. Perhaps he was led to this opinion by following the LXX. in Deut. iv. 19.

Feticism continued in Europe long after the introduction of Christianity. The councils of the Church forbid its various forms in numerous decrees, e. g. C. Turg. II. Can 22; C. Autousiæ Can. 1. 4; C. Quinisext. Can. 62, 65, 79; Narbon. Can. 15; C. Rothomag. Can. 4, 14. See in Staudlin, Gesch. Theol. Vol. III. 371, et seq.

lished and fixed. Public theological doctrines are not yet formed. There are no mysteries in which each may not share.

This state of Fetichism continues as long as Man is in the gross state of ignorance which renders it possible. Next, as the power of abstraction and generalization becomes enlarged, and the qualities of external nature are understood, there are concrete and visible Gods for the Family; next for the Tribe; then for the Nation. But their power is supposed to be limited within certain bounds. A subsequent generalization gives an invisible but still concrete Deity for each department of Nature—the earth, the sea, the sky.

Now as soon as there is a Fetiche for the family, or the tribe, a mediator becomes needed to interpret the will and insure the favour of that Fetiche, to bring rain, or plenty, or success, and to avert impending evils. Such are the *angkokols* of the Esquimaux, the *medicine-men* of the Mandans, the *jugglers* of the Negroes. Then a priesthood gradually springs up, at first possessing none but spiritual powers; at length it surrounds its God with mysteries; excludes him from the public eye; establishes forms, sacrifices, and doctrines; limits access to the Gods; becomes tyrannical; aspires after political power; and founds a theocracy, the worst of despotisms, the earliest, and the most lasting.¹ Still it has occupied a high and indispensable position in the development of the human race.

The highest form of Fetichism is the worship of the stars, or of the universe.² Here it easily branches off into Polytheism. Indeed, it is impossible to tell where one begins and the other ends, for traces of each of the three forms are found in all the others; the two must be distinguished by their centre, not their circumference. The

¹ See at the end of Hodges's "Elhu," &c., London, 1750, 1 vol. 4to, a striking account of the manner in which religious forms are established, taken from a French publication which was burned by the common hangman at Paris. See also on the establishment and influence of the priesthood upon religion. Constant, ubi sup., Vol. II. Liv. iii. iv., Vol. IV. passim. His judgment of the priesthood, though often just, is sometimes too severe. Comte, ubi sup., Vol. V. p. 57. et seq. On the priesthood among savage nations, see Pritchard, ubi sup., Vol. I. p. 206, et seq., Meiners, ubi sup., Vol. II. p. 481—602.

² See Strabo's remarkable account of the worship of the Ancient Persians, Opp. ed. Siebenkees, Vol. VI. Lib. xv. § 13, p. 221. See too the remarks of Herbert, De Religione Gentilitium, Amst. 1663, 1 vol. 4to, Ch. II., XLV., et al.

GREAT SPIRIT is worshipped, perhaps, in all stages of Fetichism. The Fetiche and the Manitou, visible types, are not the Great Spirit. But even in the worship of many Gods, or of ONE alone, traces of the ruder form still linger. The Fetiche of the individual is preserved in the Amulet, worn as a charm ; in the figure of an animal painted on the dress, the armour, or the flesh of the worshipper. The Family Fetiche survives in the household Gods ; the Penates of the Romans ; the Teraphim of Laban ; the Idol of Micah. The Fetiche of the Tribe still lives in the Lares of the Roman ; in the patron God of each Grecian people ; in some animal treated with great respect, or idealized in art, as the Bull Apis, the brazen Serpent, Horses consecrated to the Sun in Solomon's Temple ;¹ in an image of Deity, like the old wooden statues of Minerva, always religiously kept, or the magnificent figures of the Gods in marble, ivory, or gold, the productions of maturest art ; in some chosen symbol, the Palladium, the Ancilia, the Ark of the Covenant. The Fetiche of the Nation, almost inseparably connected with the former, is still remembered in the mystical Cherubim and Most Holy Place among the Jews ; in the Olympian Jove of Greece, and the Capitoline Jupiter of Rome ; in the image of " the Great Goddess Diana, which fell down from Jupiter." It appears also in reverence for particular places formerly deemed the local and exclusive residence of the Fetiche,—such as the Caaba at Mecca ; Hebron, Moriah, and Bethel in Judea ; Delphi in Greece, and the great gathering places of the North-men in Europe, spots deemed holy by the superstitious even now, and therefore made the site of Christian Churches.²

Other and more general vestiges of Fetichism remain in the popular superstitions ; in the belief of signs, omens,

¹ Vatke, *Bibliche Theologie*, Berlin, 1835, Vol. I., attempts to trace out the connection of Fetichism with the Jewish ritual.

² See Mone, *ubi supra*, Vol. I. p. 23, et seq., p. 43, et seq., p. 113, et seq., p. 249, et seq., and elsewhere. Wilkinson, *ubi sup.* Vol. I., Ch. xii., Vol. II. Ch. ii. and xiv. His theory, however, differs widely from the above. Whatever was extraordinary was deemed eminently divine. Thus with the Hebrews a great cedar was the *cedar of God*. Other nations had their *Dé-wa-dá-ru*, God Timber, &c. See Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, p. 41, et seq. Lucan, *Pharsal*, Lib. III. 399, et seq. Mithridates, at the siege of Patara, dared not cut down the sacred trees. Appian, *De Bello Mith. Ch. XXVII.* Opp. ed. Schweighauser, I. p. 679, 680.

auguries, divination by the flight of birds, and other accidental occurrences; in the notion that unusual events, thunder, and earthquakes, and pestilence, are peculiar manifestations of God; that he is more specially present in a certain place, as a church, or time, as the sabbath, or the hour of death; is pleased with actions not natural, sacrifices, fasts, penance, and the like.¹ Perhaps no form of religion has yet been adopted which has not the stain of Fetichism upon it. The popular Christian theology is full of it. The names of the constellations are records of Fetichism that will long endure.²

Under this form Religion has the smallest sound influence upon life; the religious does not aid the moral element.³ The supposed demands of Religion seem capricious to the last degree, unnatural and absurd. The imperfect priesthood of necromancers and jugglers,—which belongs to this period,—enhances the evil by multiplying rites; encouraging asceticism; laying heavy burdens upon the people; demanding odious mutilations and horrible sacrifices, often of human victims, in the name of God, and in helping to keep Religion in its infant state, by forbidding the secular eye to look upon its mysterious jugglery, and prohibiting the banns between Faith and Knowledge. Still this class, devoted to speculation and study, does great immediate service to the race, by promoting science and art, and indirectly and against its will contributes to overturn the form it desigus to support. The priesthood comes unavoidably.⁴

In a low form of Fetichism, a Law of Nature seems scarce ever recognized. All things are thought to have a life of their own; all phenomena, growth, decay, and reproduction. The seasons of the year, the changes in the

¹ The great religious festivals of the Christians, Yule and Easter, are easily traced back to such an occasion, at least to analogous festivals of fetichistic or polytheistic people. The festival of John the Baptist must be put in this class. See some details on this subject in a very poor book of Nork's, *Der Mystagog*, &c.

² See Creutzer, *Symbolik und Mythologie*, 3rd ed. Vol. I. p. 30, et seq.

³ The Guaycarus Indians of South America put to death all children born before the 30th year of their mother. Bartlett's *Progress of Ethnology*, N. Y. 1847, p. 28

⁴ See the remarks of Lafitau, *Mœurs des sauvages Amériquains*, &c., 2 vols. 4to, Paris, 1734, Vol. I. p. 105—456. His work is amazingly superficial, but contains now and then a good thing.

sky, and similar things, depend on the caprice of the Deities. The jugglers can make it rain; a witch can split the moon; a magician heal the sick. Law is resolved into miracle. The most cunning men, who understand the Laws of Nature better than others, are miracle-workers, magicians, priests, necromancers, astrologers, soothsayers, physicians, general mediators and interpreters of the Gods; as the Mandans called them "great medicine-men."¹

Then as men experience both joy and grief, pain and pleasure, and as they are too rude in thought to see that both are but different phases of the same thing, and affliction is but success in a mask, it is supposed they cannot be the work of the same Divinity. Hence comes the wide division into good and evil Gods, a distinction found in all religions, and carefully preserved in the theological doctrines of the Christian Church. Worship is paid both to the good and evil Deity. A sacrifice is offered to avert the wrath of the one, and secure the favour of the other. The sacrifice corresponds to the character ascribed to the Deity, and this depends again on the national and personal character of the devotee.²

Now in that stage of civilization where every man has his own personal Deity, and no two perhaps the same, the bond that unites man to man is exceedingly slight. Each man's hand is, in some measure, against his brother's. Opposition, or unlikeness, among the Gods, leads to hostility among men. Thus family is arrayed against family, tribe against tribe, nation against nation, because the peculiar God of the one family, tribe, or nation, is deemed hostile to all others. Therefore among cruel nations, whose Gods of course are conceived of as cruel, the most

¹ Mr. Catlin, *ubi sup.*, relates anecdotes that illustrate the state of thought and feeling in the state of Fetichism. Much also may be found in Marco Polo's Travels in the Eastern parts of the World, London, 1818, and in Marsden's Notes to that edition. The early Voyagers, likewise, are full of facts that belong here.

² The worship of *evil beings* is a curious phenomenon in human history. The literature of the subject is copious and instructive. Some famous men think the existence of the Devil cannot be found out by the light of Nature and unaided Reason; others make it a doctrine of *natural* religion. Some think him incapable of Atheism, though only a *speculative theist*. The doctrine is a disgrace to the Christian Church, and well fitted to excite the disgust of thinking and pious men. But see what may be said for the doctrine by Mayer, *Historia Diaboli*, 2nd edition, 1780. See the literature in Wegscheider, *Institutiones*, § 104, 105.

acceptable sacrifice to the Fetiché is the blood of his enemies. A stranger whom accident or design brings to the devotee is a choice offering. The Saint is a murderer. War is a constant and normal state of men, not an exception as it afterwards becomes; the captives are sacrificed as a matter of course. The energies of the race are devoted to destruction; not to creative industry. It is the business of a man to war; of a slave and a woman, to till the soil. The fancied God guides the deepening battle; presides over the butchery, and canonizes the bloody hand. He is the God of Battles, teaches men to war, inspires them to fight.

It is, unfortunately, but too easy to find historical verifications of this phase of human nature. The Jews, in their early and remarkable passage from Fetichism to Polytheism and Monotheism—if we may trust the tale—resolve to exterminate all the Canaanites, millions of men, unoffending and peaceful, because the two nations worshipped different Gods, and Jehovah, the peculiar Deity of the Jews, a jealous God, demanded the destruction of the other nation, who did not worship him. Men, women, and children must be slain.¹ The Spaniards found cannibalism in the name of God, prevailing at Mexico, and elsewhere. In our day it still continues in the South Sea Islands, under forms horrible almost as of old in the Holy Land.²

But the intense demands which war makes on all the energies of men help to unfold the thinking faculty, to elevate the race and thus indirectly to promote truer no-

¹ See a dreadful example of human sacrifice in 2 Kings iii. 27. This prevailed in many parts of America when first discovered by the Christians, who continued it in a different form, not offering to God but Mammon. See Bancroft, History of the United States, Vol. III p. 296, 297, for some forms of this. The whole of Chap. XXII. is replete with philosophical and historical instruction, and one of the most valuable and brilliant even in *that* series of shining pages.

² On this passage in human history, see Comte, Vol. V. p. 90, et seq., p. 132, et seq., and p. 186, et seq.

See F. W. Chillani, Die Menschen-Opf. der alten Hebräer, Nürnberg, 1842, 1 vol. 8vo. He strongly maintains that human sacrifice was not forbidden by Moses, but continued a legal and essential part of the national worship till the separation of the two kingdoms. Vestiges of this he thinks appear in the consecration of the first-born, in circumcision, in the Paschal Lamb, &c. &c. He cites many curious facts. See p. 376 Daumer Geheimnisse des Christlichen Altarthums, Hamb. 1847, ch. 3, 5, 9—16, 74, 75, et al.

tions of Religion. Thus War, cruel and hideous monster as he is, has yet rocked Art and Science in his bloody arms. God makes the wrath of man to praise him ;

“ From seeming evil still educing good,
And better thence again, and better still
In infinite progression.”

As civilization goes forward in this rough way, the voice of humanity begins to speak more loudly, Morality is wedded to Religion, and a new progeny is born to bless the world. It begins to be felt that if the captive consents to serve his conqueror's God, the service will be more acceptable than his death. Hence he is spared ; still worships his own Deity perhaps, but confesses the superiority of the victorious God. The God of the conquered party becomes a Devil, or a strange God, or a servant of the controlling Deity. Thus the Gibeonites and the Helots who once would have been sacrificed to the conquering God, became hewers of wood and drawers of water to the Hebrews and the Spartans, and served to develop the directly useful and creative faculties of man. The Gods demand the service, not the life-blood, of the stranger and captive. No doubt the anointed priesthood opposed this refinement with a “ Thus saith the Lord,” and condemned such as received the blessing of men ready to perish. But it would not do. Samuel hews Agag in pieces, though Saul would have saved him ; but the days of Samuel also are numbered, and the theocratic power pales its ineffectual ray before a rising light.

II. POLYTHEISM is the next stage in the religious development of mankind. Here reflection begins to predominate over sensation. As the laws of Nature, the habits and organization of animals, begin to be understood, they cease to represent the true object of worship. No man ever deified Weight and Solidity. But as men change slowly from form to form, and more slowly still from the form to the substance, coarse and material Fetichism must be idealized before it could pass away. No doubt men, for the sake of example, bowed to the old stock and stone when they knew an idol was nothing. It might offend the weak to give up the lie all at once.

Polytheism is the worship of many Gods without the worship of animals. It may be referred to two sources, worship of the Powers of material nature and of the Powers of spiritual nature. Its history is that of a conflict between the two.¹ In the earliest epoch of Greek Polytheism, the former prevails; the latter at a subsequent period. The early deities are children of the Earth, the Sky, the Ocean. These objects themselves are Gods.² In a word, the Saturnian Gods of the older mythology are deified powers of Nature: but in the mythology of the later philosophers, it is absolute spiritual power that rules the world from the top of Olympus, and the subordinate deities are the spiritual faculties of Man personified and embellished.³ Matter, no longer worshipped, is passive, powerless, and dishonoured. The animals are driven off from Olympus. Man is idealized and worshipped. The Supreme wears the personality of men. Anthropomorphism takes the place of a deification of Nature. The popular Gods are of the same origin as their worshippers, born, nursed, bred, but immortal and not growing old.⁴ They are married like men and women, and become parents. They preside over each department of Nature and each province of art.⁵ Pluto rules over the abodes of the departed; Neptune

¹ In what relates to this subject, I shall consider Polytheism as it appeared to the great mass of its votaries. Its most obvious phenomena are the most valuable. Some, as Bryant, take the speculations of naturalists and make it only a system of Physics. others, as Cudworth, following the refinements of later philosophers, would prove it to be a system of Monotheism in disguise. But to the mass Apollo was not the Sun nor the beautiful influence of God, whatsoever he might appear to the mystic sage.

² Julius Firmicus maintains that the heathen deities were simply deified natural objects. De Erroribus prof. Religionum, Ch. I.—V. But Clement of Alexandria more wisely refers them to seven distinct sources. Cohortatio ad Gentes, Opp. I., ed. Potter, p. 21, 22. Earth and Heaven are the oldest Gods of Greece.

³ See for example the contest of Eros and Anacreon, Carm. XIV. p. 18, 19, ed. Moberus.

⁴ See Heyne, Excursus VIII., in *Æliad*, I. 494, p. 189; Hegel, Philosophie der Rel., Vol. II. p. 96—141, Werke, Vol. XII., Pindar, Nem. VI. 1, et seq., Olymp. XII. et seq., &c.

⁵ See Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, Opp., ed. Baker, Oxford, 1837, VIII. Lib. XI. § 8, p. 233, et seq. In the old Pelasgic Polytheism, it seems there were no proper names for the individual Gods. The general term *Gods* was all. Herodotus, Lib. II. ch. 52, Opp., ed. Baehr., I. p. 606, et seq. Plato mentions the two classes of Gods, one derived from the *worship of Nature*, the other from that of *man*. *Legg.* Lib. XI., Opp. ed. Ast. VII. p. 344. See Plutarch cited in Eusebius, P. E. III. 1, p. 57, Vets. Lat., ed. 1579.

over the ocean; Jove over the land and sky. One divinity wakes the olive and the corn, another has charge of the vine. One guides the day from his chariot with golden wheels. A sister Deity walks in brightness through the nocturnal sky. A fountain in the shade, a brook leaping down the hills, or curling through the plains; a mountain walled with savage rocks; a sequestered vale fringed with romantic trees,—each was the residence of a God. Demons dwelt in dark caves, and shook the woods at night with hideous rout, breaking even the cedars. They sat on the rocks—fair virgins above the water, but hideous shapes below—to decoy sailors to their destruction. The mysterious sounds of Nature, the religious music of the wind playing among the pines at eventide, or stirring the hot palm tree at noonday, was the melody of the God of sounds.¹ A beautiful form of man or woman was a shrine of God.² The storms had a deity. Witches rode the rack of night. A God offended roused nations to war, or drove Ulysses over many lands. A pestilence, drought, famine, inundation, an army of locusts was the special work of a God.³

¹ See the beautiful lines of Wordsworth, Excursion, Boston, 1824, Book IV. p. 159, et seq. See also Creutzer, ubi sup., Vol. I. p. 8—29.

² See Herodotus, V. 47. The Greeks erected an altar on the grave of Philippos, the most beautiful of the Greeks, and offered sacrifice. See Wachsmuth, Antiquities of Greece, Vol. II. 2, p. 315, on the general adoration of Beauty amongst the Greeks. Hegel calls this worship *the Religion of Beauty*. Phil. der Religion, Vol. II. p. 96, et seq. National character marks the religious form.

³ A *disease* was sometimes personified and worshipped, as Fever at Rome. See Bhan, Var. Hist. XII. 11, p. 734, et seq., ed. Gronovius, Valerius Maximus, Lib. II. Ch. V. 6, Vol. I. p. 126, et seq., ed. Hase. Some say a certain ruin at Tivoli is the remnant of a Temple to *Tussis*, a cough. Cicero speaks of a temple to *Fever* on the Palatine. Nat. Deorum, III. 15, Opp. ed. Lemaire, XII. p. 333, where see the note. Nero erected a monument to the Manes of a crystal vase that got broken. Temples were erected to *Shame* and *Impudence*, *Fear*, *Death*, *Laughter*, and *Gluttony*, among the Heathen, as shrines to the Saints among Christians. Pausanias, Lib. IV. Ch. XVII., says the Athenians alone of all the Greeks had a Temple for Modesty and Mercy. See, however, the ingenious remark of Cousin, Journal des Savans, March, 1835, p. 136, et seq., and Creutzer's animadversions thereon, ubi sup. Vol. I. p. 135, 136. Brouwer, Vol. I. p. 357. In India, each natural object is the seat of a God. But in Greece the worship of nature passed into the higher form. See some fanciful remarks of Hermann on the most ancient mythology of the Greeks in his Opuscula, Vol. II. p. 167. It is a noticeable fact that some of the old Polytheistic theogonies spoke of a *gradual and progressive development of the Gods*; the *creator* keeps even pace with the *creation*. The explanation of a fact so singular as the self-contradictory opinion that the Infinite is not always the same may be found

No ship is called by the name of Glaucus because he offended a deity.¹

Arts also have their patron divinity. Phœbus-Apollo inspires the Poet and Artist; the Muses—Daughters of Memory and Jove—fire the bosom from their golden urn of truth;² Thor, Ares, Mars, have power in war; a sober virgin-goddess directs the useful arts of life; a deity presides over agriculture, the labours of the smith, the shepherd, the weaver, and each art of Man. He defends men engaged in these concerns. Every nation, city, or family has its favourite God—a Zeus, Athena, Juno, Odin, Baal, Jehovah, Osiris, or Melkartha, who is supposed to be partial to the nation which is his “chosen people.” Now perhaps no nation ever believed in many separate, independent, absolute deities. All the Gods are not of equal might. One is King of all, the God of Gods, who holds the others with an iron sway. Sometimes he is the All-Father; sometimes the All-Fate, which, in some ages, seems to be made a substitute for the one true God.³ Each nation thinks its own chief God greater than the Gods of all other nations; or, in time of war, seeks to seduce the hostile Gods by sacrifice, promise of temples and cere-

in the history of *human conceptions* of God, for these are necessarily progressive. See Aristotle, *Metaphysica*, XIV. p. 1000, et seq., Opp. II., ed. Duval, Par. 1629. See Hesiod’s *Theogony* everywhere, and note the *progress of the divine species* from Chaos and Earth to the moral divinities, Eunomia, Dike, Eirene, &c. In some of the Oriental theogonies, the rule was inverted, the first *emanation* was the best. See Warton, *History of English Poetry*, Lond. 1824, Vol. I., Pref. by the Editor.

¹ Herodotus, Lib. VI. 86, relates the beautiful story of Glaucus, so full of moral truth. Compare with it, Zechariah v. 3, 4, Job xv. 20, et seq., xviii. et seq., where the same beautiful and natural sentiment appears.

² See the strange pantheistic account of the origin and history of Gods and all things in the Orphic poems and Mythology. These have been collected and treated of with great discrimination by Lobeck, *Aglaophamus*, Vol. I. p. 473, et seq. See the more summary account in Brandis, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, Vol. I. p. 60, et seq. There are some valuable thoughts in Creutzer’s Review of the new edition of *Cornutus*, *De Nat. Deorum*, in *Theol. Stud. und Kritiken* für 1846, p. 208, et seq.

³ Men must believe in somewhat that to them is Absolute; if their conception of the Deity be imperfect, they unavoidably retreat to a somewhat Superior to the Deity. Thus for every defect in the popular conception of Zeus, some new power is added to Fate. “It is impossible even for God to escape Fate,” said Herodotus. See also Cudworth, Ch. I § 1—3, Zenophanes makes a sharp distinction between *God* and the *Gods*. See in Clem. Alex. *Stom. V.* p. 601, and the remarks of Brandis, *ubi sup*, Vol. I. p. 361, et seq. note, see also Vol. II. p. 340, et seq. See too *Cornutus* (or *Phurnutus*) *De Nat. Deorum* in Gale, *Opusc. Mythologica*, &c., Amst. 1688.

monies, a pilgrimage, or a vow. Thus the Romans invoked the Gods of their enemy to come out of the beleaguered city, and join with them, the conquerors of the world. The Gods were to be had at a bargain. Jacob drives a trade with Elohim; the God receives a human service as adequate return for his own divine service.¹ The promise of each is only "for value received."

In this stage of religious development each Deity does not answer to the Idea of God, as mentioned above; it is not the Being of infinite power, wisdom, and love. Neither the Zeus of the Iliad, nor the Elohim of Genesis, nor the Jupiter of the Pharsalia, nor even the Jehovah of the Jewish Prophets, is always this. A transient and complex conception takes the place of the eternal Idea of God. Hence his limitations; those of a man. Jehovah is narrow; Zeus is licentious; Hermes will lie and steal; Juno is a shrew.²

The Gods of polytheistic nations are in part deified men.³ The actions of many men, of different ages and countries, are united into one man's achievement, and we have a Hercules, or an Apollo, a thrice-great Hermes, a Jupiter, or an Odin. The inventors of useful arts, as agriculture, navigation; of the plough, the loom, laws, fire, and letters, subsequently became Gods. Great men, wise men, good men, were honoured while living; they are deified when they decease. As they judged or governed the living once, so now the dead. Their actions are idealized; the good lives after them; their faults are buried. Statues, altars, temples are erected to them. He who was first honoured as a man is now worshipped as a God.⁴ To these personal deities are added the attributes of the old Fetiches, and still more the powers of Nature. The attributes of the moon, the sun, the lightning, the ocean, or the stars are

¹ Genesis xxviii. 10—22.

² Sermons of Theism, &c. Sermon III. and IV.

³ Tertullian, De Anima, Ch. 33. See Meiners, ubi sup., Vol. I. p. 290, et seq.; Pindar, Olymp. II. 68, et seq., ed. Dissen., and his remarks, Vol. II. p. 36, et seq. This Anthropomorphism took various forms in Greece, Egypt, and India. In the former it was the *elevation of a man to the Gods*; in the latter the *descent of a God to man*. This feature of Oriental worship furnishes a fruitful hint as to the origin of the doctrine of the *Incarnation* and its value. The doctrine of some Christians unites the two in the *God-man*.

⁴ See the origin of Idolatry laid down in Wisdom of Solomon, Ch. xiv. 17—19. Warburton, Divine Legation, Book V. § 11. [iii.]

transferred to a personal being, conceived as a man. To be made strong he is made monstrous, with many hands, or heads. In a polytheistic nation, if we trace the history of the popular conception of any God, that of Zeus among the Grecians, for example, we see a gradual advance, till their highest God becomes their conception of the Absolute. Then the others are insignificant; merely his servants; like colonels and corporals in an army, they are parts of his state machinery. The passage to Monotheism is then easy.¹ The spiritual leaders of every nation,—obedient souls into whom the spirit enters and makes them Sons of God and prophets,—see the meaning which the popular notion hides; they expose what is false, proclaim the eternal truth, and as their recompense are stoned, exiled, or slain. But the march of mankind is over the tombs of the prophets. The world is saved only by crucified redeemers. The truth is not silenced with Aristotle; nor exiled with Anaxagoras; nor slain with Socrates. It enters the soul of its veriest foes, and their children build up the monuments of the murdered Seer.

We cannot enter into the feelings of a polytheist; nor see how Morality was fostered by his religion. Ours would be a similar puzzle to him. But Polytheism has played a great part in the development of mankind—yes, in the development of Morality and Religion.² Its aim was to “raise a mortal to the skies;” to infinitize the finite; to bridge over the great gulf between Man and God. Let us look briefly at some of its features.

I. In Polytheism we find a regular priesthood. This is sometimes exclusive and hereditary, as in Egypt and India, where it establishes castes, and founds a theocracy; sometimes not hereditary, but open, free, as in Greece.³ When

¹ There are two strongly marked tendencies in all polytheistic religions—one towards pure Monotheism, the other to Pantheism. See an expression of the latter in Orpheus, ed. Hermann, p. 457, “Zeus is the first, Zeus the last,” &c. &c., cited also in Cudworth, *ubi sup.*, Vol. I. p. 404. See Zeno, in Diogenes Laertius, ed. Hubner, Lib. VII. Ch. 73, Vol. II. p. 186, et seq.; Clemens Alexand. *Stromat.* VII. 12. See also Cudworth, Ch. IV. § 17, et seq., and Mosheim’s Annotations.

² M. Comte thinks this the period of the greatest religious activity! The *facts* look the other way

³ Even in Greece some sacerdotal functions vested by descent in certain families, for example, in the Iambides, Blanchides, Eumolpides, Asclepiades, Cery-

“every clove of garlic is a God,” as in Fetichism, each man is his own priest; but when a troop of Fetiches are condensed into a single God, and he is invisible, all cannot have equal access to him, for he is not infinite, but partial; chooses his own place and time. Some mediator, therefore, must stand between the God and common men.¹ This was the function of the priest. Perhaps his office became hereditary at a very early period, for as we trace backward the progress of mankind the law of inheritance has a wider range. The priesthood, separated from the actual cares of war, and of providing for material wants—the two sole departments of human activity in a barbarous age—have leisure to study the will of the Gods. Hence arises a learned class, who gradually foster the higher concerns of mankind. The effort to learn the will of the Gods, leads to the study of Nature, and therefore to Science. The attempt to please them by images, ceremonies, and the like, leads to architecture, statues, music, poetry, and hymns—to the elegant arts. The priesthood fostered all these. It took different forms to suit the genius of different nations; established castes and founded the most odious despotism in Egypt and the East, and perhaps the North, but in Greece left public opinion comparatively free. In the one, change of opinion was violent and caused commotion, as the fabled Giant buried under *Ætna* shakes the island when he turns; in the other it was natural, easy as for *Endymion* to turn the other cheek to the Moon. Taken in the whole, it has been a heavy rider on the neck of the nations. Its virtue has been, in a rude age to promote Science, Art, Patriotism, Piety to the Gods, and, in a certain fashion, Love to men. But its vice has been to grasp at the throat of mankind, control their thoughts and govern their life, aspiring to be the Will of the World. When it has been free, as in the philosophic age in Greece, its influence has been deep, silent, and unseen; blessed and beautiful. But when it is hered-

cides, *Clitiades*. See them in *Wachsmuth*, Vol. I. P. i. p. 152. See *Grimm*, *Deutsche Mythologie*, Ch V; *Meiners*, Vol II Book xii.; *Brouwer*, Vol I.

¹ See *Montesquieu*, *Esprit des Loix*, Liv. XXV. Ch. iv. See *Priestley's* Comparison of the Institutions of Moses with those of the *Hindoo*s, &c., *Northumberland*, 1799, § X for the esteem in which the sacerdotal class was held in *India*. *Brouwer*, Vol III. Ch. xviii., xix Also *Von Bohlen*, *Das alte Indien*, Vol I p. 45, et seq.; Vol. II p 12, et seq.

itary and exclusive, it preserves the form, ritual, and creed of barbarous times in the midst of civilization; separates Morality from Religion, life from belief, good sense from theology; demands horrible sacrifices of the body, or the soul; and, like the angry God in the old Pelasgic fable, chains for eternal damnation the bold free spirit which, learning the riddle of the world, brings down the fire of Heaven to bless poor mortal men. It were useless to quote examples of the influence of the priesthood. It has been the burthen of Fate upon the human race. Each age has its Levites; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations. In many nations their story is a tale of blood; the tragedy of Sin and Woe.¹

II. In the polytheistic period, war is a normal state and almost constant. Religion then unites men of the same tribe and nation; but severs one people from another. The Gods are hostile; Jehovah and Baal cannot agree. Their worshippers must bite and devour one another. It is high treason for a citizen to communicate the form of the national Religion to a foreigner; Jehovah is a jealous God. Strangers are sacrificed in Tauris and Egypt, and the captives in war put to death at the command of the Priest. But war at that period had also a civilizing influence. It was to the ancient world what Trade is to modern times: another form of the same selfishness. It was the chief method of extending a nation's influence. The remnant of the conquered nation was added to the victorious empire; became its slaves or tributaries, and at last shared its civilization, adding the sum of its own excellence to the moral treasury of its master. Conquered Greece gave Arts and Philosophy to Rome; the exiled Jews brought back from Babylon the great doctrine of eternal life. The Goths conquered Rome, but Roman Christianity subdued the Goths. Religion, allied with the fiercest animal passions, demanded war; this led to science. It was soon seen that one head which thinks is worth a

¹ See the one-sided view of Constant, which pervades his entire work on Religion. See his Essay on the "Progressive Development of Religious Ideas," in Ripley's Philosophical Miscellanies, Vol. II. p. 292, et seq. Virgil, in his description of the Elysian fields, assigns the first place to *Legislators*, the magnanimous Heroes who civilized mankind, the next to *Patricians*, and the third to *Priests*. Æn. VI. 661, et seq.

hundred hands. Science elevates the mass of men, they perceive the folly of bloodshed, and its sin. Thus War, by a fatal necessity, digs its own grave. The art of production surpasses the art to destroy.¹

All the wars of polytheistic nations have more or less a religious character. Their worship, however, favoured less the extermination of enemies than their subjugation, while Monotheism, denying the existence of all deities but one, when it is superinduced upon a nation, in a rude state, like Fetichism itself, butchers its captives, as the Jews, the Mahometans, and the Christians have often done—a sacrifice to the blood-thirsty phantom they call a God.² In the ruder stages of Polytheism, war is the principal occupation of men. The Military and the Priestly powers, strength of Body and strength of Thought, are the two Scales of Society; Science and Art are chiefly devoted to kill men and honour the Gods. The same weapons which conquer the spoil, sacrifice it to the Deity.³

III. But as Polytheism leads men to spare the life of the captive, so it leads to a demand for his service. Slavery, therefore, like war, comes unavoidably from this form of Religion, and the social system which grows out of it. At this day, under the influence of Monotheism, we are filled with deep horror at the thought of one man invading the personality of another, to make him a thing—a slave. The flesh of a religious man creeps at the thought of it. But yet slavery was an indispensable adjunct of this rough form of society. Between that Fetichism which bade a man slay his captive, eating his body and drinking his blood as indispensable elements of his communion with God, and that Polytheism which only makes him a slave, there is a great gulf which it required long centuries to fill up and pass over. Anger slowly gave place to interest; perhaps to Mercy. Without this change, with the advance of the art to destroy, the human race must have perished.

¹ M. Montgéry, a French captain, touchingly complains “that the art to destroy, though the easiest of all from its very nature, is now much less advanced than the art of production, in spite of the superior difficulty of the latter.” Quoted in Comte, *ubi sup.*, Vol V. p. 167.

² Here is the explanation of the given facts collected by Daumer and others.

³ M. Comte, Vol. V. p. 165, et seq., has some valuable remarks on this stage of human civilization. See also Vico, *Scienza nuova*, Bib II Cap. I.—IV.

By means of slavery the art of production was advanced. The Gibeonite and the Helot must work and not fight. Thus by forced labour, the repugnance against work which is so powerful among the barbarous and half-civilized, is overcome; systematic industry is developed; the human race is helped forward in this mysterious way. Both the theocratic and the military caste demanded a servile class, inseparable from the spirit of barbarism, and the worship of many Gods, which falls as that spirit dies out, and the recognition of one God, Father of all, drives selfishness out of the heart. In an age of Polytheism, Slavery and War were in harmony with the institutions of society and the spirit of the age. Murder and Cannibalism, two other shoots from the same stock, had enjoyed their day. All are revolting to the spirit of Monotheism; at variance with its idea of life; uncertain and dangerous; monstrous anomalies full of deadly peril. The Priesthood of Polytheism—like all castes based on a lie—upheld the system of slavery, which rested on the same foundation with itself. The slavery of sacerdotal governments is more oppressive and degrading than that of a military despotism. It binds the Soul—makes distinctions in the nature of men. The Prophet would free men; but the priest enslaves. As Polytheism does its work, and Man develops his nature higher than the selfish, the condition of the slave is made better. It becomes a religious duty to free the bondsmen at their master's death, as formerly the priests had burned them on his funeral pile, or buried them alive in his tomb to attend him in the realm of shades.¹ Just as civilization

¹ See, who will, the mingling of profound and superficial remarks on this subject in Montesquieu, *ubi sup.*, Liv. XV. Grotius, *De jure Belli ac Pacis*, Lib. III. Ch. vii. viii. Selden, *De jure naturæ, &c.*, ed. 1680, Lib. I. Ch. v. p. 174, and Lib. VII. VIII. XII. et al. See the valuable treatise of Charles Comte, *Traité de la Législation, ou Exposition des Loix générales suivant lesquelles les Peuples prospèrent, dépérissent ou restent stationnaire, &c. &c.*, 3rd ed., Bruxelles, 1837, Liv. V., the whole of which is devoted to the subject of slavery and its influence in ancient and modern times. We need only compare the popular opinion respecting slavery among the Jews, with that of the Greeks or Romans, in their best days, to see the influences of Monotheism and Polytheism in regard to this subject. See some remarks on the Jewish slavery in Michaelis's *Laws of Moses*. Slavery in the East has in general been of a much milder character than in any other portion of the world. Wolf somewhere says the Greeks received this relic of barbarism from the Asiatics. If so, they made the evil institution worse than they found it. According to Burekhardt, it exists in a very mild form among the Mahometans, everywhere. Of course his remarks do not apply to the Turks, the most cruel of Mus-sulmen. Perhaps

advanced and the form of Religion therewith, it was found difficult to preserve the institution of ancient crime, which sensuality and sin clung to and embraced.¹

IV. Another striking feature of polytheistic influence, was the union of power over the Body with power over the Soul; the divine right to prescribe actions and prohibit thoughts. This is the fundamental principle of all theocracies. The Priests were the speculative class; their superior knowledge was natural power; superstition in the people and selfishness in the Priest, converted that power into despotic tyranny. The military were the active caste; superior strength and skill gave them also a natural power. But he who alone in an age of barbarism can foretell an eclipse, or poison a flock of sheep, can subdue an army by these means. At an early stage of polytheism, we find the political subject to the priestly power. The latter holds communion with the Gods, whom none dare disobey. Romulus, Æacus, Minos, Moses, profess to receive their laws from God. To disobey them, therefore, is to incur the wrath of the powers that hold the thunder and lightning. Thus manners and laws, opinions and actions, are subject to the same external authority. The theocratic governor controls the conscience and the passions of the people. Thus the radical evil arising from the confusion between the Priests of different Gods was partially removed, for the spiritual and temporal power was lodged in the same hand.

In some nations the Priesthood was inferior to the political power, as in Greece. Here the sacerdotal class held an inferior rank, from Homer's time to that of Laertius.²

no code of *ancient* laws (to say nothing of modern legislation) was more humane than the Jewish in this respect.

¹ See Comte, *Phil. positive*, Vol V. p. 186, et seq. On this subject of slavery in Polytheistic nations, see Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, ed. Paris, 1840, Vol. I. Ch. ii. p. 37, et seq., and the valuable notes of Milman and Guizot. For the influence of Monotheism on this frightful evil, compare Schlosser, *Geschichte der Alten Welt*, Vol. III. Part III. Ch. ix. § 2, et al.; in particular the story of Paulinus, and Deogratias, p. 284, et seq., and p. 334, et seq., p. 427, et seq.; and compare it with the conduct of Cato (as given by Plutarch, *Life of Cato the Censor*, and Schlosser, *ubi sup*, Vol. II. Part II. p. 189, et seq., Charles Comte, *ubi sup*, Liv. V), and alas, with the conduct of the American Government and the commercial churches of our large towns in 1850—1855.

² See Demosthenes, *Cont. Near* Ch. XX in *Oratores Attici*, Lond. 1828,

The Genius of the nation demanded it; accordingly there sprang up a body of men, neither political, sacerdotal, nor military—the philosophers.¹ They could have found no place in any theocratic government, but have done the world great religious service, building “wiser than they knew.” It was comparatively easy for Art, Science, and all the great works of men, to go forward under such circumstances. Hence comes that wonderful development of mind in the country of Homer, Socrates, and Phidias. But in countries where the temporal was subject to the spiritual power, the reverse followed; there was no change without a violent revolution. The character of the nation becomes monotonous; science, literature, morals, cease to improve. When the nation goes down, it “falls like Lucifer, never to hope again.” The story of Samuel affords us an instance, among the Jews, of the sacerdotal class resisting, and successfully, the attempt to take away its power. Here the Priest, finding there must be a King, succeeded at length in placing on the throne a “man after God’s own heart,” that is, one who would sacrifice as the Priest allowed. The effort to separate the temporal from the spiritual power, to disenthral mankind from the tyranny of sacerdotal corporations, is one of the great battles for the souls of the world. It begins early, and continues long. The contest shakes the earth in its time.

V. Another trait of the polytheistic period is the deification of men.² Fetichism makes gods of cattle; Polytheism of men. This exaltation of men exerted great influence in the early stage of polytheism, when it was a

Vol. VIII. p. 391, et seq.; Aristot. Rep. III. 14, Opp. ed. Bekker, X. p. 87. See also César Cantu, *Histoire Universelle*, Paris, 1841—1844, Vol. I. Ch. xxviii xxix.; Constant, Liv. V. Ch. v., and Brouwer’s remarks thereon, p. 363, note.

¹ Perhaps none of the polytheistic nations offers an instance of the spiritual and temporal power existing in separate hands, when one party was entirely independent of the other. The separation of the two was reserved for a different age, and will be treated of in its place.

² See Farmer on the *Worship of Human Spirits*, London, 1783. Plutarch (Isis and Osiris) denies that human spirits were ever worshipped, but he is opposed by notorious facts. See Creutzer, *ubi sup.*, p. 137, et seq. The deification of human beings of course implied a belief in the immortality of the human soul, and is one of the many standing proofs of that belief. See Heyne’s remarks on *Iliad*, XXIII. 64 and 104, Vol. VIII. p. 363, 378, et seq.

real belief of the people and the priest, and not a verbal form, as in the decline of the old worship. Stout hearts could look forward to a wider sphere in the untrod world of spirit, where they should wield the sceptre of command and sit down with the immortal Gods, renewed in never-ending youth. The examples of Æacus, Minos, Rhadamanthus, of Bacchus and Hercules—mortals promoted to the Godhead by merit, and not birth—crowned the ambition of the aspiring.¹ The kindred belief that the soul, dislodged from its “fleshy nook,” still had an influence on the affairs of men, and came, a guardian spirit, to bless mankind, was a powerful auxiliary in a rude state of religious growth—a notion which has not yet faded out of the civilized world.² This worship seems unaccountable in our times; but when such men were supposed to be descendants of the Gods, or born miraculously, and sustained by superhuman beings; or mediators between them and the human race; when it was believed they in life had possessed celestial powers, or were incarnations of some deity or heavenly spirit, the transition to their Apotheosis is less violent and absurd; it follows as a natural result. The divine being is more glorious when he has shaken off the robe of flesh.³ Certain it is, this belief was clung to with astonishing tenacity, and, under several forms, still retains its place in the Christian church.⁴

The moral effect of Polytheism, on the whole, is difficult to understand. However, it is safe to say it is greater than that of Fetichism. The constant evil of war in public, and slavery in private; the arbitrary character assigned to the Gods; the influence of the priesthood, laying more stress on the ritual and the creed than on the life; the exceeding outwardness of many popular forms of worship; the constant separation made between Religion

¹ Pausanias touchingly complains that in his day mortals no longer became gods. See Lib. VII. Ch. ii. Opp. ed. Schubert and Walz. III. p. 9.

² The Christians began at an early age to imitate this, as well as other parts of the old polytheistic system. Eusebius, P. E. XIII. 11; Augustine, De Civ. Dei, VIII. 27.

³ On this subject, see Meiners, ubi sup., Vol. I. B. III. Ch. i. and ii.

⁴ See in Gibbon, Decline and Fall, Ch. XLVII. § iii., the lament of Serapion at the loss of his *concrete Gods*. But it was only the *Arian* notions that deprived him of his finite God. Jerome condemns the Anthropomorphism of the Polytheists as *stultissimam hæresin*, but believed the divine incarnation in Jesus. See also Prudentius Apotheosis, Opp. I. p. 430, et seq., London, 1824.

and Morality; the indifference of the priesthood in Greece, their despotism in India,—do not offer a very favourable picture of the influence of Polytheism in producing a beautiful life. Yet, on the other hand, the high tone of Morality which pervades much of the literature of Greece, the reverential piety displayed by poets and philosophers, and still more the undeniable fact of characters in her story rarely surpassed in nobleness of aim and loftiness of attainment.—these things lead to the opinion that the moral influence of this worship, when free from the shackles of a sacerdotal caste, has been vastly underrated by Christian scholars.¹

To trace the connection between the public virtue and the popular theology, is a great and difficult matter, not to be attempted here. But this fact is plain, that in a rude state of life this connection is slight, scarce perceptible; the popular worship represents Fear, Reverence it may be; perhaps a Hope; or even Trust. But the services it demands are rites and offerings, not a divine life. As civilization is advanced, Religion claims a more reasonable service, and we find enlightened men, whom the spirit of God made wise, demanding only a divine life as an offering to Him. Spiritual men, of the same elevation, see always the same spiritual truth. We notice a gradual ascent in the scale of moral ideas, from the time of Homer, through Solon, Thibognis, the seven wise men, Pindar, Æschylus, Sophocles, and the philosophers of their day.² The philosophers and sages of Greece and Rome recommend Absolute Goodness as the only perfect service of God. With them Sin is the disease of the soul; Virtue is health; a divine Life the true good of mankind; Perfection the aim. None have set forth this more ably.³

¹ The special influence of Polytheism upon morals, differed with the different forms it assumed. In India it sometimes led to rigid asceticism and lofty contemplative quietism, in Rome, to great public activity and manly vigour; in Greece, to a gay abandonment to the natural emotions; in Persia, to ascetic purity and formal devotion. On this subject see the curious and able, but one-sided and partial, treatise of Tholuck on the Moral Influence of Heathenism, in the American Biblical Repository, Vol. II. He has shown up the dark side of Heathenism, but seems to have no true conception of ancient manners and life. See Ackermann, *das Christliche in Plato, &c.*, Ch. I. (See below, note ² and ³)

² See the proof of this in Brandis, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, Vol. I. § 21, 25.

³ See, on the moral culture of the Greeks in special, Jacobs, *Vormischte*

In the higher stages of Polytheism, Man is regarded as fallen. He felt his alienation from his Father. Religion looks back longingly to the Golden Age, when Gods dwelt familiar with men. It seeks to restore the links broken out of the divine chain. Hence its sacrifices, and above all its mysteries,¹ both of which were often abused, and made substitutes for holiness, and not symbols thereof.

When War is a normal state, and Slavery is common, the condition of one half the human race is soon told. Woman is a tool or a toy. Her story is hitherto the dark side of the world. If a distinction be made between public morality, private morality, and domestic morality, it may safely be said that Polytheism did much for the outward regulation of the two first, but little for the last. However, since there were Gods that watched over the affairs of the household, a limit was theoretically set to domestic immorality, spite of the temptations which both slavery and public opinion spread in the way. When there were Gods, whose special vocation was to guard the craftsmen of a certain trade, protect travellers and defenceless men; when there were general, never-dying avengers of wrong, who stopped at no goal but justice,—a bound was fixed, in some measure, to private oppression. Man, however, was not honoured as Man. Even in Plato's ideal State, the strong tyrannized over the weak; human selfishness wore a bloody robe; Patriotism was greater than Philanthropy. The popular view of sin and holiness was low. It was absurd for Mercury to conduct men to hell for adultery and hes. Heal thyself, the Shade might say. All Pagan antiquity offers nothing akin to our lives of pious men.² It is true, as St Augustine has well said, "that matter which is now called the Christian religion, was in existence among the

Schriften, Vol III. p. 374. He has perhaps done justice to both sides of this difficult subject.

¹ Cicero, De Legg II. See on this subject of the Mysteries in general, Lobeck, *Aglaophamus, sive de Theologæ mysticæ Causis, &c*, Pars III., Ch. iii iv. The mysteries seem sometimes to have offered beautiful symbols to aid man in returning to union with the Gods. Warburton, in spite of his erroneous views, has collected much useful information on this subject. *Divine Legation*, Book II. § 17. But he sometimes sees out of him what existed only in himself.

² But see in Plutarch the singular story of Thespesius, his miraculous conversion, &c. *De sera Numinis Vindicta*, Opp. II. Ch. xxvii. p. 563, et seq., ed. Kylander.

ancients ; it has never been wanting, from the beginning of the human race."¹ There is but one Religion, and it can never die out. Unquestionably there were souls beautifully pious, and devoutly moral, who felt the Kingdom of Heaven in their bosom, and lived it out in their lowly life. Still, it must be confessed the beneficial influence of the public Worship of Polytheists on public and private virtue, was sadly weak.² The popular life is determined, in some measure, by the popular Conception of God, and that was low, and did not correspond to the pure Idea of Him ;³ still the Sentiment was at its work.

But worship was more obviously woven up with public life under this form than under that which subsequently took its place. A wedding or a funeral, peace and war, seed-time and harvest, had each its religious rite. It was the mother of philosophy, of art, and science, though, like Saturn in the fable, she sought to devour her own children, and met a similar and well-merited fate. Classic Polytheism led to contentedness with the world as it was, and a sound cheerful enjoyment of its goodness and delight. Religion itself was glad and beautiful.⁴ But its idea of life was little higher than its fact. However, that weakish cant and suivelling sentimentality of worship, which disgrace our day, were unknown at that stage.⁵ The popular faith oscillated between Unbelief and Superstition. Plato wisely excluded the mythological poets from his ideal commonwealth. The character of the Gods as it was painted by the popular mythology of Egypt,

¹ *Retract.* I. 13. See also *Civ. Dei*, VIII. and *Cont. Acad.* III. 20.

² On the influence of the national *cultus*, see Athenæus, *Deipnosoph.* VII. 65, 66, XIV. 24, et al.; Homeric Hymns I. vs. 147, et seq.

³ Plato is seldom surpassed, in our day, in his conception of some of the qualities of the Divine Being. He was mainly free from that anthropomorphic tendency which Christians have derived from the ruder portions of the Old Testament. See *Rep.* Lib. IV. *passim*. But neither he nor Aristotle—a yet greater man—ever attained the idea of a God who is the Author, or even the Master, of the material world. God and Matter were antagonistic forces, mutually hostile.

⁴ See the pleasant remarks of Plutarch on the cheerful character of public worship, *Opp.* Vol. II p. 1101, et seq., ed. Xylander; Strabo, *Lib. X.* Ch. iii. iv. *Opp.* iv. p. 167, et seq., ed. Siebenkees and Tschucke.

⁵ Many beautiful traits of Polytheism may be seen in Plutarch's *Moral Works*, especially the treatises on Superstition; That it is not possible to live well according to Epicurus; of Isis and Osiris; of the tardy Vengeance of God. See the English Version, Lond. 1691, 4 vols. 8vo.

Greece, and India, like some of the legends of the Old Testament, served to confound moral distinctions, and encourage crime. Polytheists themselves confess it.¹ Yet a distinction seems often to have been made between the private and the official character of the deities. There was no devil, no pandemonium, in ancient classic Polytheism as in the modern Church. Antiquity has no such disgrace to bear. Perhaps the poetic fictions about the Gods were regarded always as fictions, and no more. Still this influence must have been pernicious.² It would seem, at first glance, that only strong intellectual insight, or great moral purity, or a happy combination of external circumstances, could free men from the evil. However, in forming the morals of a people, it is not so much the doctrine that penetrates and moves the nation's soul as it is the feeling of that sublimity which resides only in God, and of that enchanting loveliness which alone belongs to what is filled with God. Isocrates well called the mythological tales blasphemies against the Gods. Aristophanes exposes in public the absurdities which were honoured in the recesses of the temples. The priesthood in Greece has no armour of offence against ridicule.³ But goodness never dies out of man's heart.

Mankind pass slowly from stage to stage :—

“Slowly as spreads the green of Earth
O'er the receding Ocean's bed,
Dim, as the distant Stars come forth,
Uncertain as a vision fled,”

seems the gradual progress of the race. But in the midst of the absurd doctrines of the priests, and the immoral tales wherewith mistaken poets sought to adorn their conception of God, pure hearts beat, and lofty minds rose

¹ Xenophanes, a contemporary of Pythagoras, censures Homer and Hesiod for their narratives of the Gods, imputing to them what it was shameful for a man to think of. See Karsten, *Phil. vett. Reliqua*, Vol. I. p. 43, et seq. See Plato, *Repub.* II. p. 377; Pindar, *Olymp.* I. 28. But no religion was ever *designed* to favour impurity, even when it allows it in the Gods. See the fine remarks of Seneca, *De Vita beata*, Ch. XXVI. § 5, 6. Even the Gods were subject to the eternal laws. Fate punished Zeus for each offence. He smarted at home for his infidelity abroad.

² See the classic passages in Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 1065, et seq.

³ It still remains unexplained how the Athenians, on a religious festival, could applaud the exhibitions of the comic drama, which exposed the popular mythology to ridicule, as it is done in the *Birds* of Aristophanes—to mention a single example—and still continue the popular worship.

above the grovelling ideas of the temple and the market-place. The people who know not the law, are often better off than the sage or the soothsayer, for they know only what it is needed to know. "He is oft the wisest man that is not wise at all." Religion lies so close to men, that a pure heart and mind, free from prejudice, see its truths, its duties, and hopes. But before mankind passes from Fetichism to pure Monotheism, at a certain stage of religious progress, there are two subordinate forms of religious speculation which claim the attention of the race, namely, Dualism and Pantheism. The one is the highest form of Polytheism; the other a degenerate expression of Monotheism, and both together form the logical tie between the two.

Dualism is the deification of two principles, the Absolute Good and the Greatest Evil. The origin of this form of religious speculation has been already hinted at.¹ Philosophically stated, it is the recognition of two absolute beings, the one Supreme Good, the other Supreme Evil. But this involves a contradiction; for if the Good be absolute, Evil is not, and the reverse. Another form, therefore, was invented. The Good Being was absolute and infinite; the Evil Principle was originally good, but did not keep his first estate. Here also was another difficulty: an independent and divine being cannot be mutable and frail, therefore the evil principle must of necessity be a dependent creature, and not divine in the proper sense. So a third form takes place, in which it is supposed that both the Good and the Evil are emanations from one Absolute Being, that Evil is only negative, and will at last end; that all wicked, as all good, principles are subject to the Infinite God. At this point Dualism coalesces with the doctrine of one God, and dies its death. This system of Dualism, in its various forms, has extended widely. It seems to have been most fully developed in Persia. It came early into the Christian Church, and still retains its hold throughout the greater part of Christendom, though it is fast dying away before the advance of Reason and Faith.²

¹ See above, Ch. IV.

² The doctrine of two principles is older than the time of Zoroaster. Hyde,

Pantheism has, perhaps, never been altogether a stranger to the world. It makes all things God, and God all things. This view seems at first congenial to a poetic and religious mind. If the world be regarded as a collection of powers,—the awful force of the storm, of the thunder, the earthquake; the huge magnificence of the ocean, in its slumber or its wrath; the sublimity of the ever-during hills; the rocks, which resist all but the unseen hand of Time; these might lead to the thought that matter is God. If men looked at the order, fitness, beauty, love, everywhere apparent in Nature, the impression is confirmed. The All of things appears so beautiful to the comprehensive eye, that we almost think it is its own Cause and Creator. The animals find their support and their pleasure; the painted leopard and the snowy swan, each living by its own law; the bird of passage that pursues, from zone to zone, its unmarked path; the summer warbler which sings out its melodious existence in the woodbine; the flowers that come unasked, charming the youthful year; the golden fruit maturing in its wilderness of green; the dew and the rainbow; the frost flake and the mountain snow; the glories that wait upon the morning, or sing the sun to his ambrosial rest; the pomp of the sun at noon, amid the clouds of a June day; the awful majesty of night, when all the stars with a serene step come out, and tread their round, and seem to watch in blest tranquillity about the slumbering world; the moon waning and waxing, walking in beauty through the night:—daily the water is rough with the winds; they come or abide at no man's bidding, and roll the yellow corn, or wake religious music at nightfall in the pines—these

Hist Religion, vet. Persarum, Ch. IX. and XX. XXII. Bayle's Dictionary, article Zoroaster, Vol. V. p. 636. See also Cudworth, Ch. IV. § 13, p. 289, et seq., and Mosheim's Notes, Vol. I. p. 320. et seq.; Rhode, Heilige Sage der Zendvolks, B. II. Ch. ix. x. xii., Brucker, Historia Philosophiæ, Vol. I. p. 176, et seq. Plutarch was a Dualist, though in a modified sense. See his Isis and Osiris, and Psychogonia. Marcion, among the early Christians, was accused of this belief, and indeed the existence of a Devil is still believed by most Christian divines to be second only in importance to the belief of a God; at the very least, a *scriptural doctrine, and of great value*. See a curious book of Mayer, (Historia Diaboli,) who thinks it a matter of *divine revelation*. See also the ingenious remarks of Professor Woods, in his translation of Knapp's Theology, New York, 1831, Vol. I. § 62—66, et seq. See the early form of Dualism among the Christians in Beausobie, Histoire de Maniché et du Manichéisme, 2 vols 4to.

things are all so fair, so wondrous, so wrapt in mystery, it is no marvel that men say, This is divine; yes, the All is God; he is the light of the morning, the beauty of the noon, and the strength of the sun. The little grass grows by his presence. He preserveth the cedars. The stars are serene because he is in them. The lilies are redolent of God. He is the One; the All. God is the mind of man. The soul of all; more moving than motion; more stable than rest; fairer than beauty, and stronger than strength. The power of Nature is God; the universe, broad and deep and high, a handful of dust, which God enchants. He is the mysterious magic that possesses the world. Yes, he is the All; the Reality of all phenomena.

But an old writer thus pleasantly rebukes this conclusion: "Surely, vain are all men by nature, who are ignorant of God, and could not out of the good things that are seen, know him that is . . . but deemed either Fire, or Wind, or the swift Air, or the Circle of the Stars, or the violent Water, or the Lights of Heaven, to be the Gods which govern the world. With whose beauty if they being delighted took them to be Gods; let them know how much better the Lord of them is, for the first Author of beauty had created them."¹

To view the subject in a philosophical and abstract way, Pantheism is the worship of All as God. He is the One and All; not conceived as distinct from the Universe, nor independent of it. It is said to have prevailed widely in ancient times, and, if we may believe what is reported, it has not ended with Spinoza. It may be divided into two

¹ Wisdom of Solomon, Ch. xiii. 1, et seq. At the present day Pantheism seems to be the bugbear of some excellent persons. They see it everywhere except on the dark walls of their own churches. The disciples of Locke find it in all schools of philosophy but the Sensual; the followers of Calvin see it in the liberal churches. It has become dangerous to say "*God is Spirit*," a definite God, whose *personality we understand*, is the orthodox article. M. Maret, in his *Essai sur le Pantheisme dans les Sociétés modernes*, Paris, 1840, 1 vol. 8vo, finds it the natural result of Protestantism, and places before us the pleasant alternatives, either the Catholic Church or Pantheism! Preface, p. xv. et al. The rationalism of the nineteenth century must end in scepticism, or leap over to Pantheism! According to him all the philosophers of the Spiritual School in our day are Pantheists.—Formerly divines condemned Philosophy because it had *too little* of God; now because it has *too much*. It would seem difficult to get the orthodox medium, too much and too little are found equally dangerous. See the pleasant remarks of Hegel on this charge of Pantheism, *Encyclopædie der philosoph. Wissenschaften*, &c, third edition, § 573.

forms, Material Pantheism, sometimes called Hylozoism, and Spiritual Pantheism, or Psycho-zoism. Material Pantheism affirms the existence of Matter, but denies the existence of Spirit, or anything besides matter. Creation is not possible; the Phenomena of Nature and Life are not the result of a "fortuitous concourse of atoms," as in Atheism, but of Laws in Nature itself. Matter is in a constant flux; but it changes only by laws which are themselves immutable. Of course this does not admit God as the Absolute or Infinite, but the sum-total of material things; He is limited both to the extension and the qualities of matter; He is merely immanent therein, but does not transcend material forms. This seems to have been the Pantheism of Strato of Lampsacus, of Democritus, perhaps of Hippocrates, and, as some think, though erroneously, of Xenophanes, Parmenides, and, in general, of the Eleatic Philosophers in Greece,¹ and of many others whose tendency is more spiritual.² Its philosophic form is the last result of an attempt to form an adequate *Conception* of God. It has sometimes been called Kosmo-theism, (World-Divinity,) but it gives us a world without a God.

Spiritual Pantheism affirms the existence of Spirit, and sometimes, either expressly or by implication, denies the existence of Matter. This makes all Spirit God; always the same, but ever unfolding into new forms, and therefore a perpetual *Becoming*; God is the absolute substance, with these two attributes—Thought and Extension. He is self-conscious in men; without self-consciousness in animals. Before the creation of men he was not *self-conscious*. All beside God is devoid of Substantiality. It is not but only *APPEARS*; its *being* is its *being seen*. This is Psycho-theism (Soul-Divinity). It gives us a God without a World, and He is the only cause that exists, the

¹ See Karsten, *ubi sup.*, Vol. I. and II. See the opinions of these men ably summed up by Ritter, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, Vol. I. B. v., and Brandis, *ubi sup.*, Vol. I. § 66—72. Cudworth has many fine observations on this sort of pantheism, Vol. I. Ch. iv. § 15—26, and elsewhere. He denies that this school make the deity corporeal, and charges this upon others. See Ch. III.

² See Jasche, *Der Pantheismus*, &c, Vols. II. and III. *passim*, and the histories of Philosophy. If a man is curious to detect a pantheistic tendency he will find it in the *Soul of-the-world*, among the ancients, in the *Plastic Nature* of Cudworth, or the *Hylarchic Principle* of Henry More.

Sum-total of Spirit; immanent in Spirit but not transcending spiritual manifestations. This was the Pantheism of Spinoza and some others. It lies at the bottom of many mystical discourses, and appears, more or less, in most of the pious and spiritual writers of the middle ages, who confound the Divine Being with their own personality, and yet find some support for their doctrines in the language, more or less figurative, of the New Testament.

This system appears more or less in the writings of John the Evangelist, in Dionysius the Areopagite, and the many authors who have drawn from him. It tinges in some measure the spiritual philosophy of the present day.¹ But the charge of Pantheism is very vague, and is usually urged most by such as know little of its meaning. He who conceives of God, as transcending creation indeed, but yet at the same time as the Immanent Cause of all things, as infinitely present, and infinitely active, with no limitations, is sure to be called a Pantheist in these days, as he would have passed for an Atheist two centuries ago. Some who have been called by this easy but obnoxious name, both in ancient and modern times, have been philosophical defenders of the doctrine of one God, but have given him the historical form neither of Brahma nor Jehovah.²

¹ See the curious forms this assumes in *Theologia Mystica . . . speculativa . . . et affectiva*, per Henric Harph. &c., Colon. 1538. Jäsehe and Maret find it in all the modern spiritual philosophy. Indeed, the two rocks that threaten theology seem to be a Theosophy which resolves all into God, and Anthropomorphism, which in fact denies the Infinite. This mystical tendency, popularly denominated Pantheism, appears in the ancient religions of the East; it enters largely into the doctrine of the *Sufis*, a Mahometan sect. See Tholuck, *Blüthensammlung aus der morgenländischen Mystik*, p. 33, et seq., and *passim*. Von Hammer also, in his *Geschichte der schönen Redekunste Persens*, &c., p. 340, et seq., 347, et seq., et al., gives extracts from these Oriental speculators who are more or less justly charged with Pantheism.

² The writings of Spinoza have hitherto been supposed to contain the most pernicious form of Pantheism; but of late, the poison has been detected also in the works of Schleiermacher, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Cousin, not to mention others of less note. Pantheism is a word of convenient ambiguity, and serves as well to express the *theological odium* as the more ancient word Atheism, which has been deemed by some synonymous with Philosophy. See the recent controversial writings of Mr Norton and Mr Ripley, respecting the Pantheism of Spinoza and Schleiermacher. It has been well said, the question between the alleged Pantheist and the pure Theist is simply this. *Is God the immanent cause of the World, or is he not?* See Sengler, *Die Idee Gottes*, B. I. p. 10, 107, 899.

III. Monotheism is the worship of one Supreme God. It may admit numerous divine beings superior to men, yet beneath the Supreme Divinity, as the Jews, the Mahometans, and the Christians have done; or it may deny these subsidiary beings, as some philosophers have taught. The Idea of God to which Monotheism ultimately attains, is that of a Being infinitely powerful, wise, and good. He may, however, be supposed to manifest himself in *one form* only, as the Jehovah of the Hebrews, and the Allah of the Mahometans; in *three forms*, as the Triune God of most Christians; or in *all forms*, as the Pan and Brahma of the Greek and Indian—for it is indifferent whether we ascribe no form or all forms to the Infinite.

Since the form of Monotheism prevails at this day, little need be said to portray its most important features.¹ It annihilates all distinction of nations, tribes, and men. There is one God for all mankind. He has no favourites, but is the equal Father of them all. War and slavery are repugnant to its spirit, for men are brothers. There is no envy, strife, or confusion in the divine consciousness, to justify hostility among men; He hears equally the prayer of all, and gives them infinite good at last. No priesthood is needed to serve Him. Under Fetichism every man could have access to his God, for divine symbols were more numerous than men; miracles were performed every day; inspiration was common, but of little value; the favour of the Gods was supposed to give a wonderful and miraculous command over Nature. Under Polytheism, only a chosen few had direct access to God; an appointed Priesthood; a sacerdotal caste. They stood between men and the Gods. Divine symbols became more rare. Inspiration was not usual; a miracle was a most uncommon thing; the favourites of heaven were children born of the Gods; admitted to intercourse with them, or enabled by them to do wonderful works. Now Monotheism would restore inspiration to all. By representing God as spiritual and omnipresent, it brings him within every man's reach; by making Him infinitely perfect, it shows his Wisdom, Love, and Will always the same. Therefore, it annihilates favouritism and all capricious miracles. Inspiration, like the sunlight, awaits all who will accept its

¹ Sermons of Theism, &c., Sermon V. and VI.

conditions. All are Sons of God; they only are his favoured ones who serve him best. No day, nor spot, nor deed, is exclusively sacred; but all time, and each place, and every noble act. The created All is a Symbol of God.

But here also human perversity and ignorance have done their work; have attempted to lessen the symbols of the Deity; to make him of difficult access; to bar up the fountain of Truth and source of Light still more than under Polytheism, by the establishment of places and times, of rituals and creeds; by the appointment of exclusive priests to mediate, where no mediator is needed or possible; by the notion that God is capricious, revengeful, uncertain, partial to individuals or nations; by taking a few doctrines and insisting on exclusive belief; by selecting a few from the many alleged miracles, insisting that these, and these alone, shall be accepted, and thus making the religious duty of men arbitrary and almost contemptible. Still, however, no human ignorance, no perversity, no pride of priest or king, can long prevent this doctrine from doing its vast and beautiful work. It struggles mightily with the Sin and Superstition of the world, and at last will overcome them.

The history of this doctrine is instructive. It was said above there were three elements to be considered in this matter, namely, the Sentiment of God; the Idea of God; and the Conception of God. The Sentiment is vague and mysterious, but always the same thing in kind, only felt more or less strongly, and with more or less admixture of foreign elements. The Idea is always the same in itself, as it is implied and writ in man's constitution; but is seen with more or less of a distinct consciousness. Both of these lead to Unity,¹ to Monotheism, and accordingly, in

¹ Meiners, in his work, *Historia Doctrinæ de vero Deo, &c.*, 1 vol. 12mo, 1780, (which, though celebrated, is a passionate and one-sided book, altogether unworthy of the subject, and "behind the times" of its composition,) maintains that the Heathens knew nothing of the one God till about 3554 years after the creation of the world, when Anaxagoras helped them to this doctrine. See, on the other hand, the broad and philosophical views of Cudworth, Ch. IV. *passim*, who, however, seems sometimes to push his hypothesis too far. A history of Monotheism is still to be desired, though Tenneman, Ratter, Brandis, and even Brucker, have collected many facts, and formed valuable contributions to such a work. Munscher has collected valuable passages from the Fathers, relating to the history of the doctrine among the Christians, and their controversies with the Heathen, in his *Lehrbuch der Christlichen Dogmengeschichte*, 3rd ed., by Von Cohn, Vol I Ch. vi. § 52, et seq. But Warburton, who wrote like an

the prayers and hymns, the festivals and fasts, of Fetichists and Polytheists we find often as clear and definite intimations of Monotheism, as in the devotional writings of professed Monotheists. In this sense the doctrine is old as human civilization, and has never been lost sight of. This is so plain it requires no proof. But the Conception of God, which men superadd to the Sentiment and Idea of Him, is continually changing with the advance of the world, of the nation, or the man. We can trace its historical development in the writings of Priests, and Philosophers, and Poets, though it is impossible to say when and where it was first taught with distinct philosophical consciousness, that there is one God; one only. The history of this subject demands a treatise by itself.¹ This, however, is certain, that we find signs and proofs of its existence among the earliest poets and philosophers of Greece; in the dim remnants of Egyptian splendour; in the uncertain records of the East; in the spontaneous effusions of savage hearts, and in the most ancient writings of the Jews. The latter have produced such an influence on the world, that their doctrine requires a few words on this point.

The Deity was conceived of by the Hebrews as entirely separate from Nature; this distinguishes Judaism from all forms which had a pantheistic tendency, and which deified matter or men. He was the primitive ground and cause of all. But the Jewish Religion did not, with logical consistency, deny the existence of other Gods, inferior to the highest. Here we must consider the doctrine of the *Jewish books*, and that of the *Jewish people*. In the first the reality of other deities is generally assumed. The first commandment of the decalogue implies the existence of other Gods. The mention of Sons of God who visited the daughters of men;² of the divine council or Host of Heaven;³ the contract Jacob makes with Jehovah;⁴ the frequent reference to strange Gods; the preëminence claimed for Jehovah above all the deities of the other

attorney, gives the most erroneous judgments upon the ancient heathen doctrine respecting the unity of God. See the temperate remarks of Mosheim, *De Resuscitate Constant, &c.*, p. 17, et seq.

¹ See note, p. 60.

² Gen. vi. 2.

³ Gen. iii. 22; 1 Kings xxii. 19; Job ii. 1.

⁴ Gen xxviii. 20, 22. comp Herodotus, IV. 179.

nations¹—these things show that the mind of the writers was not decided in favour of the exclusive existence of Jehovah. The people and their kings before the exile were strongly inclined to a mangled worship of Fetichism and Polytheism, a medium between the ideal religion of Moses and the actual worship of the Canaanites. It is difficult in the present state of critical investigation, to determine nicely the date of all the different books of the Jews, but this may be safely said, that the early books have more of a polytheistic tendency than the writings of the later prophets, for at length, both the learned and the unlearned became pure Monotheists.² At first Jehovah and the Elohim seem to be recognized as joint Gods,³ but at the end Jehovah is the *only God*.

But the character assigned him is fluctuating. He is always the Creator and Lord of Heaven and Earth, yet is not always represented as the Father of all nations, but of the Jews only, who will punish the Heathens with the most awful severity.⁴ In some parts of the Old Testament he is almighty, omnipresent, and omniscient; eternal and unalterable. But in others he is represented with limitations in respect to all these attributes. Not only are the sensual perceptions of a man ascribed to him, for this is unavoidable in popular speech, but he walks on the earth, eats with Abraham, wrestles with Jacob, appears in a visible form to Moses, tempts men, speaks in human speech, is pleased with the fragrant sacrifice, sleeps and awakes, rises early in the morning; is jealous, passionate, revengeful.⁵ However, in other passages the loftiest

¹ See the numerous passages where Jehovah is spoken of as the chief of the Gods. 2 Chr. ii. 5, Ps. xcvi. xcvii. 7, et seq., Ex. xii. 12, xv. 11, xviii. 11, &c. &c. Strabo, ubi sup., Lib. XVI. Ch. ii. § 35, gives a strange account of the Jewish theology.

² Compare with the former passages, Jer. ii. 26—28; Isa. xlv. 6—20; Deut. iv. 28, et seq., xxvii. 16, 17, 39, Ps. cxv. cxxxv., and Ecclesiasticus xxxiii. 5, xliii. 28; Wisdom of Sol. xii. 13, Baruch iii. 35. See de Wette, Bib. Dogmatik, § 97, et seq., and 149, et seq., who has collected some of the most important passages. See too his Wesen des Glaubens, &c., § 14, p. 72, et seq.

³ See Bauer, *Dicta Classica*, V. T. &c., 1798, Vol. I. § 41, et seq. See also the treatise of Stahl on the Appearances of God, &c., in Eichhorn, *Bibliothek der Bib. Lit.* Vol. VII. p. 156, et seq.

⁴ See an able article on "the Relation of Jehovah to the Heathen," in Eichhorn, ubi sup., Vol. VIII. p. 222, et seq. See Ammon, *Fortbildung des Christenthums*, Leipzig, 1836, et seq., Vol. I. Book 1. Ch. i.

⁵ Lessing well says, the Hebrews proceeded from the conception of the *most*

attributes are assigned him. He is the God of infinite Love; Father of all, who possesses the Earth and Heavens.

The conception which a man forms of God, depends on the character and attainment of the man himself; this differed with individual Jews as with the Greeks, the Christians, and the Mahometans. However, this must be confessed, that under the guidance of Divine Providence, the great and beautiful doctrine of one God for the Hebrews seems very early embraced by the great Jewish Lawgiver; incorporated in his national legislation; and defended with rigorous enactments. At our day it is difficult to understand the service rendered to the human race by the mighty soul of Moses, and that a thousand years before Anaxagoras.¹ His name is ploughed into the history of the world. His influence can never die. It must have been a vast soul, endowed with moral and religious genius to a degree extraordinary among men, which at that early age could attempt to found a State on the doctrine and worship of one national God.

Was he the first of the come-outers? Or had others, too far before the age for its acceptance, perished before him in the greatness of their endeavour? History is silent.² But the bodies of many Prophets must be rolled

powerful God to that of the *only* God, but remained for a long time far below the true transcendent notion of the one true God. "Education of the human race," Werke, ed 1824, Vol. XXIV. p. 43, 44. See also on this subject of Hebrew Theism, the valuable but somewhat one-sided views of Vatke, Bibl. Theologie, Vol. I § 44, et seq. But see also Salvador, Hist. des Institutions de Moïse, &c, Brussels, 1830, Vol III p. 175, et seq.

At first Christian Artists found it in bad taste and even heathenish to paint the Almighty in any form. Then, in decorating churches and MSS with pictures drawn from O S stories, they often put only a *hand* for God, or omitting that, put Christ for the Father. See Didron, Iconographie Chrétienne, Paris, 1843, p. 174, et seq. See the nice distinction made by John of Damascus in regard to images of God, Orat. I in Imaginibus, Opp. ed. Basil, 1574, p. 701, et seq et al. Before the twelfth century it seems there were no pictures of God from Christian Artists. Afterwards the Italians painted him as a *Pope*, the Germans as an *Emperor*, the French and English as a *King*. Didron, ubi sup., p. 230, et seq.

¹ Constant, Liv. IV. Ch. xi., has some just remarks on the excellence of the Hebrew Theology.

² It is difficult to determine accurately the date of events in Chinese history, such are the pretensions of Chinese scholars on the one hand, and such the bigoted scepticism of dogmatists on the other; but see the Chinese Classical Work, commonly called the Four Books, translated by David Pollie; Malacca, 1829, 1 vol. 8vo. See Cantu, ubi sup., Vol. III. Ch. xxi. et seq.

into the gulf that yawns wide and deep between the Ideal and the Actual, before the successful man comes in the fulness of time, at God's command, to lead men into the promised land, reaping what they did not sow. These men have risen up in all countries and every time. In the rudest ages as in the most refined, they look through the glass of Nature, seeing clearly the invisible things of God, and by the things that are made and the feelings felt, understanding his eternal power and Godhead. They adored Him as the Spirit who dwells in the sun, looks through the stars, speaks in the wind, controls the world, is chief of all powers, animal, material, spiritual, and Father of all men—their dear and blessed God. In his light they loved to live, nor feared to die.

There is a great advance from the Fetichism of the Canaanite to the Theism of Moses ; from the rude conceptions of the New Zealander to the refined notions of an enlightened Christian. Ages of progress and revolution seem to separate them, so different is their theology. Yet the Religion of each is the same, distinguished only by the more and less. The change from one of these three religious types to the other is slow ; but attended with tumult, war, and suffering. In the ancient civilized nations, little is known of their passage from Fetichism to Polytheism. It took place at an early age of the world, before written documents were common. We have, therefore, no records to verify this passage in the history of the Greeks, Egyptians, or Hebrews. Yet in the earliest periods of each of these nations we find monuments which show that Fetichism was not far off, and furnish a lingering but imperfect evidence of the fierce struggle which had gone on. The wrecks of Fetichism strew the shores of Greece and Egypt. Judea furnishes us with some familiar examples.¹

¹ The legendary character of the Pentateuch renders it unsafe to depend entirely on its historical statements. Many passages seem to have been originally designed, or at least retouched, by some one who sought to enhance the difference between Moses and the people. Still, the "general drift" of the tradition is not to be mistaken, and can scarcely be wrong. The testimony of the prophets respecting the early state of the nation is more valuable than that of the Pentateuch itself. See De Wette, Introduction to the O. T., tr. by Theo. Parker, Boston, 1843, Vol. II. *passim*. See too, Ewald, *Geschichte des Volks Israel*, Vol I., Gött., 1843.

In the patriarchal times, if we may trust the mythical stories in Genesis, we find sacred stones which seem to be Fetiches, Stone-pillars,¹ Idolatry,² worship of Ramphan and Chiun while in Egypt and the desert;³ the Golden Calf of Aaron and that of Jeroboam;⁴ and the Goats that were worshipped in the wilderness.⁵ Besides, we find the worship of the serpent,⁶ a relic of the superstition of Egypt or Phœnicia; the worship of Baal in its various forms;⁷ of Astarte, "Heaven's Queen and Mother;" of Thammuz, and Moloch;⁸ all of which seem to be remains of Fetichism.⁹ In the very Law itself we find traces of Fetichism. The prohibition of certain kinds of food, garments, and sacrifices; the forms of divination, the altars, feasts, sacrifices, scape-goat, the ornaments of the priest's dress, all seem to have grown out of the rude worship that formerly prevailed. The old Idolatry was spiritualized, its forms modified and made to serve for the worship of Jehovah. The frequent relapses of king and people prove, on the one hand, that the nation was slowly emerging out of a state of great darkness and superstition, and, on the other, that lofty minds and noble hearts were toiling for their civilization.

For many centuries a most bloody contention went on between the ideal Monotheism and the actual Idolatry; at times it was a war of extermination. This shows how difficult it is to introduce Monotheism before the people are

¹ Gen. xxviii 18, xxxv. 14.

² Gen. xxxi. 19, xxxv. 1—4.

³ See Josh. xiv. 14; Ezek. xx. 7, et seq., xxiii. 3; Amos v. 25, 26; Exod. xxvii 1; Lev. xvii.

⁴ Exod. xxxii. 1—6; 1 Kings xii. 28; Ezek. i. 10, and x. 14.

⁵ Levit. xvii 7. *Devils*, in our version.

⁶ Numb. xxi. 4—9; 2 Kings xvii. 4.

⁷ 1 Kings xviii. 23, 26, 28, xix 18; Jerem. xix 5, 2 Kings i. 2; Judges viii. 32, ix. 4, 46; Numb. xxv. 1, et seq.

⁸ 1 Kings xi 33, Jerem. vii. 18; Judges ii 13, x. 6; 2 Kings xxiii. 7, Levit. xix. 29, Deut. xxii. 18; Ezek. viii 14; 2 Kings xxiii. 5, xvii. 16, xxi. 3, 5; Deut. iv. 19, xvii 3, 2 Kings xxiii 10; Levit. xviii. 21, xx. 2, et seq.; Deut. xviii. 10, Jerem. vii. 31, xix. 5, xxxii. 35. See the testimony of the ancients and remarks of the learned on this subject in De Wette, *Archæologie*, &c., § 191, et seq., and § 231, et seq. Vatke goes too far in his explanations. § 21—27; but his book is full of valuable thoughts.

⁹ There is a remarkable passage, though of but four words, in Hosea xvi. 2, which shows that one of the worst vices of Fetichism still prevailed in his time, saying, "*They that sacrifice a man shall kiss the calves,*" i. e. the Idols of the People. This is not the common translation—but it seems to me the true one.

ready to receive it. They must wait till they attain the requisite moral and intellectual growth. Before this is reached, they can receive it but in name, and are detained from the ruder, and to them more congenial, form, only at the expense of most rigorous laws, suffering, and bloodshed. Before the Exile the Hebrews constantly revolted; afterwards they never returned to the ruder worship, but ten tribes of the nation were gone for ever.¹

In the more recent conflict of Monotheism and Polytheism, the history of the Christian and Mahometan religions shows what suffering is endured first by the advocates of the new, and next by those of the old faith, before the rude doctrine could give place to the better. War and extermination do their work, and remove the unbelieving. Many a country has been Christianized or Mahometanized by the sword. These things have taken place within a few centuries; when the conquering religion was called Christianity. Are the wars of Charlemagne forgotten? Go back thousands of years, to the strife between sacerdotal Polytheism and Fetichism, when each was a more bloody faith, and imagination cannot paint the horrors of the struggle.

Now, each of these forms represented an Idea of the popular consciousness which passed for a truth, or it could not be embraced; for a great truth, or it would not prevail widely; yes, for all of truth the man could receive at the time he embraced it. We creep before walking. Mankind has likewise an infancy, though it will at length put away childish things. Each of these forms did the world service in its day. Its truth was permanent; its error, the result of the imperfect development of man's faculties. It happens in religious as in scientific matters, that a doctrine contains both truth and falsehood. It is accepted for its truth or the appearance of truth. At first the falsehood does little harm, for it comes in contact with no active faculty in man which detects it.² But gradually

¹ See Newman's Hebrew Monarchy. Lond. 1847, Ch. IX. Ewald, ubi sup. B. II. p. 92, et seq. Anhang zum 2ten Band. III. (1) p. 197, et seq.

² We often see the most strange inconsistency between a man's conduct and his creed. Roman Lucretia sacrificed to Venus. The worshipper of Jupiter did not imitate his vices, nor does the modern devotee of some unholly creed, with a Christian name, become what the creed logically demands. A man may hold

the truth does its work; elevates those who receive it; new faculties awake; the falsehood is seen to be false. The free man would gladly reject it. But the Priesthood, whom interest chains to the old form, though false; or the People, not yet elevated enough to see the truth,—will not allow a man to separate the false from the true. They say to the Prophet and the Sage, “Thou shalt accept the old doctrine as we and our fathers. It is from God; the only Rule. Unless thou accept it on the same authority and in the same way as ourselves, we will burn thee and thy children with fire. Thou mayest live as liketh thee; thou shalt believe with us.” The free man replies, “Burn then if thou wilt; but Truth thou canst not burn down. A lie thou canst not build up. God does not die with his children, nor Truth with its martyrs.”

Then, as Truth is stronger than every lie, and he that has her is mightier than all men, so the fagot of martyrdom proves the fire-pillar of the human race, guiding them from the bondage and darkness of Egypt to the land of liberty and light. Truth, armed with her arrows to smite, her olive to bless, spreads wide her wings amid the outcry of the Priest and the King. At last Error goes down to the ground, but because honoured beyond her time, takes with her temple and tower in her fall.

The Truth represented by Fetichism is this: The un-

doctrines which render virtue nugatory, which make the flesh creep with horror, and yet live a divine life, or be gay even to frivolity. The late Dr Hopkins was a striking illustration of this statement. So long as the religious sentiment preponderates, the false doctrine fails of its legitimate effect. See some judicious observations on this theme in Constant, *Liv. I. Ch. iii. iv.*, and *Polythéisme Rom. Vol. I. p. 59—81.*

M. Comte, *Vol. V. p. 280.*, thinks the doctrine of pure Monotheism is perfectly sterile and incapable of becoming the basis of a true religious system! Judging only from experience, his conclusion is utterly false. But such as might be expected from one who is, as he *boasts*, “equally free from Fetichistic, Polytheistic, and Monotheistic prejudices.” He looks longingly to a time when all theism shall have passed away, and the “hypothesis of a God” become exploded! But the true man of science is of all men most modest and reverent. He who has followed Newton through the wondrous soaring of his genius comes grateful to that swan-song, beautiful as it is sublime, with which he finishes his flight, and sings of the ONE CAUSE ETERNAL and INFINITE, who rules the all. It cannot be read without a tear of joy. *Principia*, ed. 1833, *Vol. IV. p. 199, 201.* “*Et hi omnes.*” &c. &c. See too the beautiful and pious conclusion of Mr. Whewell to his *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*, *Vol. II. p. 582, 583.* And the remarks of Descartes, *Meditations, Med. 3, ad finem.* It was worthy of Linnæus to say, as he looked at a little flower, *Deum Sempiternum, omniscium, omnipotentem, à tergo transeuntem vidi et obstupui.*

known God is present in Matter; spiritual power is the strongest of forces. Its error was to make Matter God. The truth of Polytheism is: God is present, and active, everywhere; in Space, in Spirit; breathes in the wind; speaks in the storm; inspires to acts of virtue; helps the efforts of all true men. Its falsehood was, that it divided God, and gave but a chaos of Deity. When the falsehood was seen and felt to be such, and its truth believed in for itself, on its own authority, then was the time for Fetichism and Polytheism to fall. So they fell, never to hope again, for mankind never apostatizes. One generation takes up the Ark of Religion where another let it fall, and carries forward the hope of the world. The old form never passes away, till all its truth is transferred to the new. These types of religious progress are but the frames on which the artist spreads the canvas, while he paints his piece. The frame may perish when this is done. Fetichism and Polytheism did good, not because they were Fetichism and Polytheism, but because Religion was in them and they were steps in the spiritual progress of mankind—indispensable steps.

Such, then, are the three great forms of manifestation assumed by this religious Element. We cannot understand the mental and religious state of men who saw the Divine in a serpent, a cat, or an enchanted ring; not even that of superstitious Christians, who make earth a demon-land, and the one God but a King of Devils. Yet each religious doctrine has sometimes stood for a truth. It was devised to help pious hearts, and has imperfectly accomplished its purpose. It could not have been but as it was. Looking carelessly at the past, the history of man's religious consciousness appears but a series of revolutions. What is to-day built up with prayers and tears, is to-morrow pulled down with shouting and bloodshed, giving place to a new fabric equally transient. Prophets were mistaken, and saints confounded. Religious history is the tale of confusion. But looking deeper, we see it is a series of developments, all tending towards one great and beautiful end, the harmonious perfection of Man; that in theology as in other science, in morals as in theology, the circle of his vision becomes wider continually; his opinions

more true; his ideal more fair and sublime. Each form that has been, bore its justification in itself; an evil that "God winked at," to use the bold figure of a great man. It was natural and indispensable in its time and place; a part of the scheme of agencies provided from before the foundation of the world. Each form may perish; but its truth never dies. Nations pass away. A handful of red dust alone marks the spot where a metropolis opened its hundred gates; but Religion does not perish. Cities and nations mark the steps of her progress. A nation, at the head of the civilized world, organizes Religion as well as it can; perpetuates and diffuses its truth, and thus preaches the advent of a higher faith, and prepares its way. Each failure is a prophecy of the Perfect. But the change from faith to faith is attended with persecution on the one side, and martyrdom on the other. A little philosophy turns men from Religion. Much knowledge restores them to their faith, to the bosom of Piety. The great men of the world, men gifted with the deepest insight, and living the most royal life, have been Man's pioneers in these steps of progress. Moses, Hermes, Confucius, Budha, Zoroaster, Anaxagoras, Socrates, Plato, have lent their holy hands in Man's greatest work. Religion filled their soul with strength and light. It is only little men, that make wide the mouth and draw out the tongue at pure and genuine piety and nobleness of heart. Shall we not judge the world, as a rose, by its best side? God, of his wisdom, raises up men of religious genius; heaven-sent prophets; born fully armed and fitted for their fearful work. They have an eye to see through the reverend hulls of falsity; to detect the truth a long way off. They send their eagle gaze far down into the heart; far on into the future, thinking for ages not yet born. The word comes from God with blessed radiance upon their mind. They must speak the tidings from on high, and shed its beamy light on men around, till the heavy lids are opened, and the sleepy eye beholds. But alas for him who moves in such work. If there be not superhuman might to sustain him; if his soul be not naked of selfishness, he will say often, "Alas for me! Would God my mother had died or ever I was born to bear all the burdens of the world, and right its wrongs." He that feareth the Lord—when was not he

a prey? He must take his life in his hand, and become as a stranger to men. But if he fall and perish it is his gain. Is it not also the world's? It is the burning wood that warms men.

In passing judgment on these different religious states, we are never to forget, that there is no monopoly of religious emotion by any nation or any age. He that worships truly, by whatever form, worships the Only God; He hears the prayer, whether called Bralma, Jehovah, Pan, or Lord; or called by no name at all. Each people has its Prophets and its Saints; and many a swarthy Indian, who bowed down to wood and stone; many a grim-faced Calmuck, who worshipped the great God of Storms; many a Grecian peasant, who did homage to Phœbus-Apollo when the Sun rose or went down; yes, many a savage, his hands smeared all over with human sacrifice, shall come from the East and the West, and sit down in the Kingdom of God, with Moses and Zoroaster, with Socrates and Jesus,—while men, who called daily on the only living God, who paid their tribute and bowed at the name of Christ, shall be cast out, because they did no more. Men are to be judged by what is given, not what is withheld.

CHAPTER VI.

OF CERTAIN DOCTRINES CONNECTED WITH RELIGION. I. OF THE PRIMITIVE STATE OF MANKIND. II. OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

I. Of the Primitive State of Mankind.

VARIOUS theories have been connected with Religion, respecting the origin and primitive condition of the human race. Many nations have claimed to be the primitive possessors of their native soil; Autochthones, who sprang miraculously out of the ground, were descended from stones, grasshoppers, emmets, or other created things.

Others call themselves Children of the Gods.¹ Some nations trace back their descent to a time of utter barbarism, whence the Gods recalled them; others start from a golden age, as the primitive condition of men.² The latter opinion prevailed with the Hebrews, from whom the Christians have derived it. According to them, the primitive state was one of the highest felicity, from which men fell; the primitive worship, therefore, must have been the normal Religion of mankind.³

This question then presents itself, From what point did the human race set out; from civilization and the true worship of one God, or from cannibalism and the deification of Nature? Has the human race fallen or risen? The question is purely historical, and to be answered by historical witnesses. But in the presence, and still more in the absence, of such witnesses, the *à priori* doctrines of the man's philosophy affect his decision. Reasoning with no facts is easy, as all motion *in vacuo*. The analogy of the geological formation of the earth; its gradual preparation, so to say, for the reception of plants and animals, the ruder first, and then the more complex and beautiful, till at last she opens her bosom to man,—this, in connection with many similar analogies, would tend to show that a similar order was to be expected in the affairs of men; development from the lower to the higher, and not the reverse.⁴ In strict accordance with this analogy, some have taught that Man was created in the lowest stage of savage life; his Religion the rudest worship of nature;

¹ Diodorus Siculus says, somewhere, all ancient nations claim to be the *most ancient*.

² See the heathen view of this in Hesiod, *Opera et Dies*; Lucretius, V. 923, et seq.; Virgil, *Georg. I.* 125, et seq., *Ecl. IV.*; Ovid, *Met. I.* 89, et seq.; Plato, *Polit.* p. 271, et seq. See Heyne, *Opusc.* Vol. III. p. 24, et seq.; Hesiod's *Theog.* 521—579. See other parallels in Bauer's *Mythologie des A. T.* &c., Vol. I. p. 85, et seq. See also the curious speculations of Eichhorn (*Urgeschichte* ed. Gabel.), Buttmann (*Mythologus*), and Hartmann (*uber des Pentateuch*). Compare Rosenmüller, *Alterthumskunde*, Vol. I. Part 1. p. 180, et seq., and the striking passage in Kleuker's *Zendavesta*, Vol. II. p. 211, 227, et seq.; III. p. 85. See Rhode's remarks upon the passages, *ubi sup.*, p. 388, et seq. See Bauer, *Dicta Classica.* § 52.

³ See the opinions of *Zoroaster* on this point collected by Bretschneider, *Darstellung der Dogmatik, &c.*, der *Apoc. Schriften*, Vol. I. § 52, p. 286, et seq.

⁴ See *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*, Lond., 1844, 1st ed. p. 277, et seq., for some curious remarks.

his Morality that of the cannibal; that all of the civilized races have risen from this point, and gradually passed through Fetichism and Polytheism, before they reached refinement and true Religion; the spiritual man is the gradual development of germs latent in the natural man.¹

Another party, consisting more of poets and dogmatists than of philosophers, teaches the opposite doctrine, that a single human pair was created in the full majority of their powers, with a perfect Morality and Religion; that they fell from this state, and while some few kept alive the lamp of Truth, and passed it on from hand to hand, that the mass sunk into barbarity and sin, whence they are slowly emerging, aided of course by the traditional torch of Truth, still kept by their more fortunate brothers.²

¹ See Comte, Vol. V. p. 32, et al. Here arises the kindred question, Have all the human race descended from a single pair, or started up in the various parts of the earth where we find them? The first opinion has been defended by the Christian Church, in general with more obstinacy than argument. Pritchard, *ubi sup.*, derives all from one stock, and collects many interesting facts relative to the human race in various conditions. But the unity of the race is not to be made out *genealogically*. It is *essential to the nature* of mankind. Augustine has some curious speculations on this head, *De Civitate Dei*, XII. 21, XIII. 19—23, XIV. 10—12, 16—26. Laetantius, *Institut.* II. 11, VII. 4. See the opinions of Buddeus, and the curious literature he cites, *Ilist. Ecclesiast.* V. T. Vol. I. p. 92, et seq. On the other hand, Palfrey's *Academical Lectures*, Vol. II. Lect. xxi., xxii.; Kant, *von der Racen der Menschen*, Werke, Vol. VI. p. 313, et seq., *Begriff einer Menschennace*, *ib.* p. 33, et seq.; Muthmaaslicher Anfang der Menschengeschichte, *ib.* Vol. VII. p. 363, et seq. Even Schleiermacher departs from the common view. *Christliche Glaube*, § 60—61. See, likewise, the ingenious observations of Samuel S. Smith, *Inquiry into the causes of different Complexions, &c., of the human Race*. To make out the case, that all men are descended from a primitive power, is only necessary to assume, *philosophically*, a principle in the first man, whence all varieties may be derived, and then, *historically*, to assume the derivation, and the vicious circle is complete. Kames has some disingenuous remarks in his *History of Man*, *Preliminary Discourse*. See *Mémoires de l'Académie royale des Sciences morales et politiques*, (Paris,) 1841, Tom III. p. xxiii. et seq., and the literature referred to.

² See this, which is the prevalent opinion, set forth by Knapp, *ubi sup.*, Vol. I § 54—57. Hahn, *Lehrbuch des Christ. Glaub.* § 74, 75. Tholuck, in *Biblical Repository*, Vol. II. p. 119, et seq.; Hopkins's *System of Doctrines, &c.*, 2nd ed. Vol. I. Part 1 Chap 5, 8.—Bretschneider, *Dogmatik*, 4th ed. Vol. I. § 112, et seq., gives the Lutheran view of this subject, *but thinks Oken no hæretic for maintaining* (in the *Isis* for 1819, Vol. II p 1118) *that man may have arisen from an embryo, with human qualities, in the slime of the sea!* p. 812. See Jeremy Taylor, *Doctrine and Practice of Repentance*, Chap. VI., and the conflicting remarks in the Sermon at the Funeral of St. George Dalston; Jonathan Edwards, *Original Sin*, Part II. Chap. 1, and *Notes on Bible*, Works, Lond. 1839, Vol. II. p. 689, et seq. More on the same subject may be seen in Faber's *Horæ Mosaicæ*; Edwards, *On the Truth and Authority of the Scrip-*

Now in favour of this latter opinion there is no direct historical testimony except the legendary and mythological writings of the Hebrews, which have no more authority in the premises than the similar narratives of the Phœnicians, the Persians, and Chinese. If we assume the miraculous authority of these legends, the matter ends—in an assumption. The indirect testimony in favour of this doctrine is this: The opinion found in many nations that there had once been a golden age. Now, if this opinion were universal, it would not prove the fact alleged, for it can easily be explained from the notorious tendency of men, in a low state of civilization, to aggrandize the past; the senses delight to remember. That opinion only serves to illustrate this tendency. The sensual Greek often looked longingly backward to the Golden Age; but the more spiritual prophet of the Hebrews looks forward to the Kingdom of Heaven yet to be. But the opinion prevails among many nations, that they have slowly advanced from a ruder state.¹

Again, it is often alleged, that no nation has ever risen out of the savage state except under the influence of tribes previously enlightened—an historical thesis which has never been proved. No one knows whence the Chinese, the Mexicans, the Peruvians, derived assistance. We have yet to be told who taught the Greenlander to build his boat; the Otaheitan to fashion his war club; the Sacs and Pawnees to handle the hatchet, cook the flesh of the buffalo, and wear his skin. Besides, it is begging the question, to say the civilization of Rome, Athens, Tyre, Judea, Egypt, Babylon, Nineveh, came from the traditional knowledge of some primitive people. If a savage nation in seven centuries can learn to use oil and tallow for light, in a time sufficiently long it may write the Iliad, and build the Parthenon.

tures; Collier's Lectures on Scripture Facts; Gray's Connection between Sacred and Profane Literature; Cormack's Inquiry; Fletcher's Appeal, Deane's Worship of the Serpent, &c. &c.; Sénac, *Christianisme dans ses Rapports avec la Civilization moderne*, Paris, 1837, Vol. I. Part 1. ch. 2. See the opinions of the Ancients on the creation and primitive state of Man, collected in Grotius, *De Veritate*, ed. Clericus, Lib. I. § 16.

¹ Stauss, *Die Christ. Glaubenslehre*, 1840-1, Vol. I. § 45, et seq., decides against the hypothesis of a single pair, and even ascribes the origin of man to the power of *equivocal generation*. But his arguments in favour of the latter have little or no weight. See Kames, *ubi sup.*

Again, it is said that traces of Monotheism are found even in the low stages of our religious history. This must necessarily follow from the identity of the human race; from the Sentiment and Idea of God, expressing themselves spontaneously. If Man is the same in all ages, differing only in degree of development, and this element is natural to him, then we must expect to find such expressions of it in the poets and philosophers; in the religion of India, Greece, and Rome. Men of the same spiritual elevation see everywhere the same spiritual truth. If this doctrine of Monotheism proceed from tradition alone, then it must be more clear and distinct as we approach the source of the tradition. But this is notoriously contrary to facts.¹

The opposite doctrine has no more of *direct* historical testimony in its favour; but is supported by many indirect testimonies: by the fact, that the greater part of the human race are still in the condition of Fetichism and Polytheism, and that the further we go back in history the worse is this state, and the ruder their religion. In the days of Herodotus, the proportion of rude and savage people was far greater than at this day. Even in that nation alleged to be most highly favoured, we find their social, moral, and religious condition is more rude the further we trace it back. They and other nations, at the time we first meet them in history, bordered close upon the Fetichistic state to which their mythology refers. No nation has ever been found in a normal state of religious culture.

If we reason only from established facts, we must conclude, that the hypothesis of a golden age, a garden of Eden, a perfect condition of man on the earth in ancient times, is purely gratuitous. The Kingdom of Heaven is not behind but before us. No one can determine, by historical evidence, what was the primitive state of the human race, or when, or where, or how mankind, at the command of God, came into existence. Here our conclusions can be only negative.²

¹ Voltaire, *Essai sur les Mœurs, &c.*, edit. 1785, Vol. I. p. 17, et seq., 23, et seq., has many just remarks on the ruder periods of society.

² Constant, *Liv. I.* Ch. vi. and x. Ch. vi treats this subject with a superficiality unusual even with him. He thinks the doctrine of a Fall is a device of the Priesthood, at least, that it owes its importance and continuation to the sacri-

II. *On the Immortality of the Soul.*

The doctrine that Man lives for ever seems almost as general as the belief in a God. Like that, it comes naturally from an eternal desire in the human heart; a longing after the Infinite. In the rudest nations and the most civilized, this doctrine appears. Perhaps there has never been but a single form of Religion among civilized men under which it was not taught plainly and distinctly, and here it was continually implied. It seems we have by nature a sentiment of immortality; an instinctive belief therein. Rude nations, in whom instinct seems to predominate, trust the spontaneous belief. They construct an ideal world, in which the shade of the departed pursues his calling and finds justice at the last; recompense for his toil; right for his earthly wrongs. The conception of the form of future life depends on the condition and character of the believer. Hence it is a state of war or peace; of sensual or spiritual delight; of reform or progress, with different nations. The notion formed of the next world is the index of man's state in this. Here the Idolater and the Pantheist, the Mahometan and the Christian, express their conflicting views of life. The Sentiment and Idea of immortality may be true, but the definite conception must be mainly subjective, and therefore false. In a low stage of civilization the doctrine, like the religious feelings themselves, seems to have but little moral influence on life. It presents no motive to virtue, and therefore does not receive the same place in their system as at a subsequent period.

In rude ages men reason but little. As they begin to be civilized they ask proofs of Immortality, not satisfied with the instinctive feeling; not convinced that infinite Goodness will do what is best for all and each of his creatures. Hence come doubts on this head; inquiries; attempts to prove the doctrine; a denial of it. There seems an antithesis between instinct and understanding. The *reasoning*

dotal class. See some admirable remarks on the savage state in de Maistre, *Sonées de St Petersburg*, Vol. I. See also Leroux's criticism on the opinions of Jouffroy and Pascal in his *Réfutation de l'Eclecticism*, 1840, p. 330, et seq. Leroux believes in the progress of all species, Man, the Beaver, and the Bee. M Maet, ubi sup. p. 30, et seq., and 240, et seq., makes some very judicious observations.

of men is then against it, but when an accident drives them to somewhat more fundamental than processes of logic, the instinctive belief does its work. Here then are three distinct things: a Belief in a future and immortal state; a Definite Conception of that state; and a Proof of the fact of a future and immortal state. The two latter may be fluctuating and inadequate, while the former remains secure.

Now it may be considered as pretty well fixed, that all nations of the earth, above the mere wild man, believe this doctrine; at least, the exceptions are so rare, that they only confirm the rule. However, it is often difficult, and sometimes impossible, to determine the popular conception, and the influence of this belief at a particular time and place. But the subject demands a more special and detailed examination. Let us look at the opinion of the ancients.

1. *Opinion of the Hebrews respecting a Future State.*

It has sometimes been taught that this doctrine was perfectly understood, even by the Patriarchs; and sometimes declared altogether foreign to the Old Testament. Both statements are incorrect. In some parts of the Hebrew Scriptures we find rude notions of a future state, but a firm belief in it; in others doubt, and even denial thereof. In the early books, at least, it never appears as a motive. It has no sanction in the Law; no symbol in the Jewish worship. The soul was sometimes placed in the *blood*, as by Empedocles;¹ sometimes in the *breath*;² the heart, or the bowels, were sometimes considered as its seat.³ The notion of immortality was indefinite in the early books; there are cloudy views of a subterranean world,⁴ which gradually acquire more distinctness. The state of the departed is a gloomy, joyless consciousness; the servant is free from his master; the king has a shadowy grandeur.⁵

¹ Gen. ix. 4; Lev. xvii. 11; Deut. xii. 23. See Cicero, Tusc. Lib. I. Ch. 9, 10.

² Gen. ii. 7; Ps. civ. 29, et al.

³ Deut. xxxii. 46, Ps. vii. 10; Ps. xvi. 7; Prov. xxiii. 16, et al.

⁴ Gen. xxv. 8, xxxvii. 35, Num. xvi. 30, 33. In Job, Isaiah, and the Psalms this becomes more definite. Job x. 21, xxxviii. 17.

⁵ Job iii. 13—19; Isaiah xiv., Ezek. xxxii.; 1 Sam. xxviii. See Homer, Od. XI. Virgil, Æneid, VI.

The dead prophet can be called back to admonish the living. Enoch and Elijah, like Ganymede with the Greeks, being favourites of the deity,¹ and taken miraculously to him. Other passages deny the doctrine of immortality with great plainness.²

After the return from exile, the doctrine appears more definitely. Ezekiel and the pseudo-Isaiah³ allude to a resurrection of the body, a notion which is perhaps of Zoroastrian origin.⁴ Perhaps older than Zoroaster. But it is only a doubtful immortality that is taught in the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus, though in the Wisdom of Solomon,⁵ and in the fourth book of Maccabees, it is set forth with great clearness.⁶ The second book of Maccabees teaches in the plainest terms the resurrection of all; the righteous to happiness, the wicked to shame.⁷ They will find their former friends, and resume their old pursuits.⁸ Nothing is plainer.

¹ See also Ps. xvii. 15, lxxiii. 24. See the mistakes of Michaelis respecting this doctrine of immortality, in his *Argumenta immortalitate*, . . . ex Mose collecta, in his *Syntagma Comment* Vol. I p. 80, et seq. See his notes on Lowth, p. 465, ed. Rosenmuller. Warburton finds his strange hypothesis on the opposite view. See on this point, Bauer, *Dicta classica*, Vol. II. § 56, et seq.; De Wette, ubi sup., § 113, et seq.; Lessing, *Beitrage aus der Wolfenbütterschen Bibliothek*, Vol. IV. p. 484, et seq. See the moderate and judicious remarks of Knapp, ubi sup., Vol II § 149. See Henkes *Mag. fur Religions Philosophie*, Vol. V. pt. I. p. 16, et seq., and a treatise in the *Studien und Kritiken* for 1830, Vol. II. p. 884, et seq.

² *Eccles.* iii. 19—21, ix. 10. In *Job* xiv. 10—14, et al., Job distinctly denies the immortality which he had previously affirmed, but this shows the exquisite art of the poem. See De Wette, *Introduction to O. T.*, Vol. II. p. 556, 557, note *a*. Perhaps the opinions put into Job's mouth are not those of the Author, but such only as he thought the circumstances of his hero required.

³ *Ezek.* xxxvii; *Isa.* xxvi 19. See Gesenius in loco

⁴ Rhode, ubi sup., p. 494, Nork, *Mythen der alten Perser*, 1835, p. 148, et seq.; Priestley, ubi sup., § XXIII.; Bretschneider, ubi sup., § 58, p. 325, et seq.

⁵ i. 15, 16, ii 22—iii. et seq., v. 15, vi 18. It is connected with a preexistent state, viii 19, 20. The 2nd Book of Esdras is quite remarkable for the view it presents of this doctrine. See ii 23, 31, 34, 35, iv. 40, et seq., vii 13, 27—35, 42, et seq., viii. 1, et seq. et al. But the character and date of the book prevent me from using it in the text.

⁶ xv. 3, xvi. 25, xvii. 18, et al. de Wette, ubi sup., § 180. See the remarkable passage in 4th Esdras, which Fabricius has added from the Arabic Version *Codex pseudepigraphus*, ed alt Hamb 1741, Vol. II. p. 235, et seq. However, it may have been added by a Christian. In the *Psalter of Solomon*, it is said *they that fear the Lord shall rise again to everlasting life*. See Ch. xiv 2, et seq., and xv. in Fabricius, ubi sup., Vol. I p. 926, 954, et seq. I do not pretend to determine the date of this apocryphal book.

⁷ vii. 9, 11, 14, 23, xii. 43, et seq., xv. 12, et seq.

⁸ See in Eichhorn, ubi sup., Vol. IV p. 653, et seq., a valuable contribution to the History of this doctrine by Frisch. He makes an ingenious comparison

At the time of Jesus, the Pharisees believed in the resurrection of the body; a state of rewards and punishments.¹ Some of them connected it with the common notion of the transmigration of souls;² perhaps with that of preexistence. The Essenes, still more philosophically, taught the immortality of the soul, and the certainty of retribution, without the resurrection of the body. The soul is formed of the most subtle air, and is confined in the body as in a prison; death redeems it from a long bondage, and the living soul mounts upward rejoicing.³ We find similar views in Philo.⁴ Perhaps they were common in reflecting minds at the time of Jesus, who always presupposes a belief in immortality. The Sadducees alone opposed it. Such were the beginning and history of this dogma with the Jews. Its progress and formation are obvious.

2. Of this Doctrine among the Heathen Nations.

Among savage nations this belief is common. It appears in prayers and offerings for the dead; in the mode of burial. The savage American deposits in the tomb the bow and the pipe, the dress and the tomahawk of the de-

of passages from the Apocrypha, and the New Testament. The same doctrine is taught in both. See Flatt, in Paulus, Memorabil. st. II. p. 157, et seq.; Breitschneider, ubi sup., § 53—58.

¹ Acts xviii. 6—8, xxiv 15, Matth. xvii. 24, et seq; Mark xii. 19, et seq.

² Josephus, Wars, II. viii 14. Josephus may have added the metempsychosis to suit the taste of his readers

³ Josephus, Wars, II. viii 11. Josephus himself seems to agree with this opinion, when he "talks like a philosopher," in his pretended speech, Wars, III. viii. 5. See Buddeus, ubi sup., II. p. 1202, et seq.; Paulus, Memorabil., Vol II. p. 157, et seq.; and De Wette, ubi sup., § 178, et seq.

⁴ See also the views of Philo, De Somnus, p. 586; De Abräh., p. 385; De Mundi Opif., p. 31. The soul is immortal by *nature*, but by *grace*. See Dahné, Geschichtliche Darstellung der Jüdischen, —Alexand. Philosophie, &c., 1834, Vol I p. 330, et seq, 405, 485, et seq., who cites the above and other proof passages; Ratter, ubi sup., Vol. IV. See Weizel on the primitive doctrine of immortality among the Christians, in Theol. Stud. und Kritiken, for 1836. p. 957, et seq. Constant, Liv. IX Ch. vii, makes some just remarks on this subject. On the state of opinions in the time of Christ, see Gfrörer, Jahrhundert des Heils, 1838, Vol. II. Ch. vii.; Tiglandius de tribus Judeorum sectis, in quo Serarii, Drusii, Scalgeri, Opuscula, &c, 1703, Vol. I. Part I Lib II. and III., Part II. Lib II—IV., and Scalger's Animadversiones; and the very valuable treatise of Leclerc, Prolegomena ad Hist. Eccl. Lib. I. Ch. 1. See Flugge, Geschichte des Glaubens an Unsterblichkeit, &c &c., Leip. 1794, Vol. I. p. 112—160, 201—251, et passim, Bouchütté Mém. de l'Institut. Savans étrangers, Tom II. p. 621, et seq.

ceased warrior. The Scythian, the Goth, the Indian, and the half-barbarous Greek, burned or buried the horse, or the servant, the wife, or the captive of a great man at his decease, that he might go down royally attended to the realm of shades. Metempsychosis; the deification of the dead, ceremonies in their honour, gifts left on their tombs, oaths confirmed in their name, are all signs of this belief.¹ The Egyptians, the Gauls, and Scandinavians spoke of death as the object of life.² Lucan foolishly thinks the latter are brave because they believe in endless existence.

Each savage people has its place of souls. Death with them is not an extinction, but a change of life. The tomb is a sacred place. No expense is too great for the dead. The picture of Heaven is earth embellished. At first, the next world is not a domain of moral justice; God has no tribunal of judgment. But with the advance of the present, the conception of a future state rises also. The Pawnees have but one place for all the departed. The Scandinavians have two, Niflheim and Nastrond; the Persians seven; the Hindoos no less than twenty-four, for different degrees of merit.³ With many savages, the good and evil become angels to bless, or demons to curse mankind.⁴

To come to the civilized states of antiquity, India, Egypt, Persia, we find the doctrine prevalent in the earliest time, even in the ages when Mythology takes the place of History. In India and Egypt it was most often connected with

¹ See Lafitau, ubi sup., Vol. II. p. 387, et seq., 410, et seq., 420, et seq., 444, et seq., Vol. I. p. 359, et seq., 507, et seq.; Catlin, ubi sup., Vol. I. Bancroft's Hist. Vol. III. Ch. xxii.; Constant, *Livres* IX Ch. vii. viii., *Livres* II. Ch. iv.; Martin, ubi sup., Vol. I. p. 18, 56, 329. Vol. II. p. 212, et seq.; United States Exploring Expedition, Phil 1845-6, Vol. VII. p. 63, et seq., 99, et seq., et al. For the Fetishism of the Savages, see p. 16, et seq., 26, et seq., 51, et seq., 97, et seq., 110, et seq.

² On the belief of the Scandinavians, the Caledonians, the Parsees, Indians, &c., see Flugge, Vol. II. The ancient Lithuanians had some singular opinions and customs in relation to the dead, for which see Boemus, *Omnia Gentium Mores*, &c., Friburg, 1540, p. 182.

³ Constant, *ibid.* Meiners, ubi sup., Vol. I. Book iii. See Leroux, *De l'Humanité*, &c., Vol. II. p. 468, et seq.

⁴ Meiners, p. 302, et seq. Farmer, *On the Worship of Human Spirits*, passim. I have mentioned a few books on this subject, which have furnished the facts on which the above conclusions rest. I can refer to books of Travels, Voyages in general, the *Lettres Edifiantes*, descriptions of foreign countries, which furnish the facts in abundance. The works of Meiners, Constant, and Lafitau are themselves but a compilation from these sources.

transmigration to other bodies. Herodotus says, the Egyptians first taught the doctrine.¹ But who knows? Pausanias is nearer the truth when he refers it to India,² where it was taught before the birth of Philosophy in the West.³ It begins with the beginning of the nations.

In Greece we find it in a rude form in Homer; connected with Metempsychosis in Orpheus, Pythagoras, and Pherecydes; assuming a new form in Sophocles and Pindar, and becoming a doctrine fixed and settled with Socrates, Plato, and his school in general.⁴ In Homer the future state is a joyless existence. Achilles would rather be king of earthly men for a day, than of spirits for ever. Like the future state of the Jews, it offers no motive, and presents no terror. The shades of the weary came together from all lands into their dim sojourn. Enemies forgot their strife; but friends were joined.⁵ The present life is obscurely renewed in the next world. But the more especial friends or foes of the Gods are raised to honour, or condemned to shame. The transmigration of souls is perhaps derived from the wondrous mutation in the vegetable and animal world, where an acorn unswathed becomes an oak, and an egg discloses an eagle.⁶

In Hesiod, the condition of the dead is improved with the advance of the nation. The good have a place in the Isles of the Blest.⁷ In the latter poets, the doctrine rises still higher, while the form is not always definite.⁸ Pindar

¹ Lib. II Chap. 123. See Creutzer's note, in Bahr's edition.

² The date of all things is uncertain in the East. I cannot pretend to chronological accuracy, but see Asiatic Researches, Vol. V p. 360, VII. 310; VIII. 448, et seq., Priestley, ubi sup, § XXIII. Ritter Vol I p 132.

³ Stanley's History of Philosophy Part XIII Sect. II Chap. x Hyde, ubi sup.

⁴ Brouwer, Vol. II. Ch. xviii.; Wilkinson, Vol. II. p. 440, et seq. Homer assigns to the Gods a beautiful abode not shaken by the winds, &c., Od. VI. 41, et seq. See the mutation of the passage in Lucretius, III 18, et seq. Struchtmeyer, Theologia Mythica, sive de Origine Tartari et Elysi, Libri V., Hag. Com. 1753, 1 Vol. 8vo, Lib. I.

⁵ See Iliad, XXIII. et seq. et al.; Odyss XI. and XXIV. passim. and Heyne, Excursus on Iliad, XXIII. 71 and 104, Vol. VIII p. 368, et seq.; Diod. &c., Vol. I. p. 86. See the similar views of the North American Indians, in Schoolcraft, Algic Researches; Wachsmuth, Vol. II. Part II. p. 106, 244, 290; Potter, Antiquities; Gorres, Mythengeschichte, passim.

⁶ See Xenophon, Memorab, ed. Schneider, Lips. 1829, Lib. I. Chap. iii. § 7, and the Note of Bornemann

⁷ Opera et Dies, vs. 160, et seq., and the Scholia in Poet Min, ed Gaisford, Lips 1823, Vol II. p 142, et seq.

⁸ See the Gnomie poets in general, for the moral views of life, for the

celebrates the condition of the Good in the next life. It is a state where the righteous are rewarded and the wicked punished until sin is consumed from their nature, when they come to the divine abode.¹

To pass from the Poets to the Philosophers; the Immortality of the Soul was taught continually, from Pherecydes to Plotinus. There were those who doubted, and some that denied; yet it was defended by all the greatest philosophers, Thales, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Plutarch, Epictetus,² and by the most im-

immortality of the soul, Simonides, Frag. XXX. (XXXIII); Tyrtæus III. in Gai-ford, Vol. III. p. 160. 242. See the curious passage in Aristophanes, *Ranae*, vs 449—460, Opp. ed. Bekker, Lond. 1829, Vol. I. p. 535, in which see B.'s note See Oipheus, as cited by Lobeck, *Aglaoph.*, p. 950; Cudworth, Chap. I. § 21, 22, and Mosheim in loc See the indifferent book of Priestley, *Heathen Philosophy*, Part I. § 3, 5; Part II. § 3, 5; also p. 125, et seq., 197, et seq., 265, et seq.

¹ Olymp. II. vs. 104, et seq. (57—92, in Dissen.) See Cowley's wild imitation in his *Pindarique Odes*, Lond. 1720, Vol. II. p. 160, et seq. See similar thoughts in Propertius, Lib. III. 39, et seq.; and Tibullus, *Eleg.* III. 58; Virgil. *Eneid*, VI. See also Pindar's Fragment, II Vol. III. p. 34, ed. Heyne, Lips. 1817, Frag. I. p. 31, et seq., Frag. III. p. 36, and the notes of Dissen, in his edition of Pindar, Vol. II. p. 648, et seq., and Lobeck, ubi sup. See, who will, a treatise in the *Acta Eruditorum* for August, 1722, de *Statu Animæ separatæ post mortem*, &c.

² Cicero, *Tusc. Lib.* I. Chap. xvi. which Pherecydes was the first who taught this doctrine. See the note in Lemaire's edition See also Diogenes Laert. *Thales*, Lib. I. § 43, p. 27, et seq., and Plutarch, *De Placitis Phil.*, Lib. IV. Ch. ii.—vii., Opp. Vol. II. p. 898, et seq. It has been thought doubtful that Aristotle believed in immortality, and perhaps it is not easy to *prove* this point. See *De Anima*, III. 5; but compare *Ethic. Nicom.* Lib. III. Chap. vi., which denies it See again *De Anima*, II. 2; *De Gen. Anim.* III. 4. Plato teaches immortality with the greatest clearness. See the *Phædo*, passim; *Georgias*, p. 524, et seq. et al; *Apolog. Laws*, (if they are genuine,) Lib. X. XII; *Epinomis*, *Timæus*, *Rep. X.* p. 612, et seq. Plato makes the *essence* of man spiritual; *Tim.* p. 69, C. et seq., 72, D. et seq., *Rep.* IV. p. 431, A. He was opposed to the Materialists, *Soph.* p. 246, A. However, he did not condemn the body. His *argument* in favour of immortality, like many later arguments on the same theme, creates more questions than it answers. The *form* of the doctrine, its connection with *preexistence* and *transmigration*, like many doctrines still popularly connected with it, serve only to disfigure the doctrine itself, and bring it into reproach. The opinion of Cicero is so well known, that it is almost superfluous to cite passages; but see *Frag. de Consolat.* 12, et seq., 27, et al.; *De Senectute*, Chap. XXI., et seq., *Tusc.* I. C. 16; *De Amicit.*, Ch. 3, 4; *Somnium Scipionis*, et al. See *Seneca*, *De Ira*, I. 3; *Consolatio ad Helv.*, Chap. VI.; *De Vita Beata*, Chap. XXII. Ep. 50, 102, 117. Sometimes he speaks decidedly, at other times with doubt. See Lipsius *Physiol. Stoic.* Lib. III. Diss. viii.—xix. See Locke, *Essay*, Book IV. Chap. iii., and Letters to Bishop of Worcester

See Plutarch, *De Sera Numinis Vindicta*, *Morals*, Lond. 1691, Vol. IV. p. 197, et seq. See too the *Story of Soles* the *Thespian*, *ibid.* p. 206, et seq.; *Plut. Vit. Quint. Sertorius*, Opp. I. 571, 572, F & B., for an account of the

fluent schools. No doubt it was often connected with absurd notions, in jest or earnest. But when or where has its fate been different? Bishop Warburton thinks it no part of Natural Religion; Dodwell thinks immortality is only coextensive with Christian baptism, and is superinduced upon the mortal soul by that dispensation of water.¹ Could a heathen be more absurd? If the popular doctrine of the Christian Church, which dooms the mass of men to endless misery, be true, then were immortality a misfortune to the race. The wisest of the Heathen taught such a dogma as little as did Jesus of Nazareth. We must always separate the doctrine from its proof and its form; the latter is often imperfect while the doctrine is true.

Since the time of Bishop Warburton, it has been common to deny that the Heathen were acquainted with this doctrine.² "It was one guess among many," has often been said. But a man even slightly acquainted with ancient thought and life, knows it is not so. God has not made truth so hard to come at, that the world of men continued so many thousand years in ignorance of a future life. Before the time above named, it was taught by scholars, even scholars of the clerical order, that the doctrine was well known to the Heathen. Cudworth and

Fortunate Islands, with which comp. Diocl. Sic. Hist. II. Vol. I. p. 137, et seq. It seems the Priests of Serapis distinctly taught the Immortality of the Soul. Augustine says, "Many of the Philosophers of the Gentiles have written much concerning the immortality of the Soul, and in numerous books have they left it on record that the Soul is immortal. *But when you come to the resurrection of the Flesh, they do not hesitate but openly deny that, contradicting it to such a degree that they declare it impossible for this terrene flesh to rise to Heaven*" Expos. Psalms, lxxxviii. Justin M. says the doctrine of immortality was no *new thing* in Christ's time—but was taught by Plato and Pythagoras. The new element Christ added to the doctrine he thinks was the *resurrection of the Flesh* Opp. ed. Otto II p. 540 See the Literature collected on this subject by Kort-holt in his Annotations on Athenagoras, Legat., &c. &c., ed. Oxon. 1704, p. 94, et seq.

¹ Epistolary Discourse, &c, London, 1706 He thinks that *Regular Bishops* have the power of making men immortal through the "*divine baptismal spirit.*" See for the history of opinions among the Christians, Flügge, Vol. III. pt. 1 and 2.

² Warburton has the merit of framing an hypothesis so completely original that no one, perhaps, (except Bishop Hurd,) has ever shared it in full with him. Part of his singular theory is this. A belief in a future state was found necessary *in heathen countries* to keep the subjects in order, the philosophers and priests got up a doctrine for that purpose, teaching that the soul was immortal, but not believing a word of it. *Moses, who believed the doctrine, yet never taught it, controlled the people by means of his usurpation, and the perfect Law.*

More, Wilkins, Taylor, and Wollaston, to mention only the most obvious names, bear testimony to the fact.¹

To sum up in a few words the history of this doctrine, both among Jews and Gentiles : it seems that rude nations, like the Celts and the Sarmatians, clung instinctively to the sentiment of immortality ; that the doctrine was well known to the philosophers, and commonly accepted ; that some doubted, and some denied it altogether. A few had reached an eminence in philosophy, and could in their way demonstrate the proposition, and satisfy their logical doubt, thus reconciling the instinctive and reflective faculty. From the first book of Moses to the last of Maccabees, from Homer to Cicero, there is a great change in the form of the doctrine. All other forms also had changed.

But how far was the doctrine diffused among the people ? We can tell but faintly from history. But what nature demands and Providence affords, lingers longest in the bosom of the mass of men. The doctrine was not strange to the fishermen of Galilee. Was it more so to the peasants of Greece ?² The early Apologists of Christianity found no difficulty from the unity of God, and the immortality of the soul ; both are presupposed by Jesus and Paul. How far it moved men in common life can be told neither from the courtiers of Pagan Cæsar Augustus, nor from those of Christian Louis the Well-beloved. A Roman, and a Christian Pontiff—how much are they moved by the tardy terrors of future judgment ?³ Juvenal could

¹ See Cudworth and More, *passim*; Wilkins, *Principles and Duties of Natural Religion*, &c., Book I. Ch. xi.; see also Ch. iv. and viii., Taylor's Sermon, preached at the Funeral of that worthy Knight, Sir George Dalston, &c.; Wollaston, *Religion of Nature*, Sect. IX. It would be easy to cite passages from the early Christians, testifying to the truth possessed by the Heathens B. C. I will mention but one from Minucius Felix "A man might judge either that the present Christians are philosophers, or else that the old philosophers were Christians" See likewise Brougham's *Discourse on Natural Theology*, Note VI—IX. in Appendix. Polybius, *ubi sup.*, Lib. VI. c. 53—56, seems to think the legislators got up the doctrine, with no faith in it, except a general belief it would make men submissive. See Timæus, *De Anima Mundi*, in Gale, *ubi sup.*

² The *resurrection of the body* seems to have been the doctrine that offended Paul's hearers at Athens, that of *immortality* alone was well known to the Stoics, some of whom believed it, and the Epicureans, who rejected it. Acts xvii. 16, et seq. See Wetstein in loc.

³ See Horace, *Epist. Lib. I. Ep. xvi.*; Juvenal, *Satir. XIII.*; Persius, *Satir. II.* How far do these express the popular sentiment ?

to his biting sneer in more ages than one.¹ Was the sentiment of the Pagan philosopher unsatisfactory? It never otherwise. Mr Strauss declares it has not yet demonstrated; Mr Locke, that it cannot be proved. The spontaneous sentiment does its work with few words. Shall we demonstrate for us a fact of consciousness, or our personal identity? But the doctrine was condensed with gross errors,—preëxistence and metempsychosis. Has the doctrine ever been free of such connection? In a single historical case? It does not appear. The notion of inherited sin, of depravity born in the bones of the race, the notion that the mass of men are doomed by the lack of Mercy to eternal woe—immortal only to be wretched on account of a strange thing in the nineteenth century. Moslems and savages have foul notions of God; ancient civilization has enough on its head, hideous sins, unknown even to-day, for the world has been worse,—but both are guilty of such a stain.²

CHAPTER VII.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE RELIGIOUS ELEMENT ON LIFE.

Religion is not a being of isolated faculties which act independently. The religious, like each other element in us, coincides with other powers. Its action therefore is aided or hindered by them. The Idea of Religion is only realized by an harmonious action of all the faculties, the intellectual, the actual, the moral. Yet the religious faculty must act,

tit. II 149, et seq
 Cicero, ubi sup., gives a bird's-eye view of the state of the world at the commencement of the Christian period, perhaps the most faithful that has been given of manners and opinions. The popular mythology was in about the same estimation among cultivated men as the popular theology at the present time with men of piety and good sense. Leroux de l'Humanité, Vol. I. p. 302, makes some observations on this doctrine among the ancients, not without interest. See a Sermon of Immortal Life, by Theo. Parker, Boston, 1846.

more or less, though the understanding be not cultivated, and the moral elements sleep in Egyptian night; in connection therefore with Wisdom or Folly, with Hope or Fear, with Love or Hate. Now in all periods of human history Religion demands something of her votaries. The ruder their condition, the more capricious and unreasonable is the demand. Though the Religious instinct itself be ever the same, the form of its expression varies with man's intellectual and moral state. Its influence on life may be considered under its three different manifestations.

I. *Of Superstition.*

Combining with Ignorance and Fear, the Religious Element leads to Superstition. This is the vilification and debasement of men. It may be defined as FEAR BEFORE GOD. Plutarch, though himself religious, pronounced it worse than Atheism. But the latter cannot exist to the same extent; is never an active principle. Superstition is a morbid state of human nature, where the conditions of religious development are not fulfilled; where the functions of the religious faculty are impeded and counteracted. But it must act, as the heart beats in the frenzy of a fever. It has been said with truth, "Perfect love casts out fear." The converse is quite as true. Perfect fear casts out Love. The superstitious man begins by fearing God, not loving him. He goes on, like a timid boy in the darkness, by projecting his own conceptions out of himself; conjuring up a phantom he calls his God; a Deity capricious, cruel, revengeful, lying in wait for the unwary; a God ugly, morose, and only to be feared. He ends by paying a service meet for such a God, the service of Horror and Fear. Each man's conception of God is his conception of a man carried out to infinity; the pure idea is eclipsed by a human personality. This conception therefore varies as the men who form it vary. It is the index of their Soul. The superstitious man projects out of himself a creation begotten of his Folly and his Fear; calls the furious phantom God, Moloch, Jehovah; then attempts to please the capricious Being he has conjured up. To do this, the demands his Superstition makes are not to keep the laws which the one God wrote on the walls of Man's being; but to do arbitrary

acts which this fancied God demands. He must give up to the deity what is dearest to himself. Hence the savage offers a sacrifice of favourite articles of food ; the first-fruits of the chase, or agriculture ; weapons of war which have done signal service ; the nobler animals ; the skins of rare beasts. He conceives the anger of his God may be soothed like a man's excited passion by libations, incense, the smoke of plants, the steam of a sacrifice.

Again, the superstitious man would appease his God by unnatural personal service. He undertakes an enterprise, almost impossible, and succeeds, for the fire of his purpose subdues and softens the rock that opposes him. He submits to painful privation of food, rest, clothing ; leads a life of solitude ; wears a comfortless dress, that girds and frets the very flesh ; stands in a painful position ; shuts himself in a dungeon ; lives in a cave ; stands on a pillar's top ; goes unshorn and filthy. He exposes himself to be scorched by the sun and frozen by the frost. He lacerates his flesh ; punctures his skin to receive sacred figures of the Gods. He mutilates his body, cutting off the most useful members. He sacrifices his cattle, his enemies, his children, defiles the sacred temple of his body ; destroys his mortal life to serve his God. In a state more refined, Superstition demands abstinence from all the sensual goods of life. Its present pleasures are a godless thing. The flesh is damned. To serve God is to mortify the appetites God gave. Then the superstitious man abstains from comfortable food, clothing, and shelter ; comes neither eating nor drinking ; watches all night absorbed in holy vigils. The man of God must be thin and spare. Bernard has but to show his neck, fleshless and scraggy, to be confessed a mighty saint. Above all, he must abstain from marriage. The Devil lurks under the bridal rose. The vow of the celibate can send him howling back to hell. The smothered volcano is grateful to God. Then comes the assumption of arbitrary vows ; the performance of pilgrimages to distant places, thinly clad and barefoot ; the repetition of prayers, not as a delight, spontaneously poured out, but as a penance, or work of supererogation. In this state, Superstition builds convents, monasteries, sends Anthony to his dwelling in the desert ; it founds orders of Mendicants, Rechabites, Nazarites, Encratites, Pilgrims, Flagel-

lants, and similar Moss-troopers of Religion, whom Heaven yet turns to good account. This is the Superstition of the Flesh. It promises the favour of its God on condition of these most useless and arbitrary acts. It dwells on the absurdest of externals.

However, in a later day it goes to still more subtle refinements. The man does not mutilate his body, nor give up the most sacred of his material possessions. This was the Superstition of savage life. But he mutilates his soul; gives up the most sacred of his spiritual treasures. This is the Superstition of refined life. Here the man is ready to forego Reason, Conscience, and Love, God's most precious gifts; the noblest attributes of Man; the tie that softly joins him to the eternal world. He will think against Reason; decide against Conscience; act against Love; because he dreams the God of Reason, Conscience, and Love demands it. It is a slight thing to hack and mutilate the body, though it be the fairest temple God ever made, and to mar its completeness a sin. But to dismember the soul, the very image of God; to lop off most sacred affections; to call Reason a Liar, Conscience a devil's-oracle, and cast Love clean out from the heart, this is the last triumph of Superstition; but one often witnessed, in all three forms of Religion—Fetichism, Polytheism, Monotheism; in all ages before Christ; in all ages after Christ. This is the Superstition of the Soul. The one might be the Superstition of the Hero; this is the Superstition of the Pharisee.

A man rude in spirit must have a rude conception of God. He thinks the Deity like himself. If a Buffalo had a religion, his conception of Deity would probably be a Buffalo, fairer limbed, stronger, and swifter than himself, grazing in the fairest meadows of Heaven. If he were superstitious, his service would consist in offerings of grass, of water, of salt; perhaps in abstinence from the pleasures, comforts, necessities of a bison's life. His devil also would be a Buffalo, but of another colour, lean, vicious, and ugly. Now when a man has these rude conceptions, inseparable from a rude state, offerings and sacrifice are natural. When they come spontaneous, as the expression of a grateful or a penitent heart; the seal of a resolution; the sign of Faith, Hope, and Love, as an outward symbol which strengthens the in-dwelling sentiment—the sacrifice is

pleasant and may be beautiful. The child who saw God in the swelling and rounded clouds of a June day, and left on a rock the ribbon-grass and garden roses as mute symbols of gratitude to the Great Spirit who poured out the voluptuous weather; the ancient pagan who bowed prone to the dust, in homage, as the sun looked out from the windows of morning, or offered the smoke of incense at nightfall in gratitude for the day, or kissed his hand to the Moon, thankful for that spectacle of loveliness passing above him; the man who, with reverent thankfulness or penitence, offers a sacrifice of joy or grief, to express what words too poorly tell;—he is no idolater, but Nature's simple child. We rejoice in self-denial for a father, a son, a friend. Love and every strong emotion has its sacrifice. It is rooted deep in the heart of men. God needs nothing. He cannot receive; yet Man needs to give. But if these things are done as substitutes for holiness, as causes and not mere signs of reconciliation with God, as means to coax and wheedle the Deity and bribe the All-powerful, it is Superstition, rank and odious. Examples enough of this are found in all ages. To take two of the most celebrated cases, one from the Hebrews, the other from a Heathen people: Abraham would sacrifice his son to Jehovah, who demanded that offering,¹ Agamemnon his daughter to

¹ Gen. xvii 1—14. The conjectures of the learned about this mythical legend, which may have some fact at its foundation, are numerous, and some of them remarkable for their ingenuity. Some one supposes that Abraham was tempted by the *Elohim*, but *Jehovah* prevented the sacrifice. It is easy to find Heathen parallels. See the story of Cronus in Eusebius, P. E. I. 10, of Aristodemus, of whom Pausanias tells a curious story, IV 9. See the case of Helena and Valeria Luperca, who were both miraculously saved from sacrifice, in Plutarch, Paralel. Opp Vol. II. p. 314. The Bulgarian legend of poor Lasar is quite remarkable, and strikingly analogous to that of Abram and Isaac. A stranger comes to Lasar's house, L. has nothing for his guest's supper, and therefore, at his suggestion, kills Jenko, his son; the guest eats; but at midnight cries aloud that he is—the LORD! Jenko is restored to life. See the story in a notice of Paton's Servia, in For. Quart. Review for Oct. 1845, Am. ed. p. 130

Polybius says we must allow writers to enlarge in stories of miracles, and in fables of that sort, when they desire to promote piety among the people. But, he adds, an excess in this line is not to be tolerated. Opp. Lib. XVI. ch 11, ed Schweighauser, Oxon 1823, III. p. 289. Elsewhere he says, this would not be necessary in a state composed of wise men, but the people require to be managed with obscure fears and tragical stories. Ibid. Lib VI. ch 56, Vol. II. p. 389. Strabo is of the same opinion, and thinks that women and the people cannot be led to piety by philosophical discourses, only by Fables and Myths. Geog. Lib. I. ch. 2, ed. Siebenkees, p. 51-2. Dionysius Hal. speaks more

angry Diana. But a Deity kindly interferes in both cases. The Angel of Jehovah rescues Isaac from the remorseless knife; a ram is found for a sacrifice. Diana delivers the daughter of Agamemnon and leaves a hind in her place. No one doubts the latter is a case of superstition most ghastly and terrible. A father murder his own child—a human sacrifice to the Lord of Life! It is rebellion against Conscience, Reason, Affection; treason against God. Though Calchas, the anointed minister, declared it the will of Heaven—there is an older than Calchas who says, It is a Lie. He that defends the former patriarch, counting it a blameless and beautiful act of piety and faith performed at the command of God—what shall be said of him? He proves the worm of Superstition is not yet dead, nor its fire quenched, and leads weak men to ask, Which then has most of Religion, the Christian, who justifies Abraham, or the Pagan Greeks, who condemned Agamemnon? He leads weak men to ask; the strong make no question of so plain a matter.

But why go back to Patriarchs at Aulis or Moriah; do we not live in New England and the nineteenth century? Have the footsteps of Superstition been effaced from our land? Our books of theology are full thereof; our churches and homes, not empty of it. When a man fears God more than he loves him; when he will forsake Reason, Conscience, Love—the still small voice of God in the heart—for any of the legion voices of Authority, Tradition, Expediency, which come of Ignorance, Selfishness, and Sin; whenever he hopes by a poor prayer, or a listless attendance at church, or an austere observance of Sabbaths and Fast-days, a compliance with forms; when he hopes by professing with his tongue the doctrine he cannot believe in his heart, to atone for wicked actions, wrong thoughts, unholy feelings, a six-days' life of meanness, deception, rottenness, and sin,—then is he superstitious. Are there no fires but those of Moloch; no idols of printed paper, and spoken wind? No false worship but bowing the knee to Baal, Adonis, Priapus, Cybele? Superstition changes its forms, not its substance. If he were superstitious who

wisely. *Antiq.* II. ch. 18—20, *Opp. ed. Reiske, Lips. 1774, I. p. 271, et seq.*, and properly commends Romulus for rejecting immoral Stories from the public and official theology.

in days of ignorance but made his son's body pass through the fire to his God, what shall be said of them in an age of light, who systematically degrade the fairest gifts of men, God's dearest benefaction; who make life darkness, death despair, the world a desert, Man a worm, nothing but a worm, and God an ugly fiend, that made the most of men for utter wretchedness, death, and eternal hell? Alas for them. They are blind and see not. They lie down in their folly. Let Charity cover them up.

II. *Of Fanaticism.*

There is another morbid state of the religious Element. It consists in its union with Hatred and other malignant passions in men. Here it leads to Fanaticism. As the essence of Superstition is Fear coupled with religious feeling; so the essence of Fanaticism is Malice mingling with that sentiment. It may be called HATRED BEFORE GOD. The Superstitious man fears lest God hate him; the Fanatic thinks he hates not him but his enemies. Is the Fanatic a Jew?—the Gentiles are hateful to Jehovah; a Mahometan?—all are infidel dogs who do not bow to the prophet, their end is destruction. Is he a Christian?—he counts all others as Heathens whom God will damn; of this or that sect?—he condemns all the rest for their belief, let their life be divine as the prayer of a saint. Out of his selfish passion he creates him a God; breathes into it the breath of his Hatred; he worships and prays to it, and says "Deliver me, for thou art my God." Then he feels—so he fancies—inspiration to visit his foes with divine vengeance. He can curse and smite them in the name of his God. It is the sword of the Lord, and the fire of the Most High that drinks up the blood and stifles the groan of the wretched.

Like Superstition, it is found in all ages of the world. It is the insanity of mankind. As the richest soils grow weightiest harvests, or most noxious weeds and poisons the most baneful; as the strongest bodies take disease the most sorely; so the deepest natures, the highest forms of worship, when once infected with this leprosy, go to the wildest excess of desperation. Thus the fanaticism of worshippers of one God has no parallel among idolaters

and polytheists. There is a point in human nature where moral distinctions do not appear, as on the earth there are spots where the compass will not traverse, and dens where the sun never shines. This fact is little dwelt on by philosophers; still it is a fact. Seen from this point, Right and Wrong lose their distinctive character and run into each other. Good seems Evil and Evil Good, or both appear the same. The sophistry of the understanding sometimes leagues with appetite, and gradually entices the thoughtless into this pit. The Antinomian of all times turns in thither, to increase his Faith and diminish his Works. It is the very cave of Trophonius; he that enters loses his manhood and walks backward as he returns; his soul, so filled with God, whatever the flesh does, he thinks cannot be wrong, though it break all laws, human and divine. The fanatic dwells continually in this state. God demands of him to persecute his foes. The thought troubles him by day, and stares on him as a spectre at night. God, or his angel, appear to his crazed fancy and bid him to the work with promise of reward, or spurs him with a curse. Then there is no lie too malignant for him to invent and utter; no curse too awful for him to imprecate; no refinement of torture too cruel or exquisitely rendering for his fancy to devise, his malice to inflict; Nature is teased for new tortures; Art is racked to extort fresh engines of cruelty. As the jaded Roman offered a reward for the invention of a new pleasure, so the fanatic would renounce Heaven could he give an added pang to hell.

Men of this character have played so great a part in the world's history, they must not be passed over in silence. The ashes of the innocents they have burned, are sown broadcast and abundant in all lands. The earth is quick with this living dust. The blood of prophets and saviours they have shed still cries for justice. The Canaanites, the Jews, the Saracen, the Christian, Polytheist and Idolater, New Zealand and New England, are guilty of this. Let the early Christian and the delaying Heathen tell their tale. Let the voice of the Heretic speak from the dungeon-racks of the Inquisition; that of the "true believer" from the scaffolds of Elizabeth—most Christian Queen; let the voices of the murdered come up from the squares of Paris, the plains of the Low Countries, from the streets of Antioch, Byzantium,

Jerusalem, Alexandria, Damascus, Rome, Mexico; from the wheels, racks, and gibbets of the world; let the men who died in religious wars, always the bloodiest and most remorseless; the women, whom nothing could save from a fate yet more awful; the babes, newly born, who perished in the sack and conflagration of idolatrous and heretical cities, when for the sake of Religion men violated its every precept, and in the name of God broke down his Law, and trampled his image into bloody dust;—let all these speak, to admonish, and to blame.

But it is not well to rest on general terms alone. Paul had no little fanaticism, when he persecuted the Christians; kept the garments of men who stoned Stephen. Moses had much of it, if, as the story goes, he commanded the extirpation of nations of idolaters, millions of men, virtuous as the Jews; Joshua, Samuel, David, had much of it, and executed schemes bloody as a murderer's most sanguine dream. It has been both the foe and the auxiliary of the Christian Church. There is a long line of Fanatics, extending from the time of Jesus, reaching from century to century, marching on from age to age, with the banner of the Cross over their heads, and the Gospel on their tongues, and fire and sword in their hands.¹ The last of that Apocalyptic rabble has not as yet passed by. Let the clouds of darkness hide them. What need to tell of our own fathers; what they suffered, what they inflicted; their crime is fresh and unatoned. Rather let us take the wings of an angel, and fly away from scenes so awful, the slaughter-house of souls.

But the milder forms of Fanaticism we cannot escape. They meet us in the theological war of extermination, which sect now wars with sect, pulpit with pulpit, man with man. If one would seek specimens of Superstition in its milder form, let him open a popular commentary on the Bible, or read much of that weakish matter which circulates in what men call, as if in mockery, "good, pious books." If he would find Fanaticism in its modern and more Pharisaic shape, let him open the sectarian newspapers, or read theological polemics. To what mean uses may we not descend? The spirit of a Caligula and a Dominic, of Alva

¹ See the Book of Revelation, *passim*.

and Ignatius stares at men in the street. It can only bay in the distance; it dares not bite. Poor, craven Fanaticism! fallen like Lucifer, never to hope again. Like Pope and Pagan in the story, he sits chained by the wayside to grin and gibber, and howl and snarl, as the Pilgrim goes by, singing the song of the fearless and free, on the highway to Heaven, with his girdle about him and white robe on. Poor Fanaticism, who was drunk with the blood of the saints, and in his debauch lifted his horn and pushed at the Almighty, and slew the children of God,—he shall revel but in the dreamy remembrance of his ancient crime; his teeth shall be fleshed no more in the limbs of the living.

These two morbid states just past over, represent the most hideous forms of human degradation; where the foulest passions are at their foulest work; where Malice, which a Devil might envy, and which might make Hell darker with its frown; where Hate and Rancour build up their organizations and ply their arts. In man there is a mixture of good and evil. "A being darkly wise and poorly great," he has in him somewhat of the Angel and something of the Devil. In Fanaticism, the Angel sleeps and the Devil drives. But let us leave the hateful theme.¹

III. *Of Solid Piety.*

The legitimate and perfect action of the Religious Element takes place when it exists in harmonious combination with Reason, Conscience, and Affection. Then it is not Hatred, and not Fear, but LOVE BEFORE GOD. It produces the most beautiful development of human nature; the golden age, the fairest Eden of life, the kingdom of Heaven. Its Deity is the God of Infinite Power, Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Holiness—Fidelity to Himself,—within whose encircling arms it is beautiful to be. The demands it makes are to keep the Law He has written in the heart,

¹ A powerful priesthood has usually had great influence in promoting fanaticism of the most desperate character. One need only look over the history of persecutions in all ages to see this. We see it among the Hebrews, the Germans, the Druids, the nations that opposed the spread of Christianity. The Christian Church itself has erected monuments enough to perpetuate the fact. The story of Haman and Mordecai is no bad allegory of the conflict between the orthodox priesthood and the unorganized heretics.

to be good, to do good; to love men, to love God. It may use forms, prayers, dogmas, ceremonies, priests, temples, sabbaths, festivals, and fasts; yes, sacrifices if it will, as means, not ends; symbols of a sentiment, not substitutes for it. Its substance is Love of God; its Piety the form, Morality the Love of men; its temple a pure heart; its sacrifice a divine life. The end it proposes is, to reunite the man with God, till he thinks God's thought, which is Truth; feels God's feeling, which is Love, wills God's will, which is the eternal Right; thus finding God in the sense wherein he is not far from any one of us; becoming one with Him, and so partaking the divine nature. The means to this high end are an extinction of all in man that opposes God's law; a perfect obedience to Him as he speaks in Reason, Conscience, Affection. It leads through active obedience to an absolute trust, a perfect love; to the complete harmony of the finite man with the infinite God, and man's will coalesces in that of Him who is All in All. Then Faith and Knowledge are the same thing, Reason and Revelation do not conflict, Desire and Duty go hand in hand, and strew man's path with flowers. Desire has become dutiful, and Duty desirable. The divine spirit incarnates itself in the man. The riddle of the world is solved. Perfect love casts out fear. Then Religion demands no particular actions, forms, or modes of thought. The man's ploughing is holy as his prayer; his daily bread as the smoke of his sacrifice; his home sacred as his temple; his work-day and his sabbath are alike God's day. His priest is the holy spirit within him; Faith and Works his communion of both kinds. He does not sacrifice Reason to Religion, nor Religion to Reason. Brother and Sister, they dwell together in love. A life harmonious and beautiful, conducted by Righteousness, filled full with Truth and enchanted by Love to men and God,—this is the service he pays to the Father of All. Belief does not take the place of Life. Capricious austerity atones for no duty left undone. He loves Religion as a bride, for her own sake, not for what she brings. He lies low in the hand of God. The breath of the Father is on him.

If Joy comes to this man, he rejoices in its rosy light. His Wealth, his Wisdom, his Power, is not for himself alone, but for all God's children. Nothing is his which a

brother needs more than he. Like God himself, he is kind to the thankless and unmerciful. Purity without and Piety within; these are his Heaven, both present and to come. Is not his flesh as holy as his soul—his body a temple of God?

If trouble comes on him, which Prudence could not foresee, nor Strength overcome, nor Wisdom escape from, he bears it with a heart serene and full of peace. Over every gloomy cavern, and den of despair, Hope arches her rainbow; the ambrosial light descends. Religion shows him that, out of desert rocks, black and savage, where the Vulture has her home, where the Storm and the Avalanche are born, and whence they descend, to crush and to kill; out of these hopeless cliffs, falls the river of Life, which flows for all, and makes glad the people of God. When the Storm and the Avalanche sweep from him all that is dearest to mortal hope, is he comfortless? Out of the hard marble of Life, the deposition of a few joys and many sorrows, of birth and death, and smiles and grief, he hews him the beautiful statue of religious Tranquillity. It stands ever beside him, with the smile of heavenly satisfaction on its lip, and its thrusting finger pointing to the sky.

The true religious man, amid all the ills of time, keeps a serene forehead, and entertains a peaceful heart. Thus going out and coming in amid all the trials of the city, the agony of the plague, the horrors of the thirty tyrants, the fierce democracy abroad, the fiercer ill at home, the Saint, the Sage of Athens, was still the same. Such an one can endure hardness; can stand alone and be content; a rock amid the waves, lonely, but not moved. Around him the few or many may scream their screams, or cry their clamours; calumniate or blaspheme. What is it all to him, but the cawing of the sea-bird about that solitary and deep-rooted stone? So swarms of summer flies, and spiteful wasps, may assail the branches of an oak, which lifts its head, storm-tried and old, above the hills. They move a leaf, or bend a twig, by their united weight. Their noise, fitful and malicious, elsewhere might frighten the sheep in the meadows. Here it becomes a placid hum. It joins the wild whisper of the leaves. It swells the breezy music of the tree, but makes it bear no acorn less.

show that greatness in the religious man is only needed to be found; that his Charity does not expire with the quiverings of his flesh; that this hero can end his breath with a "Father, forgive them."

Man everywhere is the measure of man. There is nothing which the Flesh and the Devil can inflict in their rage, but the Holy Spirit can bear in its exceeding peace. The Art of the tormentor is less than the Nature of the suffering soul. All the denunciations of all that sat on Moses's seat, or have since climbed to that of the Messiah; the scorn of the contemptuous; the fury of the passionate; the wrath of a monarch, and the roar of his armies; all these are to a religious soul but the buzzing of the flies about that mountain oak. There is nothing that prevails against Truth.

Now in some men Religion is a continual growth. They are always in harmony with God. Silently and unconscious, erect as a palm tree, they grow up to the measure of a man. To them Reason and Religion are of the same birth. They are born saints; Aborigines of Heaven. Betwixt their Idea of Life and their Fact of Life there has at no time been a gulf. But others join themselves to the Armada of Sin, and get scarred all over with wounds as they do thankless battle in that leprous host. Before these men become religious, there must be a change,—well-defined, deeply marked,—a change that will be remembered. The Saints who have been sinners, tell us of the struggle and desperate battle that goes on between the Flesh and the Spirit. It is as if the Devil and the Archangel contended. Well says John Bunyan, The Devil fought with me weeks long, and I with the Devil. To take the leap of Niagara, and stop when half-way down, and by their proper motion reascend, is no slight thing, nor the remembrance thereof like to pass away.

This passage from sin to salvation; this second birth of the Soul, as both Christians and Heathens call it, is one of the many mysteries of Man. Two elements meet in the consciousness. There is a negation of the past; an affirmation of the future. Terror and Hope, Penitence and Faith, rush together in that moment and a new life begins. The character gradually grows over the wounds of sin. With bleeding feet the man retreads his way, but gains at last

the mountain top of Life and wonders at the tortuous track he left behind.

Shall it be said that Religion is the great refinement of the world ; its tranquil star that never sets ? Need it be told that all Nature works in its behalf ; that every mute and every living thing seems to repeat God's voice, Be perfect ; that Nature, which is the *out-ness* of God, favours Religion, which is the *in-ness* of Man, and so God works with us ? Heathens knew it many centuries ago. It has long been known that Religion—in its true estate—created the deepest welfare of Man. Socrates, Seneca, Plutarch, Antoninus, Fenelon can tell us this. It might well be so. Religion comes from what is strongest, deepest, most beautiful and divine ; lays no rude hand on soul or sense ; condemns no faculty as base. It sets no bounds to Reason but Truth ; none to Affection but Love ; none to Desire but Duty ; none to the Soul but Perfection ; and these are not limits, but the charter of infinite freedom.

No doubt there is joy in the success of earthly schemes. There is joy to the miser as he satiates his prurient palm with gold ; there is joy for the fool of fortune when his gaming brings a prize. But what is it ? His request is granted ; but leanness enters his soul. There is delight in feasting on the bounties of Earth, the garment in which God veils the brightness of his face ; in being filled with the fragrant loveliness of flowers ; the song of birds ; the hum of bees ; the sounds of ocean ; the rustle of the summer wind, heard at evening in the pine tops ; in the cool running brooks ; in the majestic sweep of undulating hills ; the grandeur of untamed forests ; the majesty of the mountain ; in the morning's virgin beauty ; in the maternal grace of evening, and the sublime and mystic pomp of night. Nature's silent sympathy—how beautiful it is !

There is joy, no doubt there is joy, to the mind of Genius, when thought bursts on him as the tropic sun rending a cloud ; when long trains of ideas sweep through his soul, like constellated orbs before an angel's eye ; when sublime thoughts and burning words rush to the heart ; when Nature unveils her secret truth, and some great Law breaks, all at once, upon a Newton's mind, and chaos ends in light ; when the hour of his inspiration and the joy of his genius

is on him, 't is then that this child of Heaven feels a god-like delight. 'T is sympathy with Truth.

There is a higher and more tranquil bliss when heart communes with heart; when two souls unite in one, like mingling dew-drops on a rose, that scarcely touch the flower, but mirror the heavens in their little orbs; when perfect love transforms two souls, either man's or woman's, each to the other's image; when one heart beats in two bosoms; one spirit speaks with a divided tongue; when the same soul is eloquent in mutual eyes—there is a rapture deep, serene, heart-felt, and abiding in this mysterious fellow-feeling with a congenial soul, which puts to shame the cold sympathy of Nature, and the ecstatic but short-lived bliss of Genius in his high and burning hour.

But the welfare of Religion is more than each or all of these. The glad reliance that comes upon the man; the sense of trust; a rest with God; the soul's exceeding peace; the universal harmony; the infinite within; sympathy with the Soul of All—is bliss that words cannot portray. He only knows, who feels. The speech of a prophet cannot tell the tale. No: not if a seraph touched his lips with fire. In the high hour of religious visitation from the living God, there seems to be no separate thought; the tide of universal life sets through the soul. The thought of self is gone. It is a little accident to be a king or a clown, a parent or a child. Man is at one with God, and He is All in All. Neither the loveliness of Nature, neither the joy of Genius, nor the sweet breathing of congenial hearts, that make delicious music as they beat,—neither one nor all of these can equal the joy of the religious soul that is at one with God, so full of peace that prayer is needless. This deeper joy gives an added charm to the former blessings. Nature undergoes a new transformation. A story tells that when the rising sun fell on Memnon's statue it wakened music in that breast of stone. Religion does the same with Nature. From the shining snake to the waterfall, it is all eloquent of God. As to John in the Apocalypse, there stands an angel in the sun; the seraphim hang over every flower; God speaks in each little grass that fringes a mountain rock. Then even Genius is wedded to a greater bliss. His thoughts shine

more brilliant, when set in the light of Religion, Friendship and Love it renders infinite. The man loves God when he but loves his friend. This is the joy Religion gives; its perennial rest; its everlasting life. It comes not by chance. It is the possession of such as ask and toil and toil and ask. It is withheld from none, as other gifts. Nature tells little to the deaf, the blind, the rude. Every man is not a genius, and has not his joy. Few men can find a friend that is the world to them. That triune sympathy is not for every one. But this welfare of Religion, the deepest, truest, the everlasting, the sympathy with God, lies within the reach of all his Sons.

BOOK II.

“Reason is natural Revelation, whereby the eternal Father of Light and Fountain of all Knowledge communicates to mankind that portion of truth which he has laid within the reach of their natural faculties. Revelation is natural Reason enlarged by a new set of discoveries, communicated by God immediately, which Reason vouches the truth of, by the testimony and proof, it gives that they come from God. So that he that takes away Reason to make way for Revelation puts out the light of both, and does much what the same as if he would persuade a man to put out his eyes the better to receive the remote light of an invisible star by a telescope.”—LOCKE, *Essay*, Book IV Chap. XIII § 4.

BOOK II.

THE RELATION OF THE RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT TO GOD, OR
A DISCOURSE OF INSPIRATION.

CHAPTER I.

THE IDEA AND CONCEPTION OF GOD.

Two things are necessary to render Religion possible; namely, a religious faculty in Man, and God out of Man as the object of that religious faculty. The existence of these two things admitted, Religion follows necessarily, as vision from the existence of a seeing faculty in Man, and that of light out of him. Now the existence of the religious element, as it was said before, implies its object. We have naturally a Sentiment of God. Reason gives us an Idea of Him. But to these we superadd a Conception of Him. Can this definite conception be adequate? Certainly not. The Idea of God, as the Infinite, may exhaust the most transcendent Imagination; it is the highest Idea of which Man is capable. But is God to be measured by our Idea? Shall the finite circumscribe the Infinite? The existence of God is so plainly and deeply writ, both in us and out of us, in what we are and what we experience, that the humblest and the loftiest minds may be satisfied of this reality, and may know that there is an absolute Cause; a Ground of all things; the Infinite of Power, Wisdom, Justice, Love, whereon we may repose, wherein we may confide. This conclusion comes alike from the spontaneous Sentiment, and premeditated Reflection; from the intuition of Reason, and the process of Reasoning. This Idea of God

is clear and distinct; not to be confounded with any other idea.

But when we attempt to go further, to give a logical description of Deity, its nature and essence; to define and classify its attributes; to make a definite Conception of God, as of the finite objects of the senses or the understanding, going into minute details, then we have nothing but our own subjective notions, which do not, of necessity, have an objective reality corresponding thereto. All men may know God as the Infinite. His nature and essence are past finding out. But we know God only in part—from the manifestations of divinity, seen in nature, felt in Man; manifestations of Matter and Spirit. Are these the whole of God; is Man his measure? Then is He exhausted, and not infinite. We affix the terms of human limitation to God, and speak of his Personality; some limiting it to one, others extending it to three, to seven, to thirty, or to many millions of persons. Can such terms apply to the Infinite? We talk of a personal God. If thereby we only deny that he has the limitations of unconscious Matter, no wrong is done. But our conception of Personality is that of finite personality; limited by human imperfections; hemmed in by Time and Space; restricted by partial emotions, displeasure, wrath, ignorance, caprice. Can this be said of God? If Matter were conscious, as Locke thinks it possible, it must predicate Materiality of God as persons predicate Personality of him. We apply the term impersonal. If it mean God has not the limitations of our personality it is well. But if it mean that he has those of unconscious Matter, it is worse than the other term. Can God be personal and conscious, as Joseph and Peter; unconscious and impersonal, as a moss or the celestial ether? No man will say it. Where then is the philosophic value of such terms?

The nature of God is past finding out. "There is no searching of his understanding." As the Absolute Cause, God must contain in himself, potentially, the ground of consciousness, of personality—yes, of unconsciousness and impersonality. But to apply these terms to Him seems to me a vain attempt to fathom the abyss of the Godhead and report the soundings. Will our line reach to the bottom of God? There is nothing on Earth, or in Heaven,

to which we can compare him; of course we can have no image of him in the mind.¹

There has been enough dogmatism respecting the nature, essence, and personality of God—respecting the Metaphysics of the Deity, and that by men who, perhaps, did not thoroughly understand all about the nature, essence, and metaphysics of Man. It avails nothing. Meanwhile the greatest religious souls that have ever been, are content to fall back on the Sentiment and the Idea of God, and confess that none by searching can perfectly find Him out. They can say, therefore, with an old Heathen, “Since he cannot be fully declared by any one name, though compounded of never so many, therefore is he rather to be called by every name, he being both one and all things; so that [to express the whole of God] either everything must be called by his name, or he by the name of everything.”² “Call him, therefore,” says another Pagan, “by all names, for all can express but a whisper of Him; call him rather by no name, for none can declare his Power, Wisdom, and Goodness.”

Malebranche says, with as much philosophy as piety, “One ought not so much to call God a Spirit, in order to express positively what he is, as in order to signify that he is not Matter. He is a being infinitely perfect. Of this we cannot doubt. But in the same manner we ought

¹ There has been some controversy on this question of the *personality* of God in modern times. The writings of Spinoza, both now and formerly, have caused much discussion of this point. The capital maxim of Spinoza on this head is, all attempts to *determine* the nature of God are a negation of him. *Determinatio negatio est.* See Ep. 50, p. 634, ed Paulus. He thinks God has *self-conscious personality* only in self-conscious persons, i. e. men. Ethic. II. Prop. 11, and Coroll.

Some have thought to help the matter by the Trinitarian hypothesis. If there were but one man in the universe, he could not indeed, it is said, have our conception of personality, which demands other persons. This condition is fulfilled for the divine Being soon as we admit a trinity in unity. Mystical writers have always inclined to a denial of the personality of God. Thus Plotinus, Dionysius the Areopagite, Scotus Erigena, Meister Eckart, Tauler, and Bohme, to mention no more, deny it. On this subject see Hegel, Lectures on the proofs of the existence of God, at the end of Philosophie der Religion, Encyclopadie, § 562, et seq., 2nd ed. See the subject touched upon by Strauss, Glaubenslehre, § 33. See also Nitzsch's review of Strauss in Studien und Kritiken for Jan 1, 1842; Sengler, ubi sup., B. I. p. Abs II—IV.

In reference to Spinoza, see the controversial writings of Messrs Norton and Ripley, above referred to.

² See the Asclepiian Dialogue, and also the passages from Seneca and Julian, cited in Cudworth, Vol II. p. 679, et seq., Ch IV § 32.

not to imagine . . . that he is clothed with a human body . . . under colour that that figure was the most perfect of any; so neither ought we to imagine that the Spirit of God has human ideas, or bears any resemblance to our Spirit, under colour that we know nothing more perfect than the human mind. We ought rather to believe that as he comprehends the perfection of Matter, without being material, . . . so he comprehends also the perfections of created spirits without being Spirit, in the manner we conceive Spirit. That his true name is, HE THAT IS, or, in other words, Being without restriction, All Being, the Being Infinite and Universal."¹ Still we have a positive Idea of God. It is the most positive of all. It is implied logically in every idea that we form, so that as God himself is the being of all existence, the background and cause of all things that are, the reality of all appearance, so the Idea of God is the central truth, as it were, of all other ideas whatever. The objects of all other ideas are dependent, and not final; the object of this, independent and ultimate. Thus Idea of an Independent and Infinite Cause, therefore, is necessarily presupposed by the conception of any dependent and finite effect. For example, a man forms a notion of his own existence. This notion involves that of dependence, which conducts him back to that on which dependence rests. He has no complete notion of his own existence without the notion of dependence; nor of that without the object on which he depends. Take our stand where we may, and reason, we come back logically to this which is the primitive fact in all our intellectual conceptions, just as each point in the circumference of a circle is a point in the radius thereof, and this leads straightway to the Centre, whence they all proceed.²

¹ Recherches de la Vérité, Liv. III. Ch. ix., as cited in Hume, Dialogues concerning Nat. Rel. Vol II p 469. See Kant, Kritik der reinen Vernunft, p. 441—540, 7th ed.; Weisse, Die Idee der Gottheit, 1833. Some have been unwilling to attribute *being* to the Deity, since we have no conception nor knowledge of *being in itself*, still less of *infinite being*. Our knowledge of *being* is only of *being thus and that*, a *conditioned being*, which is not predicable of God.

² This is not the place to attempt a proof of God's existence. In Book I. Ch. II. I could only hint at the sources of argument. See in Weisse, Kant, and Strauss, a criticism on the various means of proof resorted to by different Philosophers. Weisse divides these proofs into three classes I. The *Ontological* argument, which leads to Pantheism; II. The *Cosmological*, which leads to Deism; and III. The *Theological*, which leads to pure Theism. See Leibnitz,

But the Idea of God as a Being of Infinite Power, Wisdom, Love,—in one Word, the Absolute,—does not satisfy. It seems cold; we call it abstract. We are not beings of Reason alone; so are not satisfied with mere Ideas. We have Imagination, Feelings, limited Affections, Understanding, Flesh and Blood. Therefore we want a Conception of God which shall answer to this complex nature of ours. Man may be said to live in the World of Eternity, or abstract truth; that of Time, or historical events; that of Space, or of concrete things. Some men want, therefore, not only an Idea for the first, but a Conception for the second, and a Form for the third. Accordingly the feelings, Fear, Reverence, Devotion, Love, naturally personify God, humanize the deity, and represent the Infinite under the limitations of a finite and imperfect being, whom we “can know all about.” He has the thoughts, feelings, passions, limitations of a man; is subject to time and space; sees, remembers, has a form. This is anthropomorphism. It is well in its place. Some rude men seem to require it. They must paint to themselves a deity with a form—the Ancient of days; a venerable monarch seated on a throne, surrounded by troops of followers. But it must be remembered all this is poetry; this personal and anthropomorphic Conception is a phantom of the brain that has no existence independent of ourselves. A poet personifies a mountain or the moon; addresses it as if it wore the form of man, could see and feel, had human thoughts, sentiments, hopes, and pleasures, and expectations. What the poet’s fancy does for the mountain, the feelings of reverence and devotion do for the Idea of God. They clothe it with a human personality, because that is the highest which is known to us. Men would comprehend the deity; they can only apprehend him. A Beaver, or a Reindeer, if possessed of religious faculties, would also conceive of the deity with the limitations of its own personality, as a Beaver or a Reindeer—whose faculties as such were perfect; but the Conception, like our own, must be only subjective, for even Man is no measure of God.¹

Théodicée, Pt I. § 7, p. 506, ed. Erdmann, 1840, and his *Epist. ad Bielringum*, in his *Epp. ad div. Ed. Kortholt*, Vol. IV. p. 21 (cited by Strauss, *ubi sup.*)

¹ See Xenophanes as cited above by Eusebius, P. E. XIII. 13. See Karsten,

Now by reasoning we lay aside the disguises of the Deity, which the feelings have wrapped about the Idea of Him. We separate the substantial from the phenomenal elements in the Conception of God. We divest it of all particular form, all sensual or corporeal attributes, and have no image of God in the mind. He is Spirit,¹ and therefore free from the limitations of Space. He is nowhere in particular, but everywhere in general, essentially and vitally omnipresent. Denying all particular form, we must affirm of him Universal Being.

The next step in the analysis is to lay aside all partial action of the Deity. He is equally the cause of the storm and the calm sunshine; of the fierceness of the Lion and the Lamb's gentleness, so long as both obey the laws they are made to keep. All the natural action in the material world is God's action, whether the wind blows a plank and the shipwrecked woman who grasps it to the shore, or scatters a fleet and sends families to the bottom. But Infinite Action or Causation must be attributed to Him.

Then all mental processes, like those of men, are separated from the Idea of Him. We cannot say he thinks, for that is to reason from the known to the unknown, which is impossible to the omniscient; nor that he plans or consults with himself, for that implies the infirmity of not seeing the best way all at once; nor that he remembers or foresees, for that implies a restriction in time, a past and a present, while the Infinite must fill Eternity, all time, as well as Immensity, all space. We cannot attribute to Him reflection, which is after-thought, nor imagination, which is fore-thought, since both imply limited faculties. Judgment, fancy, comparison, induction—these are the operations of finite minds. They are not to be applied to the divine Being except as figures of speech; then they merely represent an unknown emotion. We have got a name but no real thing. But Infinite Knowing must be his.

We go still further in this analysis of the conception of God, and all partial feeling must be denied. We cannot

ubi sup., Vol. I. p. 35, et seq. The passage from Seneca, De Superstitione, preserved by Augustine, Civ. Dei, Lib. VI. C. 10; Seneca, Opp. ed. Paris, 1829, iv p. 39, et seq.

¹ I use the term Spirit simply as a *negation of the limitations of matter*. We cannot tell the *essence* of God.

say that he hates ; is angry, or grieved ; repents ; is moved by the special prayer of James and John ; that he is sad to-day and to-morrow joyful ; all these are human, limitations of our personality, and are no more to be ascribed to God than the form of the Reindeer, or the shrewdness of the Beaver. But Love implies no finiteness. This we conceive as Infinite.

At the end of the Analysis, what is left ? BEING, CAUSE, KNOWLEDGE, LOVE, each with no conceivable limitation. To express it in a word, a being of Infinite Power, Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Holiness, Fidelity to himself. Thus by an analysis of the conception of God, we find in fact, or by implication, just what was given synthetically by the intuition of Reason. But do these qualities exhaust the Deity ? Surely not. They only form our Idea of Him. It is idle, impious in men to say, the finite creature of yesterday can measure Him who is the All in All, the True, the Holy, the Good, the Altogether-beautiful. Let a man look into the Milky-way, and strive to conceive of the Mind that is the Cause, the Will, of all those centres to unknown worlds, and ask, What can I know of Him ? Nay, let a man turn over in his hand a single crystal of snow, and consider its elements, their history, transformation, influence, and try to grasp up the philosophy of this little atom of matter, and he will learn to bow before the thought of Him, and say there is no searching of his understanding. If there are other orders of beings higher than ourselves, their idea of God must include elements above our reach. The finite approximates, but cannot reach the Infinite.

In criticizing the conception of God, I would not attempt the fool's task, to define and describe God's nature, but to separate our Idea of Him from all other ideas ; not to tell all in God that answers to the Idea in Man,—that of course is impossible,—but to separate the eternal Idea from the transient conception ; to declare the positive and necessary existence of this Idea in Man, of its Object out of Man, while I deny the existence of any limitations of human personality, or of our anthropomorphic consciousness in the Deity.

CHAPTER II.

THE RELATION OF NATURE TO GOD.

To determine the relation of Man to God it is well to determine first the relation of God to Nature—the material world—that we may have the force of the analogy of that relation to aid us. Conscious man may be very dissimilar to unconscious matter, but yet their relations to God are analogous. Both depend on him. To make out the point and decide the relation of God to Nature we must start from the Idea of God, which was laid down above, a Being of Infinite Power, Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Holiness. Now to make the matter clear as noonday, God is either present in all space, or not present in all space. If infinite, he must be present everywhere in general, and not limited to any particular spot, as an old writer so beautifully says: “Even Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Him.”¹ Heathen writers are full of such expressions.² God, then, is universally present in the world of matter. He is the substantiality of matter. The circle of his being in space has an infinite radius. We cannot say, Lo here, or Lo there—for he is everywhere. He fills all Nature with his overflowing currents; without him it were not. His Presence gives it existence; his Will its law and force; his Wisdom its order; his Goodness its beauty.

It follows unavoidably, from the Idea of God, that he is present everywhere in space; not transiently present, now and then, but immanently present, always; his centre here; his circumference nowhere; just as present in the eye of an emmet as in the Jewish holy of holies, or the sun itself. We may call common what God has cleansed

¹ See, too, the beautiful statement in Ps. cxxxix 1—13.

² See those in Cudworth, Ch. IV. § 28, and elsewhere.

with his presence ; but there is no corner of space so small, no atom of matter so despised and little, but God, the Infinite, is there.¹

Now, to push the inquiry nearer the point. The Nature or Substance of God, as represented by our Idea of him, is divisible or not divisible. If infinite he must be indivisible, a part of God cannot be in this point of space, and another in that ; his Power in the sun, his Wisdom in the moon, and his Justice in the earth. He must be wholly, vitally, essentially present, as much in one point as in another point, or all points ; as essentially present in each point at any one moment of time as at any other or all moments of time. He is there not idly present but actively, as much now as at creation. Divine omnipotence can neither slumber nor sleep. Was God but transiently active in Matter at creation, his action now passed away ? From the Idea of him it follows that He is immanent in the world, however much he also transcends the world. "Our Father worketh hitherto," and for this reason Nature works, and so has done since its creation. There is no spot the foot of hoary Time has trod on, but it is instinct with God's activity. He is the ground of Nature ; what is permanent in the passing ; what is real in the apparent. All Nature then is but an exhibition of God to the senses ; the veil of smoke on which his shadow falls ; the dew-drop in which the heaven of his magnificence is poorly imaged. The Sun is but a sparkle of his splendour. Endless and without beginning flows forth the stream of divine influence that encircles and possesses the all of things. From God it comes, to God it goes. The material world is perpetual growth ; a continual transfiguration, renewal that never ceases. Is this without God ? Is it not because God, who is ever the same, flows into it without end ? It is the fulness of God that flows into the crystal and the rock, the juices of the plant, the life of the emmet and the elephant. He penetrates and pervades the World. All things are full of Him, who surrounds the sun, the stars, the universe itself ; "goes through all lands, the expanse of oceans, and the profound Heaven."²

¹ See the judicious remarks of Lord Brougham, *Dialogue on Instinct*, Dial. II., near the end. Dr Palfrey, in his *Dudleian Lecture*, attributes only a qualified omnipresence to the Deity.

² Virgil, *Georgic IV.* 222. See many passages cited by Cudworth, *Chap. IV.* § 31, p. 664, et seq., 455, et seq. ; and the passages collected from Tschaleddin

Inanimate matter, by itself, is dependent ; incapable of life, motion, or even existence. To assert the opposite is to make it a God. In its present state it has no will. Yet there is in it existence, motion, life. The smallest molecule in a ray of polarized light and the largest planet in the system exist and move as if possessed of a Will, powerful, regular, irresistible. The powers of Nature, then, that of Gravitation, Electricity, Growth, what are they but modes of God's action ? If we look deep into the heart of this mystery, such must be the conclusion. Nature is moved by the first Mover ; beautified by him who is the Sum of Beauty ; animated by him who is of all the Creator, Defence, and Life.¹

Such, then, is the relation of God to Matter up to this point. He is immanent therein and perpetually active.* Now, to go further, if this be true, it would seem that the various objects and things in Nature were fitted to express and reveal different degrees and measures of the divine influence, so to say ; that this degree of manifestation in each depends on the capacity which God has primarily bestowed upon it ;² that the material but inorganic, the vegetable but inanimate, and the animal but irrational world, received each as high a mode of divine influence as its several nature would allow.

Then, to sum up all in brief, the Material World with its objects sublimely great, or meanly little, as we judge them ; its atoms of dust, its orbs of fire ; the rock that stands by the sea-shore, the water that wears it away ; the worm, a birth of yesterday, which we trample under-foot ; the streets of constellations that gleam perennial overhead ; the aspiring palm tree, fixed to one spot, and

Rum by Rückert, in his *Gedichte*, and Tholuck, *Bluthensammlung aus der morgenländischen Mystik*

¹ Cudworth makes three hypotheses, either, 1. *All things happen in nature by the fortuitous concurrence of atoms*, and this it is Atheism to suppose, or, 2. There is in Nature a *formative faculty*, "a plastic nature," which does the work ; or, 3. Each act is done *immediately* by God. He, it is well known, adopts the second alternative. See Chap. III. § 37. See also More's *Enchiridion Metaphysicum*, Antidote against Atheism, Book II. ; *Apol. pro Cartesio*, p. 115, et seq. On the *Transcendency* of God, see Descartes, *Princip. P. I. No. 21*, et al. Leibnitz *Théod.* No 385, et al.

² I will not say there is not, in the abstract, as much of divine influence in a *wheat-stalk* as in a *world*. But in reference to ourselves there *appear* to be *various degrees* of it

the lions that are sent out free, these incarnate and make visible all of God their several natures will admit. If Man were not spiritual, and could yet conceive of the aggregate of invisible things, he might call it God, for he could go no further.

Now, as God is Infinite, imperfection is not to be spoken of Him. His Will therefore—if we may so use that term—is always the same. As Nature has of itself no power, and God is present and active therein, it must obey and represent his unalterable will. Hence, seeing the uniformity of operation, that things preserve their identity, we say they are governed by a Law that never changes. It is so. But this Law—what is it but the Will of God? a mode of divine action? It is this in the last analysis. The apparent secondary causes do not prevent this conclusion.

The things of Nature, having no will, obey this law from necessity.¹ They thus reflect God's image and make real his conception—if we may use such language with this application. They are tools, not Artists. We never in Nature see the smallest departure from Nature's law. The granite, the grass, keep their law; none go astray from the flock of stars; fire does not refuse to burn, nor water to be wet. We look backwards and forwards, but the same law records everywhere the obedience that is paid it. Our confidence in the uniformity of Nature's law is complete, in other words, in the fact that God is always the same; his modes of action always the same. This is true of the inorganic, the vegetable, the animal world.² Each thing keeps its law with no attempt at violation of it.³ From this obedience comes the regularity and

¹ I use the term *obedience* figuratively. Of course there is no *real* obedience without *power to disobey*

² M. Leroux, an acute and brilliant but fanciful writer, thinks the capabilities of man change by civilization, and, which is to the present point, that the *animals* advance also; that the Bee and the Beaver are on the march towards perfection, and have made some progress already. However he may make out the case *metaphysically*, it would be puzzling to settle the matter by facts. But if his hypothesis were admissible, it would not militate with the doctrine in the text

³ From this view it does not follow that animals are *mere machines*, with no consciousness, only that they have not free-will. However, in some of the superior animals there is some small degree of freedom apparent. The Dog and the Elephant seem sometimes to exercise a mind, and to become in some

order apparent in Nature. Obeying the law of God, his omnipotence is on its side. To oppose a law of Nature, therefore, is to oppose the Deity. It is sure to redress itself.

But these created things have no consciousness, so far as we know, at least, nothing which is the same with our self-consciousness. They have no moral will; no power in general to do otherwise than as they do. Their action is not the result of forethought, reflection, judgment, voluntary obedience to an acknowledged law. No one supposes the Bison, the Rosebush, and the Moon, reflect in themselves; make up their mind and say, "Go to, now, let us bring up our young, or put forth our blossoms, or give light at nightfall, because it is right to do so, and God's law." Their obedience is unavoidable. They do what they cannot help doing.¹ Their obedience, therefore, is not their merit, but their necessity. It is power they passively yield to; not a duty they voluntarily and consciously perform. All the action, therefore, of the material, inorganic, vegetable, and animal world is mechanical, vital, or, at the utmost, instinctive; not self-conscious, the result of private will.² There is, therefore, no room for caprice in this department. The Crystal must form itself after a prescribed pattern; the Leaf presume a given shape; the Bee build her cell with six angles. The man-

measure emancipated from their instincts. On this curious question, see Descartes, Epist. P. I. Ep. 27, 67, Henry More, Epist. ad Cartesium.

¹ This point has been happily touched upon by Hooker, Eccles. Polity, Book I. Chap. in § 2. See his curious reflections in the following sections.

² I have not the presumption to attempt to draw a line between these three departments of Nature, nor to tell what is the *essence of mechanical, vital, or instinctive* action. I would only indicate a distinction that, to my mind, is very plain. But I cannot pretend to say where one ends and the other begins. Again, it may seem unphilosophical to deny consciousness, or even self-consciousness, to the superior animals, but if they possess a self-consciousness, it is something apparently so remote from ours, that it only leads to confusion if both are called by the same term. The functions of a plant we cannot explain by the laws of *mechanical* action; nor the function of an animal, a Dog, for example, by any qualities of body. On this subject, see Whewell, Hist. Inductive Sciences, Book IX. Chap. i.—iii. Cudworth, Chap. III. § 37, No. 17, et seq., has shown that there may be *sentient*, and not mere *mechanical*, life, without consciousness, and therefore without *free-will*. Is not this near the truth, that God alone is *absolutely* free, and man has a *relative* freedom, the degree of which may be constantly increased? Taking a *certain stand-point*, it is true, Freedom and Necessity are the same thing, and may be predicated or denied of Deity indifferently, thus, if God is perfect, all his action is perfect. He can do no otherwise than as he does. Perfection therefore is his *necessity*, but it is his *freedom* none the less. Here the difference is merely in words.

tle of Destiny is girt about these things. To study the laws of Nature, therefore, is to study the modes of God's action. Science becomes sacred, and passes into a sort of devotion. Well says the old sage, "Geometry is the praise of God." It reveals the perfections of the Divine Mind, for God manifests himself in every object of science, in the half-living Molecules of powdered wood; in the Comet with its orbit which imagination cannot surround; in the Cones and Cycloids of the Mathematician, that exist nowhere in the world of concrete things, but which the conscious mind carries thither.

Since all these objects represent, more or less, the divine mind, and are in perfect harmony with it, and so always at one with God, they express, it may be, all of deity which Matter in these three modes can contain, and thus exhibit all of God that can be made manifest to the eye, the ear, and the other senses of man. Since these things are so, Nature is not only strong and beautiful, but has likewise a religious aspect. This fact was noticed in the very earliest times; appears in the rudest worship, which is an adoration of God in Nature. It will move man's heart to the latest day, and exert an influence on souls that are deepest and most holy. Who that looks on the ocean, in its anger or its play; who that walks at twilight under a mountain's brow, listens to the sighing of the pines, touched by the indolent wind of summer, and hears the light tinkle of the brook, murmuring its quiet tune,—who is there but feels the deep Religion of the scene? In the heart of a city we are called away from God. The dust of man's foot and the sooty print of his fingers are on all we see. The very earth is unnatural, and the Heaven scarce seen. In a crowd of busy men which set through its streets, or flow together of a holiday; in the dust and jar, the bustle and strife of business, there is little to remind us of God. Men must build a cathedral for that. But everywhere in nature we are carried straightway back to Him. The fern, green and growing amid the frost, each little grass and lichen, is a silent memento. The first bird of spring, and the last rose of summer; the grandeur or the dulness of evening and morning; the rain, the dew, the sunshine; the stars that come out to watch over the farmer's rising corn; the birds

that nestle contentedly, brooding over their young, quietly tending the little strugglers with their beak,—all these have a religious significance to a thinking soul. Every violet blooms of God, each lily is fragrant with the presence of deity. The awful scenes, of storm, and lightning and thunder, seem but the sterner sounds of the great concert, wherewith God speaks to man. Is this an accident? Ay, earth is full of such “accidents.” When the seer rests from religious thought, or when the world’s temptations make his soul tremble, and though the spirit be willing the flesh is weak; when the perishable body weighs down the mind, musing on many things; when he wishes to draw near to God, he goes, not to the city—there conscious men obstruct him with their works—but to the meadow, spangled all over with flowers, and sung to by every bird; to the mountain, “visited all night by troops of stars;” to the ocean, the undying type of shifting phenomena and unchanging law; to the forest, stretching out motherly arms, with its mighty growth and awful shade, and there, in the obedience these things pay, in their order, strength, beauty, he is encountered front to front with the awful presence of Almighty power. A voice cries to him from the thicket, “God will provide.” The bushes burn with deity. Angels minister to him. There is no mortal pang, but it is allayed by God’s fair voice as it whispers, in nature, still and small, it may be, but moving on the face of the deep, and bringing light out of darkness.

“Oh joy that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive.”

Now to sum up the result. It seems from the very Idea of God that he must be infinitely present in each point of space. This immanence of God in Matter is the basis of his influence; this is modified by the capacities of the objects in Nature; all of its action is God’s action; its laws modes of that action. The imposition of a law, then, which is perfect, and is also perfectly obeyed, though blindly and without self-consciousness, seems to be the measure of God’s relation to Matter. Its action therefore is only mechanical, vital or instinctive, not voluntary

and self-conscious. From the nature of these things, it must be so.

CHAPTER III.

STATEMENT OF THE ANALOGY DRAWN FROM GOD'S RELATION TO NATURE.

Now if God be present in Matter, the analogy is that he is also present in Man. But to examine this point more closely, let us set out as before from the Idea of God. If he have not the limitations of matter, but is Infinite, as the Idea declares, then he pervades Spirit as well as Space; is in Man as well as out of him. If it follows from the Idea that he is immanent in the Material World—in a moss; it follows also that he must be immanent in the Spiritual world—in a man. If he is immanently active, and thus totally and essentially present, in each corner of Space, and each Atom of creation, then is he as universally present in all Spirit. If the reverse be true, then he is not omnipresent, therefore not Infinite, and of course not God. The Infinite God must fill each point of Spirit as of Space. Here then, in God's presence in the soul, is a basis laid for his direct influence on men; as his presence in Nature is the basis of his direct influence there.

As in Nature his influence was modified only by the capacities of material things, so here must it be modified only by the capabilities of spiritual things; there it assumed the forms of mechanical, vital, and instinctive action; here it must ascend to the form of voluntary and self-conscious action. This conclusion follows undeniably from the analogy of God's presence and activity in Matter. It follows as necessarily from the Idea of God, for as he is the materiality of Matter, so is he the spirituality of Spirit.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GENERAL RELATION OF SUPPLY TO WANT.

WE find in Nature that every want is naturally supplied. That is, there is something external to each created being to answer all the internal wants of that being. This conclusion could have been anticipated without experience, since it follows from the perfections of the Deity, that all his direct works must be perfect. Experience shows this is the rule in nature. We never find a race of animals destitute of what is most needed for them, wandering up and down, seeking rest and finding none. What is most certainly needed for each, is most bountifully provided. The supply answers the demand. The natural circumstances, therefore, attending a race of animals, for example, are perfect. The animal keeps perfectly the law or condition of its nature. The result of these perfect circumstances on the one hand, and perfect obedience on the other, is this,—each animal in its natural state attains its legitimate end, reaches perfection after its kind. Thus every Sparrow in a flock is perfect in the qualities of a Sparrow, at least, such is the general rule; the exceptions to it are so rare they only seem to confirm that rule.

Now to apply this general maxim to the special case of Man. We are mixed beings, spirits wedded to bodies. Setting aside the religious nature of Man for the moment, and for the present purpose distributing our faculties into the animal, intellectual, affectional, and moral, let us see the relation between our four-fold wants and the supply thereof. We have certain animal wants, such as the desire of food, shelter, and comfort. Our animal welfare, even our animal existence, depends on the relation of the world to these wants, on the condition that they are supplied. Now we find in the world of Nature, exterior to

ourselves, a supply for these demands. It is so placed that man can reach it for himself. To speak in general terms, there is not a natural want in our body which has not its corresponding supply, placed out of the body. There is not even a disease of the body, brought upon us by disobedience of its law, but there is somewhere a remedy, at least an alleviation of that disease. The peculiar supply of peculiar wants is provided most abundantly when most needed, and where most needed; furs in the North, spices in the South, antidotes where the poison is found. God is a bountiful parent and no step-father to the body, and does not pay off, to his obedient children, a penny of satisfaction for a pound of want. Natural supply balances natural want the world over.

But this is not all. How shall man find the supply that is provided? It will be useless unless there is some faculty to mediate between it and the want. Now Man is furnished with a faculty to perform his office. It is *instinct* which we have in common with the lower animals, and *understanding* which we have more exclusively, at least no other animal possessing it in the same degree with ourselves. Instinct anticipates experience. It acts spontaneously where we have no previous knowledge, yet as if we were fully possessed of ideas. It shows itself as soon as we are born, in the impulse that prompts the infant to his natural food. It appears complete in all animals. It looks only forward, and is a perfect guide so far as it goes. The young chick pecks adroitly at the tiny worm it meets the first hour it leaves the shell.¹ It needs no instruction. The lower animals have nothing but instinct for their guide. It is sufficient for their purpose. They act, therefore, without reflection, from necessity, and are subordinate to their instinct, and therefore must always remain in the instinctive state.² Children and savages—who are in some respects the children of the human race—act chiefly by instinct, but constantly approach the development of the understanding.

¹ See Lord Brougham, Dialogues on Instinct, for some remarkable facts.

² Whewell, *ubi sup*, Vol. II. Pt. i Book ix. Ch. iii. Man may subdue the instinct of an animal, and apparently improve the creature, by superinducing his own understanding upon it. The phant nature of dogs and horses enables them to yield to him in this case. But they are not *really* improved in the qualities of a dog or a horse, but only become caricatures of their master's caprice.

This acts in a different way. It generalizes from experience; makes an induction from facts; a deduction from principles. It looks both backwards and forwards. The man of understanding acts from experience, reflection, forethought, and habit. If he had no other impelling principle, all his action must be of this character. But though understanding be capable of indefinite increase, instinct can never be wholly extirpated from this compound being, man. The most artificial or cultivated feels the twinges of instinctive nature. The lower animals rely entirely on instinct; the savage chiefly thereon, while the civilized and matured man depends mostly on understanding for his guide. As the sphere of action enlarges which takes place as the boy outgrows his childhood, and the savage emerges from barbarism, instinct ceases to be an adequate guide, and the understanding spontaneously develops itself to take its place.¹

In respect, then, to Man's animal nature, this fact remains, that there is an external supply for each internal want, and a guide to conduct from the want to the supply. This guide is adequate to the purpose. When it is followed, and thus the conditions of our animal nature complied with, the want is satisfied, becomes a source of pleasure, a means of development. In this case there is nothing miraculous intervening between the desire and its gratification. Man is hungry. Instinct leads him to the ripened fruit. He eats and is appeased. The satisfaction of the want comes naturally, by a regular law, which God has imposed upon the constitution of Man. He is blessed by obeying, and cursed by violating this law. God himself does not transcend this law, but acts through it, by it, in it. We observe the law and obtain what we need. Thus for every point of natural desire in the body, there is a point of natural satisfaction out of the body. This guide conducts, from one to the other, as a radius connects the centre with the circumference. Our animal welfare is complete when the two are thus brought into contact.

Now the same rule may be shown to hold good in each

¹ See some profound remarks on the force of the instinctive life among savages, Bancroft, ubi sup., Ch. XXII.

other department into which we have divided the human faculties. There is something without us to correspond to each want of the Intellect. This is found in the objects of Nature; in the sublime, the useful, the beautiful, the common things we meet; in the ideas and conceptions that arise unavoidably when man, the thinking subject, comes intellectually in contact with external things, the object of thought. We turn to these things instinctively, at first,

“The eye,—it cannot choose but see,
We cannot bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.”

Man is not sufficient for himself intellectually, more than physically. He cannot rely wholly on what he is. There is at first nothing in Man but Man himself; a being of multiform tendencies, and many powers lying latent—germ sheathed in germ. Without some external object to rouse the senses, excite curiosity, to stimulate the understanding, induce reflection, exercise reason, judgment, imagination,—all these faculties would sleep in their causes, unused and worthless in the soul. Obeying the instinctive tendency of the mind, which impels to thought, keeping its laws, we gain satisfaction for the intellectual desires. One after another the faculties come into action, grow up to maturity, and intellectual welfare is complete with no miracle, but by obedience to the laws of mind.

The same may be said of the affectional and moral nature of Man. There is something without us to answer the demands of the Affections and the Moral Sense, and we turn instinctively to them. Does God provide for the animal wants and no more? He is no step-father, but a bountiful parent to the intellectual, affectional, and moral elements of his child. There is a point of satisfaction out of these for each point of desire in them, and a guide to mediate between the two. This general rule may then be laid down, That for each animal, intellectual, affectional, moral want of Man, there is a supply set within his reach, and a guide to connect the two; that no miracle is needed to supply the want; but satisfaction is given soon as the guide is followed and the law kept, which instinct or the understanding reveals.

CHAPTER V.

STATEMENT OF THE ANALOGY FROM THIS RELATION.

Now it was said before, that the religious was the deepest, highest, strongest element in Man, and since the wants of the lower faculties are so abundantly provided with natural means of satisfying them, the Analogy leads us irresistibly to conclude, that the higher faculty would not be neglected; that here as elsewhere there must be a natural and not miraculous supply for natural wants, a natural guide to conduct from one to the other, and natural laws, or conditions, to be observed, and natural satisfaction to be obtained in this way; that as God was no step-father, but a bountiful parent to the lower elements, so he must be to the higher; that as there was a point of satisfaction out of the body, mind, and heart, and heart, for each desire in it, so there must be a point of satisfaction out of the soul, for each desire in the soul. Is it God's way to take care of oxen and leave men uncared for? In a system where every spot on an insect's wing is rounded as diligently, and as carefully finished off, as a world, are we to suppose the Soul of Man is left without natural protection? If there is a law, a permanent mode of divine action, whereby each atom of dust keeps its place and holds its own, surely we are not to dream the Soul of Man is left with no law for its religious life and satisfaction.

To draw the parallels still closer. By the religious consciousness we feel the want of some assured support to depend on, who has infinite Power to sustain us, infinite Wisdom to provide for us, infinite Goodness to cherish us; as we must know the will of Him on whom we depend, and thus determine what is religious truth and religious duty, in order that we may do that duty, receive that truth, obey that will, and thus obtain rest for the soul, and the highest spiritual welfare, by knowing and fulfilling

its conditions, so Analogy teaches that in this, as in the other case, there must be a supply for the wants, and some plain, regular, and not miraculous means, accessible to each man, whereby he can get a knowledge of this Support, discover this Will, and thus, by observing the proper conditions, obtain the highest spiritual welfare.

This argument for a direct connection between Man and God, is only rebutted in one of these two ways: Either, first, by denying that Man has any religious wants; or, secondly, by affirming that he is himself alone a supply to them, without need of reliance on anything independent of himself. The last is contrary to philosophy, for, theoretically speaking, by nature there is nothing in Man, but Man himself, his tendencies and powers of action and reception; in the religious element there is nothing but the religious element, as, theoretically speaking, by nature, there is in the body nothing but the body; in hunger nothing but hunger. To make Man dependent on nothing but Man; the religious element on nothing but the religious element, and therefore sufficient for itself, is quite as absurd as to make the body dependent only on the body; the appetite of hunger on nothing but hunger, sufficient to satisfy itself. Besides, our consciousness, and above all our religious consciousness, is that of dependence. The soul feels its direct dependence on God, as much as the body sees its own direct dependence on matter.

If the one statement is contrary to philosophy, the other is contrary to fact. We feel religious wants; the history of Man is a perpetual expression of these wants; an effort for satisfaction. It cannot be denied that we need something that shall bear the same relation to the religious Element which food bears to the palate, light to the eye, sound to the ear, beauty to the imagination, truth to the understanding, friendship to the heart, and duty to conscience. How shall we pass from the want to its satisfaction? Now the force of the Analogy is this—it leads us to expect such a natural satisfaction for spiritual wants as we have for the humbler wants. The very wants themselves imply the satisfaction; soon as we begin to act, there awakes, by nature, a Sentiment of God. Reason

gives us a distinct Idea of Him, and from this Idea also it follows that he must supply these wants.

The question then comes as to the fact: Is there, or is there not, a regular law, that is, a constant mode of operation, by which the religious wants are supplied, as by a regular law the body's wants are met? Now, animated by the natural trust, or faith, which is the spontaneous action of the religious Element, we should say: Yes, it must be so. God takes care of the sparrow's body; can he neglect Man's Soul? Then, reasoning again from the general analogy of God's providence, as before shown, and still more from the Idea of God, as above laid down, we say again: It must be so. Man must, through the religious Element, have a connection with God, as by the senses with Matter. He is, relative to us, the object of the soul, as much as matter is the object of the senses. As God has an influence on passive and unconscious Matter, so he must have on active and conscious Man. As this action in the one case is only modified by the conditions of Matter, so will it be in the other only by the conditions of Man. As no obedient animal is doomed to wander up and down, seeking rest, but finding none; so no obedient man can be left hopeless, forlorn, without a supply, without a guide.

Now it might be supposed that the spontaneous presentment of this supply for our spiritual demands, this two-fold argument from the Idea of God and the Analogy of his action in general, would satisfy both the spontaneous and the reflective mind, convincing them of Man's general capability of a connection with God, of receiving truth in a regular and a natural way from him, by revelation, inspiration, suggestion, or by what other name we may call the joint action of the divine and human mind. Such indeed is the belief of nations in an early and simple state. It is attested by the literature, traditions, and monuments of all primitive people. They believed that God held converse with Men. He spoke in the voices of nature; in signs and omens; in dreams by night; in deep, silent thoughts by day; skill, strength, wisdom, goodness, were referred to Him. The highest function of men was

God's Gift. He made the laws of Minos, Moses, Numa, Rhadamanthus; he inspires the Poet, Artist, Patriot; works with the righteous everywhere. Had Fetichism no meaning? Was Polytheism only a lie with no truth at the bottom? Prayers, sacrifices, fasts, priesthoods, show that men believed in intercourse with God. Good simple-hearted men and women, who live lives of piety, believe it now, and never dream it is a great philosophical truth, which lies in their mind. They wonder anybody should doubt it.

But yet among thinking men, who have thought just enough to distrust instinct, but not enough to see by the understanding the object which instinct discloses, especially it seems among thinking Englishmen and Americans, a general doubt prevails on this point.

The material world is before our eyes; its phenomena are obvious to the senses, and most men having active senses—which develop before the understanding—and the lower faculties of intellect also somewhat active, get pretty clear notions about these phenomena, though not of their cause and philosophy. But as the soul is rarely so active as the senses, as the whole spiritual nature is not often so well developed as the sensual, so spiritual phenomena are little noticed; very few men have clear notions about them. Hence to many men all spiritual and religious matters are vague. “Perhaps yes and perhaps no,” is all they can say.

Then again the matter is made worse, for they hear extravagant claims made in relation to spiritual things and intercourse with God. One man says he was healed of a fever, or saved from drowning, not by the medicine, or the boatman, but by the direct interposition of God; another will have it that he has direct and miraculous illuminations, though it is plain he is still sitting in darkness. This bigot would destroy all human knowledge, that there may be clean paper to receive the divine word, miraculously written thereon; that fanatic bids men trust the doctrine which is reputed of miraculous origin and even at variance with human faculties. Both the bigot and the fanatic condemn Science as the “Pride of Reason,” and talk boastingly of their special revelations, their new light, the signs and wonders they have seen or heard of to attest

this revelation. The sincere man of good sense is disgusted by these things, and asks if there be no Pride of Folly as well as Reason, and no revelation of nonsense from the man's own brain, which is mistaken as an eternal truth coming winged from the Godhead? He rests, therefore, in his notions of mere material things; will see nothing which he cannot see through; believe nothing he cannot handle. These material notions have already become systematized; and so far as there is any philosophy commonly accredited amongst us, it is one which grows mainly out of this sensual way of looking at things; a philosophy which logically denies the possibility of inspiration, or intercourse with God, except through a miracle that shall transcend the faculties of Man.

Now on this subject of inspiration there are but three views possible. Each of these is supported by no one writer exclusively or perfectly, but by many taken in the aggregate. Let us examine each of them as it appears in recent times, with its philosophy and logical consequences. However, it is to be remembered that all conclusions which follow logically, are not to be charged on men who admit the premises.

CHAPTER VI.

THE RATIONALISTIC VIEW, OR NATURALISM.

THIS allows that the original powers of Nature, as shown in the inorganic, the vegetable, and the animal world, all came from God at the first; that he is a principle either material or spiritual, separate from the world, and independent thereof. He made the World, and all things, including Man, and stamped on them certain laws, which they are to keep.¹ He was but transiently present and

¹ There is another form of *Naturalism* which denies the existence of a God separate or separable from the universe. Since this system would annihilate

active in Nature at creation ; is not immanently present and active therein. He has now nothing to do with the world but—to see it go. Here, then, is God on the one side ; on the other, Man and Nature. But there is a great gulf fixed between them, over which there passes, neither God nor Man.

This theory teaches that Man, in addition to his organs of perception, has certain intellectual faculties by which he can reason from effect to cause ; can discover truth, which is the statement of a fact ; from a number of facts in science can discern a scientific law, the relation of thing to thing ; from a number of facts in morals, can learn the relation of man to man, deduce a moral law, which shall teach the most expedient and profitable way of managing affairs. Its statement of both scientific and moral facts rests solely on experience, and never goes beyond the precedents. Still further, it allows that men can find out there is a God, by reasoning experimentally from observations in the material world, and metaphysically also, from the connection of notions in the mind. But this conclusion is only to be reached, in either case, by a process that is long, complicated, tortuous, and so difficult that but one man in some thousands has the necessary experimental knowledge, and but one in some millions the metaphysical subtlety, requisite to go through it, and become certain that there is a God. Its notion of God is this—a Being who exists as the Power, Mind, and Will that caused the universe.¹

The metaphysical philosophy of this system may be briefly stated. In Man, by nature, there is nothing but man ; there is but one channel by which knowledge can come into man, that is sensation ; perception through the senses. That is an assumption, nobody pretends it is proved. This knowledge is modified by reflection—the mind's process of ruminating upon the knowledge which sensation affords. At any given time, therefore, if we examine what is in Man, we find nothing which has not first been in the senses. Now the senses converse only with finite phenomena. Reflection—what can it get out of

all Religion, it may be called *irreligious Naturalism* ; with that I have now nothing to do. Some have been called Rationalists, who deny that God is separate from the world See above, Book I

¹ Dr Dewey, writing in the *Christian Examiner*, says the proposition that there is a God "is not a certainty." See *Examiner* for Sept. 1845, p. 197, et seq.

these? The Absolute? The premise does not warrant the conclusion. Something "as good as Infinite?" Let us see. It makes a scientific law a mere generalization from observed facts which it can never go beyond. Its science, therefore, is in the rear of observation; we do not know thereby whether the next stone shall fall to the ground or from it. All it can say of the universality of any law of science, is this, "So far as we have seen, it is so." It cannot pass from the Particular to the Universal. It makes a moral law the result of external experience, merely an induction from moral facts; not the affirmation of Man's moral nature declaring the eternal rule of Right. It learns Morality by seeing what plan succeeds best in the long run. Its Morality, therefore, is Selfishness verified by experiment. A man in a new case, for which he can find no precedents, knows not what to do. He is never certain he is right till he gets the reward. Its moral law at present, like the statute law, is the slowly elaborated product of centuries of experience. It pretends to find out God, as a law in science, solely, by reasoning from effect to cause; from a plan to the designer. Then on what does a man's belief in God depend? On man's nature, acting spontaneously? No; for there is nothing in man but man, and nothing comes in but sensations, which do not directly give us God. It depends on reflection, argument, that process of reasoning mentioned before. Now admitting that sensation affords sufficient premise for the conclusion, there is a difficulty in the way. The man must either depend on his own reasoning, or that of another. In the one case he may be mistaken, in an argument so long, crooked, and difficult. It is at best an inference. The "Hypothesis of a God," as some impudently call it—may thus rest on no better argument than the hypothesis of Vortices, or Epicycles. In the other case, if we trust another man, he may be mistaken; still worse, may design to deceive the inquirer, as, we are told, the Heathen Sages did. Where, then, is the certain conviction of any God at all? This theory allows none. Its "proof of the existence of God" is a proof of the possibility of a God; perhaps of his probability; surely no more.

But the case is yet worse. In any argumentation there must be no more expressed in the conclusion than is lo-

gically and confessedly implied in the premises. When finite phenomena are the only premises, whence comes the Idea of Infinite God? It denies that Man has any Idea of the Absolute, Infinite, Perfect. Instead of this, it allows only an accumulative notion, formed from a series of conceptions of what is finite and imperfect. The little we can know of God came from reasoning about objects of sense. Its notion of God is deduced purely from empirical observation; what notion of a God can rest legitimately on that basis? Nature is finite. To infer an infinite Author is false logic. We see but in part, and have not grasped up this sum of things, nor seen how seeming evil consists with real good, nor accounted for the great amount of misery, apparently unliquidated, in the world; therefore Nature is imperfect to men's eyes. Why infer a perfect Author from an imperfect work? Injustice and cruelty are allowed in the world. How then can its Maker be relied on as just and merciful? Let there be nothing in the conclusion which is not in the premises.

This theory gives us only a finite and imperfect God, which is no God at all. He cannot be trusted out of sight; for its faith is only an inference from what is seen. Instead of a religious sentiment in man, which craves all the perfections of the Godhead, reaches out after the Infinite "first Good, first Perfect, and first Fair," it gives us only a tendency to reverence or fear what is superior to ourselves, and above our comprehension; a tendency which the Bat and the Owl have in common with Socrates and Fenelon. It makes a man the slave of his organization. Free-will is not possible. His highest aim is self-preservation; his greatest evil death. It denies the immortality of Man, and foolishly asks "proofs" of the fact—meaning proofs palpable to the senses. Its finite God is not to be trusted, except under his bond and covenant to give us what we ask for.

It makes no difference between Good and Evil; Expedient and Inexpedient are the better words. These are to be learned only by long study and much cunning. All men have not the requisite skill to find out moral and religious doctrines, and no means of proving either in their own heart; therefore they must take the word of their appointed teachers and philosophers, who "have investu-

gated the matter ;” found there is “an expedient way” for men to follow, and a “God” to punish them if they do not follow it. In moral and religious matters the mass of men must rely on the authority of their teachers. Millions of men, who never made an astronomical observation, believe the distance between the Earth and the Sun is what Newton or Laplace declares it to be. Why should not men take moral and religious doctrines on the same evidence? It is true, astronomers have differed a little—some making the Earth the centre, some the Sun—and divines still more. But men must learn the moral law as the statute law. The State is above each man’s private notions about good and evil, and controls these, as well as their passions. Man must act always from mean and selfish views, never from Love of the Good, the Beautiful, the True.

This system would have religious forms and ceremonies to take up the mind of the people ; moral precepts, and religious creeds, “published by authority,” to keep men from unprofitable crimes ; an established Church, like the Jail and the Gallows, a piece of state-machinery. It is logical in this, for it fears that, without such a provision, the sensual nature would overlay the intellectual ; the few religious ideas common men could get, would be so shadowy and uncertain, and men be so blinded by Prejudice, Superstition, and Fancy, or so far misled by Passion and ignorant Selfishness, that nothing but want and anarchy would ensue. It tells men to pray. None can escape the conviction that prayer, vocal or silent, put up as a request, or felt as a sense of supplication, is natural as hunger and thirst, or tears and smiles. Even a self-styled Atheist¹ talks of the important physiological functions of prayer. This theory makes prayer a Soliloquy of the man ; a thinking with the upper part of the head ; a sort of moral gymnastics. Thereby we get nothing from God. He is the other side of the world. “He is a journeying, or pursuing, or peradventure he sleepeth.” Prayer is useful to the worshipper as the poet’s frenzy, when he apostrophizes a Mountain, or the Moon, and works himself into a rapture, but gets nothing from the Mountain or the Moon, except what he carried out.

In a word, this theory reduces the Idea of God to that of

¹ M. Comte.

an abstract Cause, and excludes this cause both from Man and the World. It has only a finite God, which is no God at all, for the two terms cancel each other. It has only a selfish Morality, which is no Morality at all, for the same reason. It reduces the Soul to the aggregate functions of the flesh; Providence to a law of matter; Infinity to a dream; Religion to priestcraft; Prayer to an apostrophe; Morality to making a good bargain; Conscience to cunning. It denies the possibility of any connection between God and Man. Revelation and Inspiration it regards as figures of speech, by which we refer to an agency purely ideal what was the result of the Senses and Matter acting thereon. Men calling themselves inspired, speaking in the name of God, were deceivers, or deceived. Prophets, the religious Geniuses of the world, mistook their fancies for revelation; embraced a cloud instead of a Goddess, and produced only misshapen dreams. Judged by this system, Jesus of Nazareth was a pure-minded fanatic, who knew ~~no~~ more about God than Peter Bayle and Pomponatius, but yet did the world service, by teaching the result of his own or others' experience, as revelations from God accompanied with the promise of another life, which is reckoned a pleasant delusion, useful to keep men out of crime, a clever auxiliary of the powers that be.

This System has perhaps never been held in all its parts by any one man,¹ but each portion has often been defended, and all its parts go together and come unavoidably from that notion, that there is nothing in man which was not first in the senses.² The best representatives of this school were, it may be, the French Materialists of the last century, and some of the English Deists. The latter term is applied to men of the most various character and ways of thinking. Some of them were most excellent men in all respects; men who did mankind great service by exposing the fanaticism of the Superstitious, and by showing the absurdities

¹ It is instructive to see the influence of this form of philosophy in the various departments of inquiry, as shown in the writings of Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Collins, Mandeville, Hartley, Hume, Priestley, Paley, Home-Tooke, Condillac, Helvetius, Darwin, Bentham, &c. But this philosophy could never fully satisfy the English mind. So there were such men as Cudworth, More, Cumberland, Edwards, Wollaston, Clarke, Butler, Berkely, Harris, Price, and more recently, Reid, Stewart, Brown, Coleridge, and Carlyle, not to mention the *more mystic* men like Fox and Penn, with their followers.

² See the judicious observations of Shaftesbury, eighth Letter to a Student.

embraced by many of the Christians. Some of them were much more religious and heavenly-minded than their opponents, and had a theology much more Christian, which called Goodness by its proper name, and worshipped God in lowliness of heart, and a divine life. But the spirit of this system takes different forms in different men. It appears in the cold morality and repulsive forms of Religion of Dr Priestley, who was yet one of the best of men; in the scepticism of Hume and his followers, which has been a useful medicine to the Church; in the selfish system of Paley, far more dangerous than the doubts of Hume or the scoffs of Gibbon and Voltaire; in the coarse, vulgar materialism of Hobbes, who may be taken as one of the best representatives of the system.

It is obvious enough, that this system of Naturalism is the Philosophy which lies at the foundation of the popular theology in New England; that it is very little understood by the men, out of pulpits and in pulpits, who adhere to it; who, while they hold fast to the theory of the worst of the English Deists—though of only the worst; while they deny the immanence of God in Matter and Man, and therefore take away the possibility of natural inspiration, and cling to that system of philosophy which justifies the Doubt of Hume, the Selfishness of Paley, the coarse Materialism of Hobbes,—are yet ashamed of their descent, and seek to point out others of a quite different spiritual complexion, as the lineal descendants of that ancient stock.

This system has one negative merit. It can, as such, never lead to fanaticism. Those sects or individuals, who approach most nearly to pure Naturalism, have never been accused, in religious matters, of going too fast or too far. But it has a positive excellence. It lays great stress on the human mind, and cultivates the understanding to the last degree. However, its Philosophy, its Theology, its Worship, are of the senses, and the senses alone.¹

¹ I have not thought it necessary to refer particularly to the authors representing this system. I have rather taken pains to express their doctrine in my own words, lest individuals should be thought responsible for the sins of the system. One may read many works of divinity, and see that this philosophy lay unconsciously in the writer's mind. I do not mean to insinuate that many persons fully and knowingly believe this doctrine, but that they are yet governed by it, under the modification treated of in the next chapter. Locke has sometimes been charged with follies of this character, but unjustly, as it seems to me, for though the fundamental principles of his philosophy, and many pas-

CHAPTER VII.

THE ANTI-RATIONALISTIC VIEW, OR SUPERNATURALISM.

THIS system differs in many respects from the other ; but its philosophy is at bottom the same. It denies that by natural action there can be anything in Man which was not first in the senses ; whatever transcends the senses can come to him only by a Miracle. And the Miracle is attended with phenomena obvious to the senses. To develop the natural side of the theory it sets God on the one side and man on the other. However it admits the immanence of God in Matter, and talks very little about the laws of Matter, which it thinks require revision, amendment, and even repeal, as if the nature of things changed, or God grew wiser by experiment. It does not see that if God is always the same, and immanent in Nature, the laws of Nature can neither change nor be changed.¹ It limits the power of Man still further than the former theory. It denies that he can, of himself, discover the existence of God ; or find out that it is better to love his brother than to hate him, to subject the Passions to Reason, Desire to Duty, rather than to subject Reason to Passion, Duty to Desire.² Man can find out all that is

sages in his works, do certainly look that way, others are of a quite spiritual tendency See King's *Life of Locke*, Vol. I. p. 366, et seq., and his theological writings, *passim*

¹ Leibnitz, in a letter to the Princess of Wales, *Opp. phil. ed. Erdmann, Berlin, 1840, p. 746-7*, amuses himself with ridiculing this view, which he ascribes to Newton and his followers, "according to them," says he, "God must wind up his watch from time to time or it would stop outright. He was not farsighted enough to make a perpetual motion"

² Some Supernaturalists admit that Man by nature can find out the most important religious truths, in the way set down before, and some admit a moral sense in man Others deny both A recent writer denies that he can find by the light of Nature ANY THEOLOGICAL TRUTH Natural theology is not possible. See *Irons, On the whole Doctrine of Final Causes, Lond. 1846, p. 34, 129, and passim.* His introductory chapter on modern Deism is very curious.

needed for his animal and intellectual welfare, with no miracle; but can learn nothing that is needed for his moral and religious welfare. He can invent the steam engine, and calculate the orbit of Halley's comet; but cannot tell Good from Evil, nor determine that there is a God. The Unnecessary is given him; the Indispensable he cannot get by nature. Man, therefore, is the veriest wretch in creation. His mind forces him to inquire on religious matters, but brings him into doubt, and leaves him in the very slough of Despond. He goes up and down sorrowing, seeking rest, but finding none. Nay; it goes further still, and declares that, by nature, all men's actions are sin, hateful to God.

On the other hand, it teaches that God works a miracle from time to time, and makes to men a positive revelation of moral and religious truth, which they could not otherwise gain. Its history of revelations is this: God revealed his own existence in a visible form to the first man; taught him religious and moral duties by words orally spoken. The first man communicated this knowledge to his descendants, from whom the tradition of the fact has spread over all the world. Men know there is a God, and a distinction between right and wrong, only by hearsay, as they know there was a Flood in the time of Noah, or Deucalion. The first man sinned, and fell from the state of frequent communion with God. Revelations have since become rare; exceptions in the history of men. However, as Man having no connection with the Infinite must soon perish, God continued to make miraculous revelations to one single people. To them he gave laws, religious and civil; made predictions, and accompanied each revelation by some miraculous sign, for without it none could distinguish the truth from a lie. Other nations received reflections of this light, which was directly imparted to the favoured people. At length he made a revelation of all religious and moral truth, by means of his Son, a divine and miraculous being, both God and Man, and confirmed the tidings by miracles the most surprising. As this re-

He has some excellent remarks, for there are two kingdoms of philosophy in him, but wishes to advance what he calls revealed religion, at the expense of the foundation of all Religion. The Ottoman King never thinks himself secure on the throne till he has slain all his brothers.

velation is to last for ever, it has been recorded miraculously, and preserved for all coming time. The persons who received direct communication miraculously from God, are of course mediators between Him and the human race.

Now to live as religious men, we must have a knowledge of religious truth ; for this we must depend alone on these mediators. Without them we have no access to God. They have established a new relation between Man and God. But they are mortal, and have deceased. However, their sayings are recorded by miraculous aid. A knowledge of God's will, of Morality and Religion, therefore, is only to be got at, by studying the documents which contain a record of their words and works, for the Word of God has become the letter of Scripture. We can know nothing of God, Religion, or Morals at first hand. God was but transiently present in a small number of the race, and has now left it altogether.

This theory forgets that a verbal revelation can never communicate a simple idea, like that of God, Justice, Love, Religion, more than a word can give a deaf man an idea of sound. It makes inspiration a very rare miracle, confined to one nation, and to some scores of men in that nation, who stand between us and God. We cannot pray in our own name, but in that of the mediator, who hears the prayer, and makes intercession for us. It exalts certain miraculous persons, but degrades Man. In prophets and saints, in Moses and Jesus, it does not see the possibility of the race made real, but only the miraculous work of God. Our duty is not to inquire into the truth of their word. Reason is no judge of that. We must put faith in all which all of them tell us, though they contradict each other never so often. Thus it makes an antithesis between Faith and Knowledge, Reason and Revelation. It denies that common men, in the nineteenth century, can get at Truth, and God, as Paul and John in the first century. It sacrifices Reason, Conscience, and Love to the words of the miraculous men, and thus makes its mediator a tyrant, who rules over the soul by external authority, restricting Reason, Conscience, and Love ; not a brother, who acts in the soul, by waking its dormant powers, disclosing truth, and leading others by a divine life to God, the Source of Light. It says the words of Jesus are true because he

spoke them; not that he spoke them because true. It relies entirely on past times; does not give us the Absolute Religion, as it exists in Man's nature, and the Ideas of the Almighty, only a historical mode of worship, as lived out here or there. It says the canon of Revelation is closed; God will no longer act on men as heretofore. We have come at the end of the feast; are born in the latter days and dotage of mankind, and can only get light by raking amid the ashes of the past, and blowing its brands, now almost extinct. It denies that God is present and active in all spirit as in all space—thus it denies that he is Infinite. In the miraculous documents it gives us an objective standard, "the only infallible rule of religious faith and practice." These mediators are greater than the soul; the Bible the master of Reason, Conscience, and the Religious Sentiment. They stand in the place of God.

Men ask of this system: How do you know there is in Man nothing but the product of sensation, or miraculous tradition; that he cannot approach God except by miracle; that these mediators received truth miraculously; taught all truth; nothing but the truth; that you have their words pure and unmixed in your Scriptures; that God has no further revelation to make? The answer is:—We find it convenient to assume all this, and accordingly have banished Reason from the premises, for she asked troublesome questions. We condescend to no proof of the facts. You must take our word for that. Thus the main doctrines of the theory rest on assumptions; on no-facts.

This system represents the despair of Man groping after God. The religious Element acts, but is crippled by a philosophy poor and sensual. Is Man nothing but a combination of five senses, and a thinking machine to grind up and bolter sensations, and learn of God only by hearsay? The God of Supernaturalism is a God afar off; its Religion worn-out and second-hand. We cannot meet God face to face. In one respect it is worse than naturalism; that sets great value on the faculties of Man, which this depreciates and profanes. But all systems rest on a truth, or they could not be; this on a great truth, or it could not prevail widely. It admits a qualified immanence of God in Nature, and declares, also, that mankind is dependent on Him, for religious and moral truth as for all

things else ; has a connection with God, who really guides, educates, and blesses the race, for he is transiently present therein. The doctrine of miraculous events, births, persons, deaths, and the like, this is the veil of Poetry drawn over the face of Fact. It has a truth not admitted by Naturalism. As only a few "*thinking*" men even in fancy can be satisfied without a connection with God, so Naturalism is always confined to a few reflective and cultivated persons ; while the mass of men believe in the supernatural theory, at least, in the truth it covers up. Its truth is of great moment. Its vice is to make God transiently active in Man, not immanent in him ; restrict the divine presence and action to times, places, and persons. It overlooks the fact that if religious truth be necessary for all, then it must either have been provided for and put in the reach of all, or else there is a fault in the divine plan. Then again, if God gives a natural supply for the lower wants, it is probable, to say the least, he will not neglect the higher. Now for the religious consciousness of Man, a knowledge of two great truths is indispensable : namely, a knowledge of the existence of the Infinite God, and of the duty we owe to Him, for a knowledge of these two is implied in all religious teaching and life. Now one of two things must be admitted, and a third is not possible : either Man can discover these two things by the light of Nature, or he cannot. If the latter be the case, then is he the most hopeless of all beings. Revelation of these truths is confined to a few ; it is indispensably necessary to all. Accordingly the first hypothesis is generally admitted by the supernaturalists, in New England—though in spite of their philosophy—that these two things can be discovered by the light of Nature. Then if the two main points, the premises which involve the whole of Morals and Religion, lie within the reach of Man's natural powers, how is a miracle, or the tradition of a miracle, necessary to reveal the minor doctrines involved in the universal truth ? Does not the faculty to discern the greater include the faculty to discern the less ? What covers an acre will cover a yard. Where then is the use of the miraculous interposition ?

Neither Naturalism nor Supernaturalism legitimates the fact of Man's religious consciousness. Both fail of satisfy-

ing the natural religious wants of the race. Each has merits and vices of its own. Neither gives for the Soul's wants a supply analogous to that so bountifully provided for the wants of the Body, or the Mind.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE NATURAL-RELIGIOUS VIEW, OR SPIRITUALISM.

THIS theory teaches that there is a natural supply for spiritual as well as for corporeal wants; that there is a connection between God and the Soul, as between light and the eye, sound and the ear, food and the palate, truth and the intellect, beauty and the imagination; that as we follow an instinctive tendency, obey the body's law, get a natural supply for its wants, attain health and strength, the body's welfare; as we keep the law of the mind, and get a supply for its wants, attain wisdom and skill, the mind's welfare,—so if, following another instinctive tendency, we keep the law of the moral and religious faculties, we get a supply for their wants, moral and religious truth, obtain peace of conscience and rest for the soul, the highest moral and religious welfare. It teaches that the World is not nearer to our bodies than God to the soul; “for in him we live and move, and have our being.” As we have bodily senses to lay hold on Matter and supply bodily wants, through which we obtain, naturally, all needed material things; so we have spiritual faculties to lay hold on God, and supply spiritual wants; through them we obtain all needed spiritual things. As we observe the conditions of the Body, we have Nature on our side; as we observe the Law of the Soul, we have God on our side. He imparts truth to all men who observe these conditions; we have direct access to Him, through Reason, Conscience, and the Religious Faculty, just as we have direct access to Nature, through the eye, the ear, or the hand. Through these

channels, and by means of a law, certain, regular, and universal as gravitation, God inspires men, makes revelation of truth, for is not truth as much a phenomenon of God, as motion of Matter? Therefore if God be omnipresent and omniactive, this inspiration is no miracle, but a regular mode of God's action on conscious Spirit, as gravitation on unconscious Matter. It is not a rare condescension of God, but a universal uplifting of Man. To obtain a knowledge of duty, a man is not sent away, outside of himself to ancient documents, for the only rule of faith and practice; the Word is very nigh him, even in his heart, and by this Word he is to try all documents whatever. Inspiration, like God's omnipresence, is not limited to the few writers claimed by the Jews, Christians, or Mahometans, but is coëxtensive with the race. As God fills all Space, so all Spirit; as he influences and constrains unconscious and necessitated Matter, so he inspires and helps free and conscious Man.

This theory does not make God limited, partial, or capricious. It exalts Man. While it honours the excellence of a religious genius, of a Moses or a Jesus, it does not pronounce their character monstrous, as the supernatural, nor fanatical, as the rationalistic theory; but natural, human, and beautiful, revealing the possibility of mankind. Prayer, whether voluntative or spontaneous, a word or a feeling, felt in gratitude or penitence, or joy, or resignation,—is not a soliloquy of the man, not a physiological function, nor an address to a deceased man; but a sally into the infinite spiritual world, whence we bring back light and truth. There are windows towards God, as towards the World. There is no intercessor, angel, mediator between Man and God; for Man can speak and God hear, each for himself. He requires no advocate to plead for men, who need not pray by attorney. Each man stands close to the omnipresent God; may feel his beautiful presence, and have familiar access to the All-Father; get truth at first hand from its Author. Wisdom, Righteousness, and Love, are the Spirit of God in the Soul of Man; wherever these are, and just in proportion to their power, there is inspiration from God. Thus God is not the author of confusion, but Concord; Faith, and Know-

ledge, and Revelation, and Reason tell the same tale, and so legitimate and confirm one another.¹

God's action on Matter and on Man is perhaps the same thing to Him, though it appear differently modified to us. But it is plain from the nature of things, that there can be but one kind of Inspiration, as of Truth, Faith, or Love: it is the direct and intuitive perception of some truth, either of thought or of sentiment. There can be but one mode of Inspiration: it is the action of the Highest within the soul, the divine presence imparting light; this presence as Truth, Justice, Holiness, Love, infusing itself into the soul, giving it new life; the breathing in of the Deity; the in-come of God to the Soul, in the form of Truth through the Reason, of Right through the Conscience, of Love and Faith through the Affections and Religious Element. Is Inspiration confined to theological matters alone? Most surely not. Is Newton less inspired than Simon Peter?²

Now if the above views be true, there seems no ground for supposing, without historical proof, there are different kinds or modes of inspiration in different persons, nations, or ages, in Minos or Moses, in Gentiles or Jews, in the first century or the last. If God be infinitely perfect, He

¹ See Jonathan Edwards' view of Inspiration, in his sermon on A divine Light imparted to the Soul, &c Works, ed. Lond. 1840. Vol. II. p. 12, et seq., and Vol. I p cclxx. No. [20].

² So long as inspiration is regarded as purely miraculous, good sense will lessen instances of it, as far as possible, for most thinking men feel more or less repugnance at believing in any violation, on God's part, of regular laws. As spiritual things are commonly less attended to than material, the belief in miraculous inspiration remains longer in religious than secular affairs. A man would be looked on as mad, who should claim miraculous inspiration for Newton, as they have been who demed it in the case of Moses. But no candid man will doubt that, humanly speaking, it was a more difficult thing to write the Principia than the Decalogue. Man must have a nature most sadly anomalous, if, unassisted, he is able to accomplish all the triumphs of modern science, and yet cannot discover the plainest and most important principles of Religion and Morality without a miraculous revelation; and still more so, if being able to discover, by God's natural aid, these chief and most important principles, he needs a miraculous inspiration to disclose minor details. Science is by no means indispensable, as Religion and Morals. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, if it is a real advantage, follows unavoidably from the Idea of God. The *Best Being*, he must *will* the best of good things, the *Wisest*, he must devise plans for that effect, the *most Powerful*, he must bring it about. None can deny this. Does one ask another "proof of the fact?" *Is he so very full of faith who cannot trust God, except he have His bond in black and white, given under oath and attested by witnesses!*

does not change; then his modes of action are perfect and unchangeable. The laws of Mind, like those of Matter, remain immutable and not transcended. As God has left no age nor man destitute, by nature, of Reason, Conscience, Affection, Soul, so he leaves none destitute of inspiration. It is, therefore, the light of all our being; the background of all human faculties; the sole means by which we gain a knowledge of what is not seen and felt; the logical condition of all sensual knowledge; our highway to the world of Spirit. Man cannot, more than Matter, exist without God. Inspiration then, like vision, must be everywhere the same thing in kind; however it differs in degree, from race to race, from man to man. The degree of inspiration must depend on two things: first, on the natural ability, the particular intellectual, moral, and religious endowment, or genius, wherewith each man is furnished by God; and next, on the use each man makes of this endowment. In one word, it depends on the man's Quantity of Being, and his Quantity of Obedience. Now as men differ widely in their natural endowments, and much more widely in the use and development thereof, there must of course be various degrees of inspiration, from the lowest sinner up to the highest saint. All men are not by birth capable of the same degree of inspiration; and by culture, and acquired character, they are still less capable of it. A man of noble intellect, of deep, rich, benevolent affections, is by his endowments capable of more than one less gifted. He that perfectly keeps the soul's law, thus fulfilling the conditions of inspiration, has more than he who keeps it imperfectly; the former must receive all his soul can contain at that stage of his growth. Thus it depends on a man's own will, in great measure, to what extent he will be inspired. The man of humble gifts at first, by faithful obedience may attain a greater degree than one of larger outfit, who neglects his talent. The Apostles of the New Testament, and the true Saints of all countries, are proofs of this. Inspiration, then, is the consequence of a faithful use of our faculties. Each man is its subject; God its source; Truth its only test. But as truth appears in various modes to us, higher and lower, and may be superficially divided, according to our faculties, into truths of the

Senses, of the Understanding, of Reason, of Conscience, of the Affections, and the Soul, so the perception of truth in the highest mode, that of Reason, Morals, Philanthropy, Religion, is the highest inspiration. He, then, that has the most of Wisdom, Goodness, Religion, the most of Truth, in the highest modes, is the most inspired.

Now universal infallible inspiration can of course only be the attendant and result of a perfect fulfilment of all the laws of mind, of the moral, affectional, and religious nature; and as each man's faculties are limited, it is not possible to men. A foolish man, as such, cannot be inspired to reveal Wisdom; nor a wicked man to reveal Virtue; nor an impious man to reveal Religion. Unto him that hath, more is given. The poet reveals Poetry; the artist Art; the philosopher Science; the saint Religion. The greater, purer, loftier, more complete the character, so is the inspiration; for he that is true to Conscience, faithful to Reason, obedient to Religion, has not only the strength of his own Virtue, Wisdom, and Piety, but the whole strength of Omnipotence on his side; for Goodness, Truth, and Love, as we conceive them, are not one thing in Man, and another in God, but the same thing in each. Thus Man partakes the Divine Nature, as the Platonists, Christians, and Mystics call it. By these means the Soul of All flows into the man; what is private, personal, peculiar, ebbs off before that mighty influx from on high. What is universal, absolute, true, speaks out of his lips, in rude, homely utterance, it may be, or in words that burn and sparkle like the lightning's fiery flash.

This inspiration reveals itself in various forms, modified by the country, character, education, peculiarity of him who receives it, just as water takes the form and the colour of the cup into which it flows, and must needs mingle with the impurities it chances to meet. Thus Minos and Moses were inspired to make laws; David to pour out his soul in pious strains, deep and sweet as an angel's psaltery; Pindar to celebrate virtuous deeds in high heroic song; John the Baptist to denounce sin; Gerson, and Luther, and Bohme, and Fenelon, and Fox, to do each his peculiar work, and stir the world's heart, deep, very deep. Plato and Newton, Milton and Isaiah, Leibnitz and Paul, Mozart, Raphael, Phidias, Praxiteles, Orpheus, receive into their

various forms, the one spirit from God most high. It appears in action not less than speech. The Spirit inspires Dorcas to make coats and garments for the poor, no less than Paul to preach the Gospel. As that bold man himself has said, "there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; diversities of operations, but the same God who worketh all in all."¹ In one man it may appear in the iron hardness of reasoning, which breaks through sophistry, and prejudice, the rubbish and diluvial drift of time. In another it is subdued and softened by the flame of affection; the hard iron of the man is melted and becomes a stream of persuasion, sparkling as it runs.

Inspiration does not destroy the man's freedom; that is left fetterless by obedience. It does not reduce all to one uniform standard, but Habakkuk speaks in his own way, and Hugh de St Victor in his. The man can obey or not obey; can quench the spirit, or feed it as he will. Thus Jonah flees from his duty; Calchas will not tell the truth till out of danger; Peter dissembles and lies. Each of these men had schemes of his own, which he would carry out, God willing or not willing. But when the sincere man receives the truth of God into his soul, knowing it is God's truth, then it takes such a hold of him as nothing else can do. It makes the weak strong; the timid brave; men of slow tongue become full of power and persuasion. There is a new soul in the man, which takes him as it were by the hair of his head, and sets him down where the idea he wishes for demands. It takes the man away from the hall of comfort, the society of his friends; makes him austere and lonely; cruel to himself, if need be; sleepless in his vigilance, unflinching in his toil; never resting from his work. It takes the rose out of the cheek; turns the man in on himself, and gives him more of truth. Then, in a poetic fancy, the man sees visions; has wondrous revelations; every mountain thunders; God burns in every bush; flames out in the crimson cloud; speaks in the wind; descends with every dove; is All in All. The Soul, deep-wrought in its intense struggle, give outness to its thought, and on the trees and stars, the fields, the floods, the corn ripe for the sickle, on Men and Women it sees its burden writ. The Spirit within constrains the man. It is

¹ 1 Cor. xii. 8, et seq.

like wine that hath no vent. He is full of the God. While he muses the fire burns; his bosom will scarce hold his heart. He must speak or he dies, though the earth quake at his word.¹ Timid flesh may resist, and Moses say, I am of slow speech. What avails that? The Soul says, Go, and I will be with thy mouth, to quicken thy tardy tongue. Shrinking Jeremiah, effeminate and timid, recoils before the fearful work—"The flesh will quiver when the pincers tear." He says, I cannot speak. I am a child. But the great Soul of All flows into him and says, Say not "I am a child!" for I am with thee. Gird up thy loins like a man, and speak all that I command thee. Be not afraid at men's faces, for I will make thee a defenced city, a column of steel, and walls of brass. Speak, then, against the whole land of sinners; against the kings thereof, the princes thereof, its people, and its priests. They may fight against thee, but they shall not prevail; for I am with thee. Devils tempt the man, with the terror of defeat and want, with the hopes of selfish ambition. It avails nothing. A "Get-thee-behind-me; Satan," brings angels to help. Then are the man's lips touched with a live coal from the altar of Truth, brought by a Seraph's hand. He is baptized with the Spirit of fire. His countenance is like lightning. The truth thunders from his tongue—his words eloquent as Persuasion; no terror is terrible; no fear formidable. The peaceful is satisfied to be a man of strife and contention, his hand against every man, to root up and pluck down and destroy, to build with the sword in one hand and the trowel in the other. He came to bring peace, but he must set a fire, and his soul is straitened till his work be done. Elisha must leave his oxen in the furrow; Amos desert his summer fruit and his friend; and Böhme, and Bunyan, and Fox, and a thousand others, stout-hearted and God-inspired, must go forth of their errand, into the faithless world, to accept the prophet's mission, be stoned, hated, scourged, slain. Resistance is nothing to these men. Over them steel loses its power, and public opprobrium its shame; deadly things do not harm them; they count loss gain—shame glory—death triumph. These are the men who move the world. They have an eye to see its follies, a heart to weep and

¹ See Lucan IX. 564, et seq.

bleed for its sin. Filled with a Soul wide as yesterday, to-day, and for ever, they pray great prayers for sinful Man. The wild wail of a brother's heart runs through the saddening music of their speech. The destiny of these men is forecast in their birth. They are doomed to fall on evil times and evil tongues, come when they will come. The Priest and the Levite war with the Prophet and do him to death. They brand his name with infamy; cast his unburied bones into the Gehenna of popular shame; John the Baptist must leave his head in a charger; Socrates die the death; Jesus be nailed to his cross; and Justin, John Huss, and Jerome of Prague, and millions of hearts stout as these and as full of God, must mix their last prayers, their admonition, and farewell blessing, with the crackling snap of faggots, the hiss of quivering flesh, the impotent tears of wife and child, and the mad roar of the exulting crowd. Every path where mortal feet now tread secure, has been beaten out of the hard flint by prophets and holy men, who went before us, with bare and bleeding feet, to smooth the way for our reluctant tread. It is the blood of prophets that softens the Alpine rock. Their bones are scattered in all the high places of mankind. But God lays his burdens on no vulgar men. He never leaves their souls a prey. He paints Elysium on their dungeon wall. In the populous chamber of their heart, the light of Faith shines bright and never dies. For such as are on the side of God there is no cause to fear.

The influence of God in Nature, in its mechanical, vital, or instinctive action, is beautiful. The shapely trees; the leaves that clothe them in loveliness; the corn and the cattle; the dew and the flowers; the bird, the insect, moss and stone, fire and water, and earth and air; the clear blue sky that folds the world in its soft embrace; the light which rides on swift pinions, enchanting all it touches, reposing harmless on an infant's eyelid, after its long passage from the other side of the universe,—all these are noble and beautiful; they admonish while they delight us, these silent counsellors and sovereign aids. But the inspiration of God in man, when faithfully obeyed, is nobler and far more beautiful. It is not the passive elegance of unconscious things which we see resulting from Man's voluntary obedience. That might well charm us in Na-

ture ; in Man we look for more. Here the beauty is intellectual, the beauty of Thought, which comprehends the world and understands its laws ; it is moral, the beauty of Virtue, which overcomes the world and lives by its own laws ; it is religious and affectional, the beauty of Holiness and Love, which rises above the world and lives by the law of the Spirit of Life. A single good man, at one with God, makes the morning and evening sun seem little and very low. It is a higher mode of the divine Power that appears in him, self-conscious and self-restrained.

Now this it seems is the only kind of inspiration which is possible. It is coextensive with the faithful use of Man's natural powers. Men may call it miraculous, but nothing is more natural ; or they may say, it is entirely human, for it is the result of Man's use of his faculties ; but what is more divine than Wisdom, Justice, Benevolence, Piety ? Are not these the points in which Man and God conjoin ? If He is present and active in spirit—such must be the perfect result of the action. No doubt there is a mystery in it, as in sensation, in all the functions of Man. But what then ? As a good man has said, "God worketh with us both to will and to do." Mind, Conscience, the affections, and the Soul mediate between us and God, as the senses between us and matter. Is one more surprising than the other ? Is the one to be condemned as spiritual mysticism or Pantheism ? Then so is the other as material mysticism or Pantheism. Alas, we know but in part ; our knowledge is circumscribed by our ignorance.

Now it is the belief of all primitive nations that God inspires the wise, the good, the holy.¹ Yes, that he works with Man in every noble work. No doubt their poor conceptions of God degraded the doctrine and ascribed to the Deity what came from their disobedience of his law.

The wisest and holiest men have spoken in the name of

¹ On this doctrine see Sonntag, *Doctrina Inspirationis*, &c., 1803, § 1, et seq., and the authors he cites. De Wette, *Dogmatik*, § 85—96, and § 143—148, gives the Old Testament doctrine of Inspiration. See also Hase, *Huttenius redivivus*, § 41, *Dogmatik*, § 8, Bretschneider, *Dogmatik*, Vol. I. § 14, et seq., and Baumgarten-Crusius, *Dogmengeschichte*, Vol. II p. 775, et seq. Much useful matter has been collected by these writers, and by Munscher, Bauer, Von-Cölln, and Strauss, but a special history of the doctrine is still a desideratum.

God. Minos, Moses, Zoroaster, Confucius, Zaleucus, Numa, Mahomet, profess to have received their doctrine straightway from Him. The sacred persons of all nations, from the Druid to the Pope, refer back to his direct inspiration. From this source the Sibylline oracles, the responses at Delphi, the sacred books of all nations, the Vedas and the Bible, alike claim to proceed. Pagans tell us no man was ever great without a divine afflatus falling upon him.¹ Much falsity was mingled with the true doctrine, for that was imperfectly understood, and violence, and folly, and lies were thus ascribed to God. Still the popular belief shows that the human mind turns naturally in this direction. Each prophet, false or true, in Palestine, Nubia, India, Greece, spoke in the name of God. In this name the apostles of Christ and of Mahomet, the Catholic and the Protestant, went to their work.² A good man feels that Justice, Goodness, Truth, are immutable, not dependent on himself; that certain convictions come by a law over which he has no control. There they stand, he cannot alter though he may refuse to obey them. Some have considered themselves bare tools in the hand of God; they did and said they knew not what, thus charging their follies and sins on God most high. Others, going to a greater degree of insanity, have confounded God with themselves, declaring that they were God. But even if likeness were perfect, it is not identity. Yet a ray from the primal light falls on Man. No doubt there have been men of a high degree of inspiration, in all countries; the founders of the various religions of the world. But they have been limited in their gifts, and their use of them. The doctrine they taught had somewhat national, temporal,

¹ See the opinions of the ancients in the classic passages, Cicero de Nat. Deorum, II. 66; Orat. pro Arch. c. 8. Xenophon Memorab. I. 1, Seneca, Ep. XLI. See many passages collected in Sonntag. See also Barclay's Apology for the Quakers, Ptop. I—III XI; Sewell's History of the Quakers, B. IX. —XII, and p. 693; and George Fox's Journal, passim.

² The history of the formation of the ecclesiastical doctrine of inspiration, which is the Supernatural View, is curious. It did not assume its most exclusive shape in the early teachers. In John of Damascus it appears in its vigour. In Abelard and Peter Lombard, it is more mild and liberal. Since the Reformation, it has been violently attacked. Luther himself is fluctuating in his opinions. As men's eyes opened they would separate falsehood from truth. The writings of the English deists had a great influence in this matter. See Wulch's Religions-Strengigkeiten. Vol. V. ch. vii. Strauss also. Vol. I. § 14, et seq., gives a brief and compendious account of attacks on this doctrine.

even personal, in it, and so was not the Absolute Religion. No man is so great as human Nature, nor can one finite being feed for ever all his brethren. So their doctrines were limited in extent and duration.

Now this inspiration is limited to no sect, age, or nation. It is wide as the world, and common as God. It is not given to a few men, in the infancy of mankind, to monopolize inspiration and bar God out of the soul. You and I are not born in the dotage and decay of the world. The stars are beautiful as in their prime; "the most ancient Heavens are fresh and strong;" the bird merry as ever at its clear heart. God is still everywhere in nature, at the line, the pole, in a mountain or a moss. Wherever a heart beats with love, where Faith and Reason utter their oracles, there also is God, as formerly in the heart of seers and prophets. Neither Gerizim nor Jerusalem, nor the soil that Jesus blessed, so holy as the good man's heart; nothing so full of God. This inspiration is not given to the learned alone, not to the great and wise, but to every faithful child of God. The world is close to the body; God closer to the soul, not only without but within, for the all-pervading current flows into each. The clear sky bends over each man, little or great; let him uncover his head, there is nothing between him and infinite space. So the ocean of God encircles all men; uncover the soul of its sensuality, selfishness, sin, there is nothing between it and God, who flows into the man, as light into the air. Certain as the open eye drinks in the light, do the pure in heart see God, and he that lives truly feels him as a presence not to be put by.¹

But this is a doctrine of experience as much as of abstract reasoning. Every man who has ever prayed—prayed with the mind, prayed with the heart greatly and strong, knows the truth of this doctrine, welcomed by pious souls. There are hours, and they come to all men, when the hand of destiny seems heavy upon us; when the thought of time misspent; the pang of affection misplaced or ill-requited; the experience of man's worse nature and the sense of our own degradation, come over us. In the

¹ Such as like to settle questions by *authority*, will see that this is the doctrine of the more spiritual writers of the Old and New Testaments, especially of John and Paul. It seems to me this was the doctrine of Jesus himself.

outward and inward trials, we know not which way to turn. The heart faints and is ready to perish. Then in the deep silence of the soul, when the man turns inward to God, light, comfort, peace dawn on him. His troubles—they are but a dew-drop on his sandal. His enmities or jealousies, hopes, fears, honours, disgraces, all the undeserved mishaps of life, are lost to the view; diminished, and then hid in the mists of the valley he has left behind and below him. Resolution comes over him with its vigorous wing; Truth is clear as noon; the soul in faith rushes to its God. The mystery is at an end.

It is no vulgar superstition to say men are inspired in such times. They are the seed-time of life. Then we live whole years through in a few moments, and afterwards, as we journey on in life, cold, and dusty, and travel-worn, and faint, we look to that moment as a point of light; the remembrance of it comes over us like the music of our home heard in a distant land. Like Elisha in the fable, we go long years in the strength thereof. It travels with us, a great wakening light; a pillar of fire in the darkness, to guide us through the lonely pilgrimage of life. These hours of Inspiration, like the flower of the aloe-tree, may be rare, but are yet the celestial blossoming of Man; the result of the past, the prophecy of the future. They are not numerous to any man. Happy is he that has ten such in a year, yes, in a lifetime.

Now to many men, who have but once felt this—when Heaven lay about them, in their infancy, before the world was too much with them, and they laid waste their powers, getting and spending,—when they look back upon it, across the dreary gulf, where Honour, Virtue, Religion have made shipwreck and perished with their youth, it seems visionary, a shadow, dream-like, unreal. They count it a phantom of their inexperience; the vision of a child's fancy, raw and unused to the world. Now they are wiser. They cease to believe in inspiration. They can only credit the saying of the priests, that long ago there were inspired men; but none now; that you and I must bow our faces to the dust, groping like the Blind-worm and the Beetle; not turn our eyes to the broad, free Heaven; that we cannot walk by the great central and celestial light which God made to guide all who come into the world, but only by the farthing-candle of tradition, poor and flicker-

ing light which we get of the priest, which casts strange and fearful shadows around us as we walk, that "leads to bewilder and dazzles to blind." Alas for us if this be all!

But can it be so? Has Infinity laid aside its Omnipresence, retreating to some little corner of space? No. The grass grows as green; the birds chirp as gaily; the sun shines as warm; the moon and the stars walk in their pure beauty, sublime as before; morning and evening have lost none of their loveliness; not a jewel has fallen from the diadem of night. God is still there; ever present in Matter, else it were not; else the serpent of Fate would coil him about the All of things; would crush it in his remorseless grasp, and the hour of ruin strike creation's knell.

Can it be then, as so many tell us, that God, transcending Time and Space, immanent in Matter, has forsaken Man; retreated from the Shekinah in the Holy of Holies, to the court of the Gentiles; that now he will stretch forth no aid, but leave his tottering child to wander on, amid the palpable obscure, eyeless and fatherless, without a path, with no guide but his feeble brother's words and works; groping after God if haply he may find him; and learning, at last, that he is but a God afar off, to be approached only by mediators and attorneys, not face to face as before? Can it be that Thought shall fly through the Heaven, his pinion glittering in the ray of every star, burnished by a million suns, and then come drooping back, with ruffled plume and flagging wing, and eye which once looked undazzled on the sun, now spiritless and cold—come back to tell us God is no Father; that he veils his face and will not look upon his child; his erring child! No more can this be true. Conscience is still God-with-us; a Prayer is deep as ever of old; Reason as true; Religion as blest. Faith still remains the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Love is yet mighty to cast out fear. The Soul still searches the deeps of God; the pure in heart see him. The substance of the Infinite is not yet exhausted, nor the well of Life drunk dry. The Father is near us as ever, else Reason were a traitor, Morality a hollow form, Religion a mockery, and Love a hideous lie. Now, as in the days of Adam, Moses, Jesus, he that is faithful to Reason, Conscience, Heart and Soul, will, through them, receive inspiration to guide him through all his pilgrimage.

