

(3)

A  
 TREATISE  
 ON  
**OPPOSITES,**  
 THEIR NATURE,  
 ORIGIN, AND USES,  
 AS AFFECTING  
 BOTH THE NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL LIFE  
**OF MAN.**



BY THE  
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*I call heaven and earth to record this day against you,  
 that I have set before you life and death, blessing and  
 cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy  
 seed may live. DEUT. XXX. 19.*



**Manchester:**


Printed and sold by J. GLEAVE, No. 106, Deansgate.

SOLD ALSO BY MESSRS. CLARKE, MARKET PLACE;  
 AND IN LONDON BY E. HODSON, CROSS STREET, HATTON GARDEN;  
 T. GOYDER, 8, CHARLES STREET, WESTMINSTER; AND  
 THE OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

1820.



TO THE  
CHURCHWARDENS, SIDESMEN,  
AND  
**THE REST OF THE CONGREGATION**  
OF  
**ST. JOHN'S CHURCH,**  
**Manchester.**



DEARLY BELOVED,

**T**HOUGH forbidden by bodily infirmity to address you from the pulpit, and though this infirmity has now been of long continuance, yet I cannot be insensible to your eternal interests, the magnitude of which, like that of natural objects, seems to increase in proportion as their distance diminishes. When, however, I speak of *distance* on this occasion, it is evident that the term is not to be understood as implying *real*, but only *apparent* distance, inasmuch as eternal things are ever *equally near*, at one time as at another; and if they appear otherwise, it is owing merely to *the state of the optics* by or through which they are viewed. Thus to the eyes of the young,

who as yet are unacquainted with any decay of bodily health and strength; who see nothing, and are disposed to see nothing, but the fascinating prospects of temporal existence; in whose view the world appears adorned with all the imperishable charms of a pleasure which will never satiate, and of an ambition, a gain, and a glory, which can never have an end:—to such eyes, I say, the realities of another world, *near* and *grand* as they are in themselves, must of necessity appear both *remote* and *small*, and this for no other reason than because they are not seen as they *really are*, but only as a perverted and mistaken judgment *represents* them. Let this state, however, be changed, as it must be sooner or later, by age, by sickness, by the loss of friends, or by any other of those overwhelming calamities, which unmask the present world, and in so doing, expose to open view, its delusions, its uncertainties, its disorders, and its dangers, and how is the aspect of eternal things changed accordingly! How is their *remoteness* now seen as *nearness*, and their *diminutiveness* converted into *grandeur*; and this for no other reason than because they are viewed through the medium of *altered eyes*, or rather through the *telescope* of altered affections and thoughts, which exhibit them, to the intellectual sight in their true size and proportions, as the things

in which man is most deeply interested, because the things which can alone satisfy the desires of an immortal being!

Seeing then, as I trust I do, your eternal interests magnified according to this their true greatness, and grateful as I feel to that DIVINE PROVIDENCE which has blessed me with the sight, it is impossible for me not to be affected by it; and it is equally impossible to be affected and not to tell you so. And since it hath pleased the same Divine Providence still to allow me the use of my pen, I flatter myself that you will not think I have trespassed too much on your time and patience in my present application of it, the intent of which is to secure to you more effectually the blessings prepared for you in another life, by putting you on your guard against a subtle argument of modern infidelity, calculated to mislead and discourage you in the pursuit of them, whilst it represents the pursuit as attended with unsurmountable difficulties, and at the same time, charges the GREAT CREATOR and GOVERNOR of the universe with either ignorance, or injustice, or both, for permitting those difficulties.—But it is necessary that I explain myself.

It cannot have escaped your notice that infidelity, that bird of night, has for some years past, both in this and other parts of Christendom, been

spreading abroad her black wings, and endeavouring to build her nest, where she may lay her young, in the decayed and dead branches, which she has first lopped off from the *tree of life*, and then applied to her own dark and mischievous purposes. Or, (to speak without a figure) you cannot be ignorant of the diabolical attempts which have of late been made, and are now making, both in this and other kingdoms of Europe, to annihilate the Christian religion by doubting, disputing, and denying the evidences of the Revelation on which it is founded; and by thus endeavouring to prove that the Word of the Most High God is a merely human fabrication, destitute alike of divine authority and divine wisdom, and thus calculated solely to impose on the credulity of mankind, to mislead their judgment, and to fasten on them a cruel yoke of burdensome laws, unjust statutes, and ridiculous observances. You must also have farther noted, on this occasion, how the advocates of the above scepticism, in attempting to root up the TREE OF LIFE, have laboured to effect their wicked design by first *cutting off some of the principal branches*; in other words, by detaching some *particular parts* of Revelation from the *whole*, and by thus exposing each part, in its *single and detached* state, to a partial and unfair judication, to which it could not have been exposed,

so long as it remained in connection with the parent trunk and the rest of the branches.

Of all the instances of this cunning and wicked artifice, by which these enemies of mankind have set themselves in battle array against the authority of divine truth, and thus against the power of its consolations, none perhaps is more conspicuous than the subject of the following pages, viz. *The Nature, Origin, and End of Opposites*. For let us attend now to the general tenor of their sentiments and reasonings on this occasion. Some of them have the boldness to assert that the *opposite*, called in Sacred Scripture, the *devil* and *satan*, cannot possibly have any existence, because, they urge, it is utterly inconceivable, and contrary to all our ideas of an infinitely powerful Being, to suppose that He would for a moment allow such an adversary to disturb the order of His kingdom, and especially to tempt others to disturb it, when He himself could at any instant pronounce against such an adversary a sentence of annihilation.\* Others again, in a strain indeed less audacious, but in a temper and spirit not less impious and offensive, contend that all *opposites* are not only of divine *permission*, but of divine *approbation*; in other words, that there is

\* See Mr. Paine's *Age of Reason*.

nothing in man, which can properly be said to be *opposed to God*, since man, in obeying his passions, acts only according to the impulse which he receives from his **MAKER**, and consequently is as incapable of committing a crime, as his **MAKER** is incapable of being justly offended at the commission.\* Others again consider the birth and existence of *opposites*, as at variance with all the known attributes of deity, and accordingly impugn the divine testimony of Revelation on the ground of it's attributing to the Deity such birth and existence. For such is the tendency of their sceptical comments on the second and third chapters of Genesis, whilst they labour to prove, that agreeable to the plain meaning of these chapters, God is evidently the first author of sin and transgression, since, had *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil* never been planted, and the prohibition against eating of it's fruit never been uttered, man would have continued for ever in the enjoyment of his original innocence, so that the discord of disobedience, and of the infernal passions to which it gave birth, would never have grated in the ears, nor have tormented the hearts of offending mortals. With an air therefore of triumph and self-

\* See the several systems of French philosophy advocated by Helvetius, Diderot, Condorcet, &c. &c.



complacency, they insultingly ask, "Why did the  
 "ALMIGHTY plant in Paradise a *fatal tree*, from  
 "which, He must be aware, so many tremendous  
 "consequences were to ensue? We cannot believe  
 "that, an infinite mercy would permit, still less  
 "countenance, such a certain source of crime and  
 "mischief: we therefore reject the record, by which  
 "a fact, so derogatory to divine justice, is supported;  
 "and we accordingly conclude that the Bible is not of  
 "divine authority; but rather an imposition on the cre-  
 "dibility of mankind, as wicked as it is unreasonable."

Such are the arguments, by which the infidel of  
 the present day endeavours to demonstrate, either  
 that the ALMIGHTY is bound to annihilate all things  
*opposed* to Himself and His kingdom; or that  
 nothing really is *opposed*, because He Himself hath  
 appointed it, and is pleased with, rather than offend-  
 ed by, its operation; or lastly, that the Sacred  
 Scriptures, in announcing that GOD *planted a tree*,  
 the fruit of which first gave birth to sin, and to all  
 the disorderly passions of the human heart, cannot  
 possibly be regarded as authentic records, either of  
 divine justice or of divine judgment.

Here then, from these attempts of designing  
 men to deprive you of all the comforts of evangelical

\* See the recent publications of Carline and other deistical  
 writers.

faith and life, by invalidating the evidences of divine revelation; by arraiging the chief attributes of the Deity; by introducing into the human mind a dreadful perplexity concerning the origin of evil, and especially by a groundless insinuation, that human passions may be securely indulged, as being subject neither to divine scrutiny nor to divine control, since man is compelled of necessity to submit to their influence; from these attempts, I say, (which were never, in any former period of the world, either devised with deeper artifice, or enterprised with more ardent zeal than at the present moment,) you may learn both the design and the desire by which I have been instigated to address you in the following pages on the interesting subject of *opposites*.

But for it is my earnest wish, as it hath always been my devout prayer, that you may be preserved pure of every taint of sceptical infection, and that, thus becoming true believers in the GREAT SAVIOUR, you may be admitted to the high honour and happiness of following His steps, of obeying His precepts, of incorporating into your hearts and lives His holy spirit of love and wisdom, and of thus entering with Him into glory.

My intention therefore, in the Work here presented to you, is to guard you, in the first place, against the delusive and dangerous ideas cherished

by the advocates of modern infidelity, respecting the origin, nature, and tendency of all those principles and persuasions in the human mind, which are *in opposition* to the divine mind, that so you may be led to a fuller discovery of the mischiefs to which you are exposed from their influence, and of your *only* security against their destructive operation. In discussing, therefore, this important subject, I have endeavoured to prove, that you have nothing to fear from the violence of such *opposites* but your own want of determination and resolution to control and subdue them, since from the moment that you look up to the ALMIGHTY for grace and power to assist you in this spiritual warfare, from that moment your adversaries are not only disarmed of all power to do you injury, but are also converted into instruments of your purification, and of thus adding new jewels to your crown of glory.

In connection too with this subject, I have endeavoured further to demonstrate, that the Almighty hath, from the beginning, permitted the existence and operation of the above *opposites*, as the only proper ground of the freedom of the human will, since if man be supposed to be created in a state incapable of transgression, he must then be supposed also to be in a state of *necessary* or *compelled* goodness, in which case he could not possibly be a subject of the sublime happiness to which he is

called in the Gospel, consisting in an entire and free renunciation of all evil; in a victory over himself, the devil, the world, and the flesh; in a voluntary choice of the SUPREME GOOD, which is the love of God and of his neighbour; and in thus conjoining himself mutually and reciprocally with God, by keeping His holy commandments, and labouring to conform himself entirely to the divine will, guidance, and protection;

A further design of the following pages is to guard you against a spirit of murmuring and complaint respecting the dispensations of the divine providence, by endeavouring to convince you that the divine providence, even when it appears most opposed to you, is ever on your side, fighting for you and with you against all your spiritual enemies, and that therefore these enemies can have no advantage over you, but what you give them, either by your carelessness, or unbelief, or your want of resolution; or, lastly, by that impatience of spirit, which will not submit to wait, and be gently led and guided of the ALMIGHTY, but taking the reins into its own hands, will be its own guide, governor, and deliverer. On this occasion therefore is inculcated the absolute necessity of keeping a daily watch over the wind's temper, that so it may be found continually in such a state of meekness, ductility, composure, and contentment, as to be an easy unresisting sub-

ject of divine leading, and never to *break the bridle* by which the FATHER OF MERCIES would at once restrain it from falling into destruction, and conduct it in the pure and quiet path of eternal life and salvation.

Lastly, I have endeavoured to point out the manifold and important Christian duties, binding upon you from your necessary connection with *opposites*, and to show that these duties consist principally, as the gospel teaches throughout, in renouncing the inordinate loves of self and of the world, that so the love of God and of your neighbour may be implanted in their place, and render you fruitful in every good thought, word, and work. And here it has been my farther intention to prove to you, that religion is an important transaction between God and yourselves; the execution of a solemn covenant, intended to connect the CREATOR of the world and his creatures in a blessed bond of mutual respect, love, and endearment; and that with this view it's blessed end is to work a change in the human heart, by expelling from it all that is selfish, impure, unjust and defiled, thus all pride and vanity, all ambition, revenge, covetousness and sensuality, that so the kingdom of God, which is the kingdom of his unutterable love, mercy, compassion, charity, meekness, justice, judgment, and patience, may be established on the subjugation of their *opposites*, and

man, being thus admitted to an everlasting and blessed conjunction with his MAKER, may recover the divine image and likeness, re-enter paradise, eat of THE TREE OF LIFE, and live for ever.

It only remains then that I earnestly entreat you, for your own sakes, to take these things into serious consideration, and to peruse the following pages, not with a cold and critical eye, which is disposed to quarrel with language, or to reject a sentiment because it appears new, but with humble and penitent hearts, warmed with the heavenly flame of devout affection, in consequence of being enlightened to see that the concerns of eternity are, beyond all comparison, infinitely more deserving objects of your pursuit than any gain, glory, or pleasure, howsoever fascinating in it's aspect, which the present transitory world has to bestow. May I flatter myself also that you will keep in mind that you are here addressed by one who loves you, and whose constant labour it has been, now for more than fifty years, to point out to you the way to a blessed immortality: Remember also that he closely connects your interests with his own, and that in agreement with this connection he remains, and must ever remain, with devout prayer for your everlasting welfare,

Your affectionate Pastor,

J. C.

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**ERRATA.**

**Page 3, line 11 from the bottom, for *this* read *thus*.**

**Page 26, 4th line from the bottom, for *stong* read *strong*.**



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# On Opposites, &c.



## SECTION I.

### *On Opposites in general, their Nature and Origin.*

**WHOSOEVER**, with the contemplative eye of wisdom, hath been accustomed to scrutinize the works of God, and to take delight in observing their indefinite varieties, together with their astonishing magnificence, harmony, use, and end, must of course have been led to the acknowledgment and adoration of that Divine incomprehensible agency, by which the world, with all its wonderful contents, was first brought into existence, and afterwards preserved in it. For who can behold so stupendous a fabric, and not be convinced that it is the workmanship of a power superior to itself? Who can discover grandeur, order, and beneficence, and not confess at the same time that they bespeak an Author? Let the same observer too pass from external objects, and enter into the interior regions of his own mind: Let him endeavour to anatomize himself as to the two wonderful faculties of volition and

intellect, with all their ramifications, which properly constitute himself: How is he again struck with the view of powers and capacities, of purposes, affections, thoughts, and energies, which defy all calculation of numbers and of excellence, and which again call him, as they were intended, to recognise the Divine Source from whence they flow! Thus, whether we look out of, or within ourselves; at the mechanism and forms of matter, or at the still more marvellous structure and operations of mind; we are compelled to bow down before the DIVINE ARCHITECT of so many wonders, and to adopt the language of the holy one of old, *O LORD, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is full of Thy riches*, [Psalm civ. 24.]

But, whilst we are at once surprised and edified by the above contemplations both of the universe and of ourselves, have we ever been led to reflect that the various objects, which excite our combined astonishment and adoration, are in themselves *compounds*; in other words, that they are made up of *heterogeneous* principles and materials, which, in many cases, are not only *discordant*, but *opposed* to each other? Have we ever too reflected further, that the harmony and order which we admire; the grandeur, the beneficence and use, which so deservedly affect us; result entirely from this circumstance of their *composition*, insomuch that if this were wanting, in other words, if the above principles and materials were not *discordant*, and *opposed* to each other, it would then be absolutely impossible that either order or harmony; either grandeur, beneficence, or use, should exist?

Perhaps this subject hath not heretofore commanded the attention which it's great importance merits, whether it be viewed philosophically, or theologically; whether as affecting the science of nature and her natural laws, or the knowledge of man and his spiritual duties. It is high time, then, that we apply to a contemplation so well calcu-

lated to open our eyes to the knowledge both of God and of ourselves, by unfolding to our view the laws of the divine economy in this lower world; by explaining at the same time the mysterious phenomenon of our own minds; and above all, by justifying the permissions and operations of the Divine Providence, in reference to what are commonly called natural and spiritual evils, with their effects. Under the influence then of the Divine Spirit, which is all the bright truth of revealed wisdom, and in devout supplication for it's heavenly guidance, from a conviction of the natural darkness of our own understandings, let us proceed to an inquiry involving in it our dearest interests, because connected with our growth both in heavenly intelligence and it's life.

The *first* step in the above investigation leads us to consider the *nature* and the *origin* of the opposites of which we are treating.

On this part of our subject, however, nothing can be known, until it be first seen, and seen clearly, that all creation implies the combination of two distinct principles, called *spiritual* and *natural*, or *immaterial* and *material*, the former of which, viz. the *spiritual* and *immaterial* principle, is *living* and *active*, whilst the latter, viz. the *natural* and *material* principle, is in itself *dead* and *passive*. For creation, properly considered, is not the creation of *life*, since life is not *creatable*, but it is the creation of various forms for the reception of life, and this for it's enjoyment, propagation, and fruitfulness.\* In like man-

\* In contradiction to the assertion here made, that *life is not creatable*, some spiritual writers have insisted that the soul of man is *created life*, and thus is *life itself*, and not merely the *receptacle of life* from God. But these writers do not seem to be aware of the dangerous tendency of a position, which so directly opposes the divine testimony where it is written, that God *breathed into man the breath of lives, and man became a living soul*, [Gen. ii. 22.] For from this testimony it is clear, that man originally became a *living soul* in consequence of receiving the *breath of lives* from God, in like manner as the Apostles, after the LORD'S resurrection, received the HOLY SPIRIT, in

ner, and for the same reason, creation, properly considered, is not the creation of *love*, of *wisdom*, of *power*, and of *bliss*, since these principles, like the *life* with which they are connected, are not creatable; but it consists in the creation of various forms for the reception and enjoyment of *love*, of *wisdom*, of *power*, and of *bliss*. For it is an undeniable truth, that there is but *one* fountain of *life*, of *love*, of *wisdom*, of *power*, and of *bliss*, and that is God; and therefore *life*, *love*, *wisdom*, *power*, and *bliss*, cannot with any propriety be said to be *created* by God, but only to *proceed* from Him. Nothing then is created, or ever hath been created by God, but the various receptacles of what flows from Himself, which receptacles are all the nameless and numberless forms, both spiritual and natural, existing in the three kingdoms of nature, called *animal*, *vegetable*, and *mineral*, which taken collectively constitute what is commonly called *nature*. Thus the end of creation is to impart *life*, *love*, *wisdom*, *power*, and *bliss*, and all this from the divine mercy, for the sake of making others happy out of itself; but this end, it is plain, cannot be attained unless by *means* of an indefinite variety of

consequence of a similar *breathing* from the INCARNATE GOD, [John xx. 22.] But how plain is it to see, that in this latter case the Apostles did not become *themselves* the HOLY SPIRIT by the breathing of their risen God, but only receivers of that inestimable gift, as it was continually imparted to them from it's Divine Source and Fountain! How plain therefore is it to see further, that, in the former case, man did not become *life itself* by receiving the *breath of lives*, but only a receptacle of life, momentarily imparted from the Divine Being who first breathed it! Besides, it merits the most profound consideration, that *life in itself* is the proper characteristic of DEITY, as *derived* and *dependent life* is the proper characteristic of His creatures, consequently, that to create *life in itself* is to create a GOD, the very idea of which creation is contrary to every dictate of reason and common sense. It is said indeed by the GREAT REDEEMER, that *as the FATHER hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the SON to have life in Himself*, [John v. 26.] but this assertion only proves that the humanity of that Redeemer was a DIVINE HUMANITY, and thus, by virtue of it's indissoluble union with divinity, possessed independent and underived life.

forms accommodated to the reception of the above divine and heavenly principles, which flow continually from God. It is equally evident that these forms are in themselves *dead* and *passive*, and all the life and activity which they receive is from the first source of life and activity, that is, from God, but this in proportion to the greater or lesser perfection of the form, since *animal* forms receive more of life and activity than *vegetable* forms, and *vegetable* forms more than *mineral*.

It is manifest, then, that in every subject of creation there is contained both an *immaterial* principle, and a *material* one, consequently both a *living* and a *dead* principle, both an *active* and a *passive* one. For supposing a *living* and *active* principle to exist, separate from a *dead* or *passive* one, how plain is it to see that, in such case, there would be no creation, since a *living* and *active* principle, as was shown above, is not creatable! Again, if we suppose a *dead* and *passive* subject to exist, destitute of a *living* and *active* one, it is again evident to demonstration, that all the ends and purposes of creation would be entirely frustrated; for what is creation without *life* and *activity*?

Here then we may discover the *nature* and *origin* of *opposites*, and how, by the goodness and wisdom of the GREAT CREATOR, which constitute the law of the existence of all things here below, those *opposites* are necessarily combined in all created subjects. For what principles can be more opposed to each other than what is *living* and what is *dead*, what is *active* and what is *passive*, thus what is *spiritual* and what is *natural*, what is *immaterial* and what is *material*? Yet on the combination of these *opposite* principles depend the whole of creation, consequently the all of it's order, harmony, magnificence, beauty, and use. On the same combination also depends the very existence of the human mind, together with the operation of all it's powers and faculties, it's sense of bliss and enjoy-

ment, it's variety of affections, thoughts, and purposes. If then we remove from creation this it's distinguishing characteristic, as being a complex of *opposites*, we at the same moment destroy it; and if we remove the same characteristic from the human mind, we unmake it also in like manner, because we despoil it of the very constituent principles of it's being and capacities.

Some writers indeed have insisted, and with much plausibility, that *opposites* had their birth from *the fall of man*, and would never have come into existence, had man continued to stand steadfast in his original integrity. But these writers forget that the fall of man is itself an evident proof that *opposites* had a prior existence, since itself was the effect of the operation of an opposite. For had the human mind been originally created in a state of separation from all *opposing* principles; in other words, had it been created subject to the influence of *good only*, without any capacity of inclining to *evil*, it is manifest to demonstration, that the fall of man could never have been effected. It is plain, then, that even before the fall, *opposites* existed, and consequently were not the derivative *effects* of the fall, but rather it's producing *cause*, so that howsoever the fall might tend afterwards to render opposites *more opposite*, yet it did not originally give them birth, but on the contrary received birth from them.

But the nature and origin of *opposites* will better appear from considering their *varieties*, as they are to be found both in the outward creation, or what may be called the great world of nature, and also in inward creation, or what may be termed the little world of the mind of man; The former may be denominated *natural opposites*; the latter *spiritual*. We shall begin then with the former.

## SECTION II.

*On natural Opposites, their Varieties and Uses.*

**EVERY** intelligent person must necessarily have been led to note a multiplicity of *natural opposites*, as they affect the bodily senses, both of *sight*, of *hearing*, of *taste*, of *smelling*, and of *touch*; for who hath not been made sensible, occasionally, of the *opposites* of *light* and *darkness*, of *concord* and *discord*, of *sweet* and *bitter*, of a *grateful odour* and a *stench*, of *heat* and *cold*, thus of *natural pleasure* and *natural pain*? But whence, it may be asked, come these opposites? What is their origin, and what their end? It were impiety to say that *darkness*, *discord*, *bitterness*, *stench*, *cold* and *pain*, proceed *immediately* from the FATHER OF MERCIES, because from Him, we are well assured, cometh *light*, *beauty*, *concord*, *sweetness*, *grateful odour*, *heat*, and *pleasure*, and it is impossible that the same fountain can produce waters of such contrary properties. We are compelled then to conclude, in agreement with what was suggested in the foregoing section, that the principles, which excite in us painful sensations, are not immediately from God, but from nature, and that nature therefore was created for the purpose of receiving, reflecting, and thus bringing into manifestation, fixation, and fruitfulness, the divine, life-giving, and active powers which are from God, and which could not otherwise be either manifested, fixed, or made fruitful. For GOD, we know, is in His essence the purest love, and the purest wisdom:\* but how now can this purest love and

\* When it is said that God in His essence is the purest love and the purest wisdom, it is to be understood that love and wisdom in Him are one, and not two; in other words, that they are *distinctly one*, and never divided. In the inseparable union therefore of these two divine principles consists the perfec-

purest wisdom be imparted and made known, but to and in recipient subjects? And what are such recipient subjects, but creatures and things which in themselves are *natural*? in other words, which in themselves are *dead* and *passive*, yet so ordained as to be capable of receiving, reflecting, and rendering fruitful what is *alive* and *active*? We conclude, therefore, that all *natural opposites* are from nature, and are thus grounded in the immutable law of creation, which requires the combination of *living* and *dead* principles, or of *active* and *passive* ones, for the purpose of bringing into manifestation and fruitfulness the adorable laws and wisdom of the GREAT CREATOR.

Hence, then, if the above reasoning be just, and seen and acknowledged to be so, we may be enabled to discover some of the important *uses* resulting from *natural opposites*. For what would natural light be without natural darkness and shade, but an uniform unvaried brilliancy, which would soon dazzle and weary our eyes by its splendour, but could never recreate them, as they are at present recreated, by a variety of tints, of colourings, and of forms? Every judicious painter is well aware of this circumstance, and seeing the impossibility of making a fine picture by the aid of light only, he artfully mingles his shades, and thus, by the combination of *opposites* produces all the beauty, order, and effect, which are the characteristics of fine painting. In like manner a skilful musician mixes his *concord*s and *discord*s, because he knows from the wisdom of the Deity, as the capacity of separating them constitutes the principal imperfection of man. The approximation of man then towards the perfection of his being is to be estimated, in all cases, by his approximation to the conjunction of love and of wisdom from God in himself, since he becomes an *image* and *likeness* of his MAKER in proportion as such conjunction is effected, and on the contrary destroys such image and likeness in proportion as he disjoins in himself those godlike and living principles. It is however to be understood that the above conjunction leaves man at perfect liberty to will, think, and act, *as of himself*, yet under the secret acknowledgment that all his power to do so is from above.



experience, that the human ear is soon satiated with *con-*  
*cords alone*, and that therefore the discord is necessary to  
relieve it, by introducing variety, and through variety con-  
ducting to all the fulness of delight resulting from the  
perfect harmony of modulation and composition. Yet  
what is thus true respecting the senses of *seeing* and *hear-*  
*ing*, is equally true of all the other senses, which, it is  
evident, require *variety* for their gratification, and of  
course require the combination of opposites in one degree  
or other, since variety, without opposites, cannot possibly  
be produced.

The uses then of *natural opposites* result from the ten-  
dency of the latter to increase natural delight, which is  
soon cloyed by the sameness of the sensations which give  
it birth, and of course requires variety for it's continuance  
and increment. Perhaps even *bodily pain* itself, in this  
view, may be regarded as instrumental in administering to  
the store of *animal pleasure*, since animal pleasure, like  
fine painting and music, is the effect of the combination of  
opposites, and would consequently soon pall on the appe-  
tite, if it's tone was always the same, uninterrupted by  
vicissitude, and unrelieved by contrast. Let us again then  
prostrate ourselves before the ALMIGHTY CREATOR, in grate-  
ful adoration of the mercy which has thus, in the infinity  
of it's wisdom, provided for the perfection of our bliss, by  
placing all things here below in a kind of *equilibrium*\*  
between two *opposites*, and thus by combining those oppo-  
sites with each other in such due proportion, as compels  
them to produce the greatest possible variety of sensation  
for our gratification and delight.

\* Quære, whether every natural delight may not be regarded as the result  
of such *equilibrium*, and thus as the composed and quiet rest of the senses,  
operated upon by two equal and opposite powers?

## SECTION III.

*On spiritual Opposites, their Varieties and Uses.*

**BY** *spiritual opposites*, as was shown in the first section, are to be understood all those opposites which are to be found in the little world of the human mind, and that these are as various as natural opposites, may be evident from this consideration, that the mind has it's several senses alike with the body, and is thus the subject of *light* and *darkness*, of *concord* and *discord*, of *sweet* and *bitter*, of *grateful odour* and *a stench*, of *heat* and *cold*, thus of *pleasure* and *pain*. Nevertheless, the senses of the mind differ essentially from those of the body in this respect, that the former are *spiritual*, and affected by *spiritual* objects, whereas the latter are *natural*, and affected only by *natural* objects. *Light* therefore and *darkness*, *concord* and *discord*, *sweet* and *bitter*, *grateful odour* and *stench*, *heat* and *cold*, *pleasure* and *pain*, when predicated of *mind*, must be understood according to a *spiritual* idea, otherwise they cannot possibly be regarded as applicable to *mind*.

In order then to apprehend clearly what is meant by *spiritual opposites*, and to discover at the same time their *varieties* and *uses*, it will be necessary to attain first a distinct idea of *spiritual light* and *darkness*, of *spiritual concord* and *discord*, of *spiritual sweet* and *bitter*, of *spiritual grateful odour* and *stench*, of *spiritual heat* and *cold*, and thus of *spiritual pleasure* and *pain*.

To begin then with *spiritual light* and *darkness*.— There can be no difficulty in conceiving a just idea on this subject, if it only be considered that *truth* is to the mind, or mental eye, what the sun's *light* is to the body, or bodily eye, and that consequently *truth* is *spiritual light*, making

manifest to the mind an indefinite variety of spiritual objects, in like manner as the light of the sun makes manifest an indefinite variety of natural objects. If it be asked, what *truth* is? it may be replied, that truth, in it's origin, is a divine principle proceeding from God, and applying itself to the understanding of man, to the intent that man may receive instruction respecting God, respecting also His kingdom, and that mode of life which is acceptable to God, and which conducts to His kingdom. The WORD OF GOD therefore is truth, because the WORD OF GOD, or what we call THE BIBLE, is the divine will and wisdom of the MOST HIGH let down here upon the earth, and embodied in literal expression and an historical form,\* that so it may be accommodated to the reception of man, and thus administer to him a blessed light, by which he may be enlightened in the things which concern his eternal peace. Accordingly when this WORD, *was made flesh*. [John i. 14.] in the person of the GREAT SAVIOUR, this manifested God is pleased to call Himself by the emphatic appellations of THE TRUTH,

\* It is much to be lamented that this idea of the WORD OF GOD, or the SACRED SCRIPTURE, has been nearly lost sight of, and that thus the *letter* and *history* of the Holy Volume have been too frequently regarded as constituting it's sanctity, separate from the internal or spiritual sense contained and involved in them. But who cannot see that THE WORD OF GOD, as proceeding from God, must of necessity be *spiritual*, agreeable to that declaration of the GREAT REDEEMER, *The words that I speak unto you are spirit, and are life*? [John vi. 63.] To separate then the *letter* and *history* from the *spirit* and *life*, by which they are animated, and of which they are full, is like separating *body* from *soul*, the consequence of which separation is, that the *body* becomes a *carcase*. And may not such separation be regarded as the principal cause of the deistical principles which are at this day so prevalent? For what is more offensive than a *carcase*? If then the Holy Volume be converted into such a *carcase*, by depriving it of it's essential *soul* and *life*, what wonder is it that so many are *offended* at it? To strike then at the root of this offence, and thus, at the root of Deism, we must endeavour to prove that the WORD OF GOD is full of the LIFE OF GOD, and that therefore all the cavils of the Deists against it's *letter* or *history* do not at all affect it's *soul* or *spirit*; any more than a scratch on a casket of precious stones affects the precious stones themselves which are contained in it.

[John xiv. 6.] and also of the LIGHT OF THE WORLD, [John viii. 12.] to instruct us, not only that He is God, but also that truth is *spiritual light*; and that consequently, whether we speak of *spiritual light*, or of *the truth*, it is the same thing.

From this view now of *spiritual light*, it may be plain to see what is to be understood by *spiritual darkness*. For if all *spiritual light* be the divine truth which proceedeth from God, and enlighteneth the human mind, then all *spiritual darkness* must be the absence of divine truth in the human mind, whether such absence result from ignorance, from perversion, or from rejection of the truth. For such are the several origins of *spiritual darkness*, since it is evident that one man may never see by the blessed light of the eternal truth, because he has never been instructed in the divine oracles, which contain it, whilst another may never see by the same light, because, although instructed in the WORD OF GOD, he yet perverts instruction, and thus in the language of prophecy, *turns the truth of God into a lie*. For a similar reason, a third may still sit in *spiritual darkness*, not because he is ignorant of the truth, which should enlighten him, nor yet because he perverts the truth when he has received it, but for this most tremendous reason, because his mind is so defiled with evil, and hardened in sin, that he absolutely and altogether rejects the admission of truth, when it is presented to his acceptance, agreeable to the awful declaration of the GREAT SAVIOUR, *He that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved*, [John iii. 20.]

It is manifest then, even to demonstration, that there exist in the human mind the two opposites of *spiritual light* and *spiritual darkness*, and that these opposites, like those of natural light and natural darkness, are the result of two distinct principles, one from God, which is the ETERNAL TRUTH, and the other from nature, which is capable

either of receiving or rejecting that truth. For the same reason we are compelled to admit the existence of the other spiritual opposites, called spiritual *concord* and *discord*, spiritual *sweet* and *bitter*, spiritual *grateful odour* and *stench*, spiritual *heat* and *cold*, spiritual *pleasure* and *pain*, because *spiritual concord* arises from the agreement, as *spiritual discord* does from the disagreement, between the mind's inclinations and it's views of truth; in other words, between the affections which are of the will or love, and the perceptions which are of the understanding or wisdom: *Spiritual sweet*, in like manner, is nothing else but the delightful sensation of such agreement, manifesting itself in a certain interior pleasantness, which may be called, and is called in the Sacred Scripture, the *honey* and the *honey-comb* of the soul or spirit; whilst *spiritual bitter* is the opposite painful sensation arising from disagreement: *Spiritual grateful odour*, again, and *spiritual stench*, are sensations arising from the same causes as *spiritual sweet* and *bitter*, but rendered perceptible in a higher sphere or degree of man's spiritual life; For the same reason *spiritual heat* is the activity of spiritual affection, exercising itself either in the ardent desire and pursuit of the eternal truth, and of that state of heavenly purity to which the truth always points, or in the hatred and rejection both of truth and it's purity; in the former of which cases it is properly called *spiritual heat*, whereas in the latter it's proper denomination is *spiritual cold*, inasmuch as the hatred and rejection of truth is the result of the predominance of mere natural love, which love, when separated from spiritual love, or the love of truth, is nothing else, and therefore, deserves no other name than that of *spiritual cold*. Hence then it must be evident what is to be understood by *spiritual pleasure* and *pain*, since the former is the constant necessary effect of the reception of the eternal truth, and of obedience to it's dictates, whilst the latter is the uniform result of prin-

ciples, inclinations, and affections, which would counteract and oppose either the reception of truth, or compliance with it's requirements.

*Spiritual opposites* then, it appears, are all those contending powers in the human mind, which manifest themselves whensoever the ETERNAL TRUTH is presented for acceptance, that is to say, for *acknowledgment* and for *obedience*, because in some cases contention is more excited respecting the acknowledgment of truth, and in others more respecting obedience to it's dictates. JESUS CHRIST adverts to this contention, when He speaks of *one king going to make war against another king*, and of the former *with ten thousand meeting him that cometh against him with twenty thousand*, [Luke xiv. 31.] For such is the state of warfare to which every human being is exposed when he is to decide on the evidence, the origin, the authority, and especially the ascendancy of the revealed will or Word of the Most High in his own bosom. *Ten thousand* of the heavenly host, who are his blessed spiritual associates, encourage him to believe and to obey, whilst *twenty thousand* of the infernal crew, who are his cursed and delusive companions, would persuade him to deny and to reject. What person, born in a country where the Word of God is known, hath not experienced more or less of the effect of such warfare, either in the opposition made to the reception of truth in his *understanding* and *thoughts*, or in the more violent combat which ensues, when it's heavenly light is to be exalted in his *will* and it's *affections*? It may be, possibly, that he is not aware of his close connection either with the powers of heaven, or the spirits of darkness, who are the principal agents in the tremendous conflict, and therefore he refers it merely to contending principles in his own mind, independent of all foreign agency whether from above or from beneath. Still, however, he is made sensible of contention, whilst at one time the *ten thousand*, and at another the *twenty thousand*,

have the advantage. For sometimes his passions are headstrong, and urge the impossibility of restraint; self-love and the love of the world take the reins, and his chariot-horses are driven furiously, trampling down, as mire in the streets, every opposing dictate of that heavenly wisdom, which was given to curb them. Again, at other times, the voice of wisdom is attended to; passion gives place to her sober counsels; and the chariot-horses begin to acknowledge that their reins are in better hands, and that their course is directed to a safer and more glorious goal.

The existence then of *spiritual opposites* is confirmed by the common experience of mankind, which testifies universally that the ETERNAL TRUTH, when presented to the human mind; always excites more or less of combat, before it's divine authority is fully acknowledged, it's divine influence fully complied with, and it's divine empire and sovereignty fully established.

To the inattentive observer it may possibly appear, that the above *opposites*, so far from being of any use, or promoting in any way the benefit of mankind, are peculiarly injurious, by closing the windows of the human intellect against the admission of that light of truth, which, being infinitely brighter than that of the meridian sun of this world, is at the same time fraught with infinitely greater blessings and comforts. It may appear therefore further, that had no such opposites existed, the Providence of the Almighty would have been more conspicuous, His adorable will would have been more universally accomplished, and the salvation of His children would have been rendered more secure.

But the question still is, not concerning what may *appear* on this occasion advantageous, or injurious, but concerning what *really is* so, since perhaps there never was a case, to which the words of the GREAT SAVIOUR were more applicable, or the application more urgent, where He says;

*Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous [just] judgment, [John vii. 24.]*

Let us consider then what is the language and decision of *righteous* or *just judgment* in regard to the *spiritual opposites* above adverted to, that so, if possible, we may vindicate the ways of GOD, and justify His providential permissions, by making the grand and interesting discovery, that the eternal happiness of mankind is more effectually promoted and secured by such *opposites*, than it could possibly be by their absence; in other words, that it is more conducive to the everlasting benefit of man that the admission of revealed truth into his understanding and will should be combated, and by combat be rendered difficult, than if it could find an easy and uninterrupted entrance, like the light of the sun into his bodily eyes.

With all humility then before the ADORABLE FOUNTAIN OF ALL TRUTH, and with all deference to the general sentiments of mankind, the following queries on the interesting subject are submitted to the reader's most serious consideration.

1. Doth not common experience warrant the conclusion, that every good derives a value, and thus receives increase, from the labour, danger, and difficulty, attending it's acquirement? And will not this conclusion apply to the acquirement of truth?

2. For supposing two persons to receive the truth, one *without* combat, and the other *with* combat, will not truth be seen by the latter as a greater blessing than by the former? And will he not accordingly confirm it more in his own mind, and like the woman in the parable with her *ten pieces of silver*, rejoice at finding the *piece which had been lost*, more than in the possession of what had not been lost?

3. Again, was man to receive the eternal truth into his understanding without labour, and to incorporate it into his will, or love, without conflict, might he not be led to



flatter himself, that all this was effected by some inherent power of his own, independent of the DIVINE POWER, and that thus both the first insemination of truth, and it's future fruitfulness, were the results of his own skill and proficiency, more than of the DIVINE PROVIDENCE AND MERCY?

4. In such case, would not a dangerous self-love be cherished, and exalted above the divine love? And would not man be led from that defiled love to regard the light of truth, which is the light of heaven, not as a perpetual gift from the FATHER OF LIGHT, but as an acquisition of his own; not so much as a plant of paradise, but as the product and growth of his own sagacity, penetration and intelligence?

5. All the promises of heavenly reward, we are instructed, are made to *him who overcometh*, [see Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26; chap. iii. 5, 12, 21; chap. xxi. 7;] but who can be said to *overcome*, who hath no enemies to combat? Where there is no warfare, there can be no victory; consequently, if truth could be admitted into man's mind and life without struggle, it would bring with it no reward, because it would conduct to no triumph.

6. When JESUS CHRIST said, *Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake*, [Matt. v. 10.] and again, *Ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy!* [John xvi. 20.] is it not reasonable to suppose, that He had respect to the insemination and growth of that ETERNAL TRUTH, which He came to teach for the saluation of mankind, and that therefore He meant to instruct all His followers, that the *blessedness* of this truth is increased by the *persecution* or *opposition* which attends it's reception, and that thus true *joy* results from the *sorrow*, true *peace* from the *conflict*, which His followers must be prepared to expect, during the momentous period of the truth's operation, until it's kingdom of purity is established in the human bosom, and the crown

of immortal glory set on the head of the victorious combatant. Is not the providence of the ALMIGHTY fully justified in the permission of all those *opposites*, which increase the difficulty of the reception of His blessed counsels, when it is thus considered, that these counsels derive their blessedness from opposition, affecting man with *joy* in proportion to the *error* occasioned by opposing principles? And why not the *important uses* of spiritual opposites be hence clearly seen, and fully appreciated, when it is discovered, that by such opposites revealed truth is not only *strengthened* in the human mind, but rendered also *more blessed*, and not only rendered more blessed, but is rescued also from that terrible rapacity, on the part of man, which would seize upon it as *his own*, instead of referring it by grateful acknowledgment to its proper DIVINE SOURCE? Cannot we here too discover a happy illustration of the divine maxim, *sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof* [Matt. vi. 34.] which, separate from the above view of opposites, is altogether inexplicable? How ought we then again to bow down in humble and grateful acknowledgment and adoration of that DIVINE and GLORIOUS PROVIDENCE, which, in all ages of the world, and under every dispensation of revealed truth, hath permitted its merciful counsels to be opposed and counteracted in the human mind? It may possibly appear to us that it would have redounded more to the honour of God and the happiness of His creatures, if the latter had been originally created in a state *incapable of transgression*, in which state the divine Word and wisdom would have been unremittingly and devoutly attended to, and mankind would have been preserved in the path of truth without any labour of their own, and indeed without the possibility of deviation from its guidance and purity. But how incompetent is the natural reason of man to fathom the depth of divine thought and its operation! or how shall the

*camel pass through the needle's eye* (The Almighty might indeed have created man, as he hath created inferior animals, not only free from sin, but from the power of sinning. But where, in such case, would have been the proper and boasted freedom of the human will, that distinguishing faculty by which man is elevated to pre-eminence above the beasts? For freedom from the power of sinning is not freedom, but necessity, and such a necessity as unmakes or unman's man; as annihilates indeed all trial, temptation, spiritual labour and fear, but annihilates at the same time every virtuous energy, every victorious effort, every blessed hope, every spiritual advancement and improvement. The all-wise God, it is plain, was aware of the consequences of such a necessity, and therefore by the two figurative trees in paradise, the one of life, and the other of the knowledge of good and evil, He was pleased to announce His divine and merciful will, that man should be free, either to choose life or death; either to obey and live, or to transgress and die; since by such freedom he might be elevated into a state of celestial and angelic bliss, whereas without it he would ever have remained in a brutish or animal state, incapable of heavenly love and heavenly joy, like those inferior creatures, which being *compelled* to live their appointed life, and unable to change it either for the better or the worse, are utterly incapable of tasting the joys of triumphant virtue, the blessedness of restrained passions, and the everlasting delights resulting from the resurrection; the growth and fruitfulness of the eternal Tanna.

Let us learn then, from what has been said, the important lesson, that the very oppositions which we find in ourselves to the knowledge, the love, and the practice of truth, so far from discouraging us, and enfeebling our exertions, ought rather to operate as an increased stimulus to our virtuous energies, because they are foreseen and intended of the divine providence of our Heavenly Father

to be the blessed means; not only of forming our crown of immortal glory, but also of adding continually to it's brightness, it's beauty, and it's magnificence.

#### SECTION IV.

*On the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, as spiritual Opposites.*

**I**N discussing this important subject, it may be proper first to define accurately what is to be understood by the *three opposites* here mentioned, because until the meaning of the terms, the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*, be clearly ascertained, all reasoning about them must of necessity be vain, ambiguous, and inconclusive. — To begin then with a definition of the first of these terms, or the *devil*.

Under this term, according to the testimony of the Sacred Scriptures, which is the only sure testimony to be depended on in this instance, are intended to be expressed, not one single or individual agent only, but all the spirits of darkness *collectively*, who therefore designate themselves by the significant name, *Legion*, [Luke viii. 30.] Whether these spirits were originally fallen angels, or, as is far more probable, consist of such intelligent beings as were once men, but men hardened in wickedness, and blinded by error, it is not my present purpose to inquire. It is sufficient to know, that the existence of such spirits is sanctioned by the authority of divine revelation; and that their close connection with the human race, together with the malicious and mischievous arts which they exercise by virtue of such connection, is supported by the same high authority. Thus we read in the parable of the

sower, concerning him who *heareth the Word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not; "Then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart,"* [Matt. xiii. 19;] and again it is written in the parable of *the tares of the field, "The enemy that sowed them is the devil,"* [verse 29 of the same chapter;] from which words, (which, it is to be observed, are the words of JESUS CHRIST Himself,) we are taught this interesting truth, that the spirits of darkness, in consequence of their connection with man, have the power so to influence his judgment, as to incline him to reject all heavenly truth, signified by *catching away that which was sown in his heart*; and that they have also the power to insemiate false persuasions in the place of truth, as announced in the divine declaration, *He that sowed them [the tares] is the devil.* Accordingly we read in another place, that it was at the instigation of the same wicked spirits, that the faith of the Apostle Peter was weak and wavering, [Matt. xvi. 23; Luke. xxii. 31, 32;] and that the heart of another Apostle, viz. Judas, was tempted to betray his Lord, [John. xiii. 2;] and that the unbelieving Jews were not only a faithless, but a wicked generation, for thus it is positively asserted by JESUS CHRIST Himself, *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him: When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh from his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it,* [John. viii. 44.] To the same purpose we are admonished, in the apostolic writings, to be *sober and vigilant*, which admonition is enforced by this weighty argument, *because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour,* [1 Peter. v. 8;] and again we are instructed to *resist the devil*, which instruction is supported by the encouraging consideration, *He will flee from you,* [James. iv. 7;] It would be endless to adduce passages from the

Book of Revelation, all confirming this same doctrine, not only that infernal spirits, called the devil and satan, have existence, but also that they are in the closest consociation with the human race, insomuch that they influence both the affections and thoughts of men, and this in such a manner, as to gain an entire and destructive possession of the human mind in all instances, where no resistance is made to their wicked and delusive suggestions.

Having thus considered what we are to understand by the *first* of the above opposites, called the *devil*, let us now proceed to a consideration of the *second*, which is announced to us under the appellation of the *world*.

It must be obvious to every reflecting mind, that in this appellation is involved, not so much the idea of *place*, as of *state*, and of state also as applied to the *inhabitants* of the world, rather than to the *world itself*. Thus when JESUS CHRIST saith of His disciples, *They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world*, [John xvii. 14.] it is evident that by the term *world* He meant to designate the *manners, customs, laws, tempers, inclinations, &c. &c.* of those who live in the world, and not so much the world, as the *place* or *habitation* in which they live. Again, when He saith of Himself, *I have overcome the world*, [John xvi. 33.] and of His disciples, *I have chosen you out of the world*, [John xv. 19.] it is again manifest, that we must seek the proper interpretation of these words in the principles and persuasions which govern and direct the minds of men, and not in the globe of earth which they inhabit.

The *world* then, it is plain, is an *opposite*, not so much from its *soil*, its *atmosphere*, and the *material elements* of which it is composed, nor yet so much from the *innocent delights* which it presents to the bodily senses, or from the *various employments* with which it sets at work both the heads and the hands of its children, as from the *spirit* and *temper* with which those delights are tasted, and

those employments prosecuted; from the wild schemes of *ambition*, the inordinate accumulation of *wealth*, the visions of a false and perishable *glory*, which they cherish, and by which they delude; from the *temptations* thus, by which they continually assail, and so frequently overcome the thoughtless and unwary, whilst they represent themselves as an imperishable source of the purest gratifications, and give the lie direct to the whole Scripture testimony respecting the superior joys of religion and the world to come. It is therefore in this sense of the term under consideration, that the apostolic precepts are grounded, *Be not conformed to this world*, [Rom. xii. 2;] and again, *The friendship of the world is enmity with God: Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is an enemy of God*, [James iv. 4;] and again, *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the FATHER, but is of the world*, [1 John ii. 15, 16.]

Let us now, in the *third* place, proceed to consider what we are to understand by *the flesh*, and in what sense, and for what reason, the flesh is denounced as an *opposite*.

This term, it is plain, when applied in the Sacred Scriptures, involves in it a variety of meaning. Thus, when JESUS CHRIST saith, *It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing*, [John vi. 63.] it is evident that *flesh* is here contrasted with *spirit*, and is thus intended to express what may be called the *selfhood of man*, which in itself is *dead*, as opposed to the divine operation of the MOST HIGH, which in itself is *living*, or *life*. Again, when the same DIVINE SPEAKER, in His last prayer to His FATHER, addresses Him in these words, *As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh*, [John xvii. 2.] what eye cannot see clearly, that by *flesh* is here intended to be expressed the *whole human race*, who are probably here denominated *flesh* by the GREAT SAVIOUR, as being in themselves *dead*,

and having no life but what they receive by virtue of His living influence? Again, when the Apostle writes, *The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh*, and then adds, *The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like*, [Gal. v. 17, 19, 20, 21.] it is manifest that the term *flesh* is here applied to designate that corrupt principle of the human heart, which by nature is opposed to the grace and truth of God, and whose *fruits* therefore are nothing else but the external manifestations of the base principle from which they proceed.

By *the flesh* then, considered as an *opposite*, it is plain, we are to understand, not merely *bodily appetites*, or those *natural inclinations*, which are serviceable either for the support of animal life, as *eating and drinking*, or for the propagation of that life, as *the love of the sex*, or for its recreation, as *innocent pleasures, diversions, and amusements*, (for such appetites, so far from being in themselves criminal, or opposed to the will of heaven, are the appointments of that will, and when indulged with a view to their proper end, are rather in agreement with, than opposed to the designs of the ALMIGHTY;)—but by *the flesh* we are to understand that corrupt principle of *selfishness* or *selfhood*, in man, which inclines him at any time, or on any occasion, to oppose the will, and to dispute the counsels of the MOST HIGH, either by direct and overt acts of rebellion against divine authority, or by the no less dangerous, but tacit and secret opposition, resulting from a hardened, unbroken, and unsubmitive *self-will*, which exalts itself, in all things, above God, His Word, His providence, and His kingdom.

Such then are the ideas suggested in the book of Revelation respecting the three grand *opposites*, called the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*.



But to see these opposites in their true and proper character, we must view them, not only *separately*, but *collectively*; in other words, not only as *single* and *distinct* opposites, but as opposites *combined*, and combined by such a law, that the opposition of one can produce no effect without the opposition of the other two, and of course the united opposition of all three is necessary to give efficacy to the opposition of any. This law of combination is not peculiar to the three opposites of which we are speaking, but extends to other cases, as for instance, to the soul, the body, and the operation of man, all which three principles, though perfectly distinct from each other, are yet so united, that acting separately, or individually, they can produce no effect: It extends also to the three philosophical principles, called *end*, *cause*, and *effect*, no one of which is any thing, or can accomplish any purpose, in it's insulated state, or disjoined from the other two, but becomes something, and accomplishes it's purpose, by it's union with the two others. Such then is the combination of the three opposites, the *devil*, the *world*; and the *flesh* in man, agreeable to which combination, the *devil* may be regarded as the *soul* of opposition, the *world* as the *body*, and the *flesh* as the *operation*; or again, the *devil* may be regarded as the *end*, the *world* as the *cause*, and the *flesh* as the *effect*, in all cases where combat is waged by man against the law, the order, the providence, and the kingdom of the ALMIGHTY. For who cannot see that the devil, *of himself*, or *singly*, cannot tempt man to any evil, inasmuch as all the power of his temptation results from the riches, the honours and pleasures of the world as *instruments*,\* and from the *dispo-*

\* This fact is confirmed by the history of our LORD's temptation in the wilderness, in which we read, *Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, and saith unto Him, All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me.* [Matt. iv. 8, 9.]

sition of *the flesh* to yield to his suggestions? Who again cannot see, that the riches, the honours, and pleasures of the world can be no instruments productive of temptation, unless pressed on the human mind by some *spiritual agent*, since riches, honours, and pleasures of the world are in themselves *dead* and *inactive*, and of course incapable of operating on the immortal spirit of man, unless quickened and instigated by a living and intelligent being? And lastly, who cannot discern that the *flesh*, agreeable to the definition given of it above, can be no source of opposition in man to the will and counsels of the ETERNAL, if separated from it's *grand stimulants* the devil and the world, from which alone it derives all it's life and activity of mischief? We are compelled then to conclude, that the above three opposites, called the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*, are joined together in some secret mysterious connection or confederacy with each other, and by this infernal league and alliance carry on a perpetual and destructive war against the everlasting interests of man, to which they are opposed by the most malicious and inveterate hostility.

It appears then, from the above account, that every individual human being, during the whole period of his existence here below, is beset by a host of combined adversaries, who are ever attempting to divert his affections and thoughts from all concern about his eternal interests, and thus, by separating him from God and heaven, and all belief in the great realities of another world, to impress on him their own infernal image, to make him their defiled child, to bind on him their heavy yoke, to deprive him of his heavenly birthright, and to degrade him finally even below the beasts that perish. It appears yet further, that these adversaries have their strong holds in the very centre of every man's life; that they are *the foes of his own household*; that they are operative in all his most secret purposes and counsels; and that their chief delight

is to stifle serious meditation, to murder every pious inclination, to annihilate all the blessed principles of love and charity, of innocence and humility, and thus to convert the human bosom, which was intended to be *a house of prayer*, and of continual adoration of the MOST HIGH, *into a den of thieves, into an habitation of devils*, [Matt. xxi. 13; Rev. xviii. 2.] Did these truths want confirmation, it might be sought for and found in the history, not only of the Jewish nation, but of all nations, people, and languages, on the face of the earth, from the indisputable records of which it is, alas! but too evident, that sin and folly have abounded in all ages, and in all countries, and that thus the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*, have acquired a frightful dominion, exalting their throne above the throne of GOD Himself, and like the impious king of old, *setting up their image of gold*, whilst their *herald cries aloud*, "*To you it is commanded, O people, nations, and languages, that at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, lute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, ye fall down and worship the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar the king hath set up*, [Dan. iii. 1, 4, 5.]

What inference now shall we draw, or what inference is it wise and fair to draw, from the above statement of the tremendous snares and dangers to which we are exposed, as human beings, in our pilgrimage here below? Shall we say with some infidels, that the spirits of darkness, called the *devil* and *satan*, have no existence, or, at least, that they have no connection with, and exercise no destructive operation on mankind? We must then deny, not only the general testimony of the sacred writers, but the testimony also of universal experience, which confirms the awful fact, that this formidable adversary of man both exists, and hath consociation with man, and not only consociation with man, but malice against him, and a malice fruitful in all kinds of delusive artificers and cunning stratagems to deceive and destroy him. Or shall we say with others, that

the world and the flesh are no enemies, but rather friends of man, since they supply him with pleasures, without which he cannot live, and since his natural appetites prove that he was created and born for the unrestrained enjoyment of those pleasures? We must then again contradict the plainest and most repeated declarations, not only of revealed truth, but also of daily experience, which bear continual and pointed witness to the mischiefs resulting from the free and unbridled indulgence of worldly and carnal passions. Or, lastly, shall we assert with others, that man has no control over himself, and of course is compelled to follow his natural inclinations, and that therefore, if he suffers any injury from either the devil, the world, or the flesh, the fault lies, not with himself, but with the condition of his nature, which was made subject to the operation of those agents? We must then maintain the monstrous position, that every divine law is vain and nugatory, and consequently that the ALMIGHTY, in promulgating His laws, has totally misapplied them, by binding them on the observance of a creature, who had neither inclination nor ability to obey them.

How then shall we reconcile the existence of the above opposites, the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*, with divine mercy and providence? How shall we justify the ALMIGHTY in his permission of such evils to disturb, to defile, and to destroy His creature man, when a single act of His omnipotence might have prevented the mischief? How too shall we convince mankind, that this very permission originates in the purest love and wisdom, and that therefore instead of regretting it, and complaining of its painful consequences, they ought rather to bow down continually before their HEAVENLY FATHER in grateful acknowledgment of the innumerable benefits resulting from it? No reasonable answer can be given to these questions but what is grounded in the doctrine of *opposites* as above stated, from which doctrine it is made evident that a state

of trial and difficulty is more advantageous to man, than a contrary state; in other words, that if it be not man's own fault, every spiritual adversary becomes his benefactor, by bringing into fuller exercise the principles of his spiritual life, by forwarding thus his purification and regeneration, and finally, by adding brighter jewels to his immortal crown than could have adorned it, had no enemy excited combat, and had no combat conducted to the splendid reward of victory.

Let us apply now this doctrine of opposites to the three opposites above named, viz. the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*; and first of all to the *devil*.

It is granted that the devil is a power opposed to the salvation of man, and in many instances a successful power. But in some instances, it must be allowed, his power is not successful; and on these occasions it may be asked, what becomes of his power, or what is it's effect? In answer to this question, let us turn our eyes towards the sincere Christian, and mark the result of all the trials and temptations which are forced on him by his great adversary. Behold him then under every assault, from a deep sense of his own inability to protect himself, applying in devout supplication to his DIVINE PROTECTOR, and committing himself for shelter *under the shadow of His wings!* Behold him also *drawing nearer to his GOD*, and entering into a closer conjunction with Him of confidence and of love, in proportion as *the roaring of the lion* is more frequent and more terrific! It may be that at times he appears to himself to be overcome, or at least not to have guarded himself sufficiently at all points against the force and cunning of his antagonist. But mark now the effect of this seeming discomfiture, and how, instead of discouraging, it only humbles him; instead of weakening, it increases his strength, by making him more sensible of his own infirmities, more awake to his danger, more distrustful of his own resolutions, and more importunate for divine

aid and security! Who then cannot discern, in this case, that every effort of the enemy is turned against himself, since instead of gaining it's wicked purpose, it only forces the object of it's assault into the arms of an OMNIPOTENT SAVIOUR; and thus, at once, manifests and magnifies the power of that SAVIOUR, at the same time that it adds to the peace and security of it's intended victim? Who, therefore, cannot discern that the *salt* of heavenly affection is thus preserved from *losing it's savour*, whilst it is seasoned by the holy fear of falling into the hands of a deadly and defiling foe? And who, lastly, cannot hence perceive that the ALMIGHTY, in His adorable mercy and providence, permits infernal agency; not because He could not by His omnipotence annihilate it, but because He is ever near to overrule and control it in such a manner, that it shall be compelled to administer to His own glory, by promoting the more complete purification of His children, and thus rendering them more sensible of His parental love, His infinite power, wisdom, and greatness?

Yet what is thus true concerning the *devil* and his agency, is equally true concerning the *world* and the *flesh*, and their agency, as may again be discovered in the example of every sincere Christian. For behold, now, this spiritual champion *going forth conquering and to conquer*, amidst the riches, honours, and pleasures of a disordered *world*, whilst at the same time he is beset with all the infirmities of a *fleshly* and distempered nature! It may reasonably be supposed that he is not insensible to his danger, because the ETERNAL TRUTH, to which he has submitted the guidance of his understanding, perpetually warns him of it. What effect then has this sense of danger on his enlightened mind? What! but to make him eager to escape it, and for this purpose to direct his whole heart, with it's best affections, to that ALMIGHTY CONQUEROR, who, in the days of his flesh was exposed to the same danger, and from His divine omnipotence was enabled to say, *I have*

*overcome the world!* It is plain then, on this occasion, that the riches, honours, and pleasures of the world, together with all the deceitful lusts of the flesh, are deprived of all their power of mischief, and converted into instruments of blessing. For as all fear impels an infant to seek shelter in it's mother's arms, and to cling closer to it's mother's breast, so the dread of those most terrible of all monsters, *ambition, avarice, worldly-mindedness, the love of sensual pleasure, &c. &c.* drives the true Christian into the arms and bosom of His God, by an impulse of devout affection, which probably love alone, without fear, could never have excited. Thus every alarm about *the wickedness of his heels* proves the security of his *head*, and even the occasional *stumbling of his feet* is converted into the means of amending his *heart*, whilst it renders him more abased in himself, more sensible of infirmity, and thus better disposed to see and acknowledge, that all the riches, honours and pleasures of the world, and all the gratifications of the flesh, are but as *dung and dross*, when set in competition with the riches, honours, pleasures and gratifications resulting from communion with God, from the consolations of His Word, and from the prospect of His eternal kingdom.

It is not however to be supposed that this spiritual combatant, in his warfare against the world and the flesh, is *afraid* either of worldly riches, worldly honours, worldly pleasures, or even of the lower gratifications of the senses; for so far from it, he can *fearlessly* enjoy both riches, honours, pleasures, and sensual gratifications, when they are presented to him in the order of providence, and are made to administer to the will of heaven. All therefore that he *really fears* is the *abuse* of such things, when they are suffered to be *masters*, instead of being compelled to be *servants*; thus when they are allowed to exalt themselves above the love and wisdom of God in the spiritual mind, instead of so submitting themselves, that the love and the

wisdom of God may have entire ascendancy, and bear uncontrolled and unmixed sway over all the affections, thoughts, joys, and delights of the natural man or mind. It is further to be considered, that when worldly riches, honours, and pleasures, together with the gratifications of sense, thus submit themselves to divine control, they then become that *mammon of unrighteousness*, concerning which JESUS CHRIST saith to His disciples, *Make to yourselves friends [of it], that when ye fail they may receive you into everlasting habitations*, [Luke xvi. 9.] the true ground and comprehensive meaning of which divine words is manifestly this, that when worldly riches, honours, and pleasures, together with the gratifications of sense, are enjoyed in the order of God, and under the grateful acknowledgment of His bounty, and as the instrumental means of promoting the good of society, they then become *friendly* to man's best interests; so that instead of separating him from God and heaven, as is their natural tendency when abused, they now draw closer the cords of union, and bringing the principles of heavenly love and wisdom into fuller exercise, open and keep open the door of the *everlasting habitations* of the blessed in the kingdom of God.

Such then is the situation of man, as exposed to the three grand enemies of his salvation, the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*.

But shall we say with the infidel, that this situation is a disadvantageous one, which might be improved for the better, and that therefore the providence of the ALMIGHTY is unjustifiable in it's permission of so much imperfection? Let us rather ask, How can victory be obtained without combat? What proof can be given of obedience, without trial? And what happiness can have it's full and proper relish, which is not attained through dangers and difficulties? It is true, God might have created man, as He hath created other animals, in a capacity of enjoying *animal pleasure*, free from the interruption of spiritual trial; but



then it ought to be recollected that *animal pleasure* is not *happiness*, as will be shown more particularly in a following section. He might also have created man in such a state, as to have been incapable of sinning, but where then would have been his boasted *freedom of will*? and how, without such freedom, could he have been a man, born to the noble privilege of choosing *freely* an eternal good in preference to a temporal one, and thus of attaching himself mutually and reciprocally to his *heavenly Father*? On this subject, however, of *freedom* we shall speak more at large in a future section of this work, and therefore shall conclude the present section with observing, that since it appears that the above opposites, the *devil*, the *world*, and the *flesh*, are all of them under divine control, and are thus rendered instrumental in the hands of the Most High, to try or prove his faithful children; and by trying, to purify; and by purifying, to render them free and willing recipients of the divine love and wisdom, and thus to qualify them for an eternal conjunction of life, of love, and of bliss, with their HEAVENLY FATHER; therefore the divine providence is fully justified in the permission of those opposites, and all the objections of the infidel, grounded in such permission, are fallacious and vain.

F

## SECTION V.

*In what cases Opposites are injurious to man, and in what cases they are beneficial.*

**T**HAT opposites are not *necessarily*, and in *all* cases, injurious to man, may be evident from the consideration of the *natural opposites* above mentioned, such as *darkness, discord, bitter, a stench, cold, and pain*. For who cannot see that these opposites cause no mischief to the natural life of man, only so far as they are not attended to, and are thus not guarded against, but suffered to gain an undue ascendancy, in consequence of the want of proper thought, prudence, and precaution, respecting them on the part of man? And who cannot see further, that when they are properly attended to, guarded against, and not suffered to gain an undue ascendancy, they then rather administer to man's advantage; in the *first* place by exciting thought, prudence, and precaution; and in the *second* place, by giving fuller effect to the principles to which they are opposed, at the same time that they add an indefinite increase to the variety of natural sensations, and thus to the sum of natural gratification? The darkness, for instance, by which the careless traveller is led astray in his journey; which throws indistinctness, obscurity, and confusion, on all the beauties of nature; which excites apprehension and terror in the bosoms of the thoughtless; and which fills even the most reflecting mind with awe and seriousness; how are it's effects counteracted, when man regards it, as he was intended to regard it, with a thoughtful eye, and thus not only secures himself against it's mischiefs, but learns from it all that sublime wisdom and instruction which it was designed to convey! For what shall we say is the proper speech and language of

this natural opposite? Doth it not with it's black, but loud tongue, call man to reflect on it's causes and it's consequences? Doth it not announce, therefore, the necessity of caution, of circumspection, and of foresight? Doth it not also, by inculcating such necessity, guard the watchful and considerate effectually against it's dangers? What a lesson too doth it teach respecting the glory and consolation of light, at the same time that by the variety of it's shades, it gives variety to that glory and consolation? But above all, how is the serious mind instructed by this natural opposite, in it's *representative character*, concerning the *spiritual darkness* of ignorance and of error, and concerning too the terrible perils to which the inconsiderate are exposed from this darkness, whilst, with those of an opposite character, it's shades add inconceivable splendour and comfort to the light of the ETERNAL TRUTH? Yet what is thus true respecting the natural opposite of *darkness*, is equally true respecting every other natural opposite, each of which has it's peculiar speech and language, full fraught with lessons of science, of intelligence and wisdom to the attentive hearer.

It appears then that *natural opposites* are not necessarily injurious to man, since they only become injurious from man's inattention to the language which they speak, and to the prudence which they are calculated to excite. It appears yet further, that whensoever man is wise to hearken to and interpret their language, and to profit by their prudential lessons, they not only cease to be injurious, but also instantly acquire a contrary tendency, being rendered instrumental, under the divine providence of the MOST HIGH, in the *first* place to beget reflection; in the *second*, to give variety to sensations; in the *third*, to manifest the blessedness of the principles to which they are opposed; and in the *fourth* place, [what is perhaps their highest benefit, and that for which they were principally designed,] to exhibit, in their *representative* cha-

racter, the nature and effect of *spiritual opposites*, and thus to instruct man concerning the mischiefs to which he is exposed, and the advantages which he may hope to derive, from their operation.

From this view then of *natural opposites*, it may further be discovered in what cases *spiritual opposites* also are injurious, and in what cases they are beneficial, since the above reasoning will equally apply to both. As therefore *natural darkness* is never mischievous, only so far as man makes it so by his want of thought and consideration, in like manner *spiritual darkness*, which is the absence of the light of the ETERNAL TRUTH, derives all it's pernicious effects solely from man's inattention, carelessness, and consequent perverseness. And as *natural darkness*, according to what was shown above, has a tendency to make more manifest to the reflecting mind the glory and the comforts of natural light, at the same time that it adds indefinite variety to that glory and to those comforts, for the same reason *spiritual darkness*, when it's causes and it's consequences are well weighed, tends finally to render the light of truth more brilliant, to give variety to it's tints, and thus to increase the power of it's consolation in the human will and understanding.

That *spiritual darkness* is thus injurious, or beneficial, according to the manner in which the human mind is affected by it, will be manifest from considering the cases of two persons, in one of whom it begets only inconsideration and perverseness, whilst in the other it excites thought, reflection, and all that happy disposition of the heart, which never fails to result from the due exercise of reason and of intellect. Behold then the *former* contented with his ignorance; insensible alike to the darkness of error and to the light of truth, yea, perhaps even mistaking the one for the other; proud and conceited of the natural powers of his understanding, but never reflecting on their want of a director; calling animal pleasure and

false joy by the venerable name of happiness, without ever considering that the light of heavenly truth alone, by distinguishing between the one and the other, conducts to the regions of bliss! Behold him therefore misled by error, not because he was born, like the *mole* and the *bat*, to delight in darkness, but because he never suffered his natural ignorance to lead him, as it was designed to do, to see himself as a *mole* and a *bat*, and thus to discover his want of the light of truth to make him a *man*, and to change the eye of the *bat* for that of the *eagle*. Like the *mole* therefore he *works under ground*, and like the *bat* he flies in *the shades of night*, when yet a moment's serious reflection might have taught him, that he was born to live and to fly in higher and more lightsome regions, and that his natural ignorance was designed only to serve *first*, as a stimulant to the discovery of those regions; and, *secondly*, as a contrasted shade to make more manifest their incomparable brightness, glory, and bliss.

But let us turn our eyes, now, from this disgusting portrait of human folly, to contemplate its opposite, as displayed in the character of him, who, from a sense of the *spiritual darkness* in which he is naturally born; is led to think and reflect on his privations, and thus to supplicate heaven for their removal. Behold, therefore, this awakened penitent humbled, in the first place, under a due sense of his wretched condition, and lifting up his eyes and his heart to his MERCIFUL CREATOR for the blessing of that spiritual light, by which alone it can be improved! Behold, in the second place, this MERCIFUL CREATOR listening to the desires of his penitent child, and sending out the light of His HOLY WORD for his guidance and comfort! With what sacred joy and transport is this light received, which is to turn the *night* into *day*; the *wilderness of error* into a *garden of intelligence*; the *mole* and the *bat* into a *man* and an *eagle*! How plainly too is it perceived that the rising of the sun of wisdom is rendered infinitely more

glorious by the mists and clouds out of which he rises, and that his meridian splendour acquires a brightness from the contrast of that midnight darkness by which it was preceded ! Ignorance is thus seen, like the opaque substance behind a mirror, to reflect the beautiful image of truth ; whilst all error, and the evil in which it originates, are acknowledged to add to that beauty, by the dark and opposite shades which they exhibit. Thus the mercy and providence of the ALL-WISE CREATOR are confessed both in the evening and in the morning, whilst the gloom of the former is viewed as administering to the brilliancy, the consolation, and the fruitfulness of the latter.

And if all this be true of *spiritual darkness*, it is equally true of every other *spiritual opposite*, which increases in man the difficulty of attaining that state of purity and bliss, to which he is called in the love and the wisdom of God. For the difficulty, in such case, tends rather to his advantage, since the divine omnipotence is rendered more manifest by overcoming it ; and in proportion as the divine omnipotence is more manifest, the selfhood of man and all dependance on self is removed, and thus, whilst man is humbled, the ALMIGHTY is exalted ; and with the exaltation of the ALMIGHTY every heavenly grace and virtue, every angelic joy and delight is imparted to the purified spirit. Even ; therefore, the natural hardness of the human heart ; its natural propensity to every variety of evil ; the natural resistance which it makes to the light of truth ; its numerous and repeated offences against the divine counsels ; together with the combats which it so long wages against that mercy and wisdom by which it is to be saved ; all these things are capable of being turned to a good account, provided they excite that self-exploration and self-abhorrence, which they are calculated to excite, and thus lead to a clearer view, and to a more implicit trust in that INCARNATE GOD who hath declared, “ *Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and on all the power*

*of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*" [Luke x. 19.] For, how is it possible for man to be made sensible of this blessed power, until he feels the want of it? And how shall he be brought to feel the want of it, until by repeated experience of his own natural defilements, disobediences, and infirmities, he is convinced that the *serpent* and the *scorpion* cannot be *trod upon* by any strength merely his own, but only by the divine might of the GREAT REDEEMER. It is accordingly written, "*The Lord is known* [consequently His divine mercy, and might] *by the judgment, which He executeth.*" [Psalm ix. 16.] in other words, by his omnipotence, in the removal of the powers of darkness from man, and the consequent establishment of the peace and order of his own heavenly kingdom.

Did this subject want any further confirmation, it might be sought for and found in the case of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, whose piety, we find, was elevated, because his humility was promoted, by *a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of satan, sent to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the Revelations.* [2 Cor. xii. 7.] What this *thorn in the flesh* was, we are not expressly told; but, (what is of far greater importance) we are informed of its happy effect in exciting a spirit of devout supplication, for thus we read in the subsequent verse, *For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.* We are made acquainted also yet further with the result of this supplication in another verse, where it is written, *And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.* [verse 9.] It is evident then from this account, that *the thorn in the flesh*, by which the Apostle was *buffeted*, was attended with singular benefits, *first* by stimulating to prayer, and *secondly* by procuring the blessing which sincere prayer never fails to draw down from the FATHER OF MERCIES, viz. *divine grace*, and by thus leading him to depend no longer on his

OWN *weakness*, but on that *strength* of the OMNIPOTENT which was to be *made perfect* in it. Yet what is thus true of a *thorn in the flesh* must be confessed to be true of every other *opposite*, which would separate between man and his God, and therefore we are compelled to subscribe to this conclusion, that whensoever such opposite tends to excite in man the spirit of devout supplication to the INCARNATE GOD, it is not only instantly deprived of it's mischievous character as a *messenger of satan*, but it assumes a contrary aspect, and is endued with a contrary virtue, being rendered instrumental in magnifying and bringing near the divine strength of the MOST HIGH, and at the same time in preparing man to receive it, by abasing his natural pride, vanity and self-exaltation.

Do we complain then of the manifold evils into which we are born, and of the rebellions against the divine mercy and truth which they continually excite? Doth this perpetual war of the *flesh* against the *spirit* perplex and dismay us? and do we think it would have been happier for us if we had never been thus exposed to the dangerous contention of our passions? Have we occasionally too felt the *bite of the serpent*, and hath the *sting of the scorpion* at times infected our blood with its deadly poison? Doth the ALMIGHTY therefore appear to forsake us, and *His mercy to come utterly to an end for evermore*, so that instead of being our friend and deliverer, He is changed into our most formidable foe, and most avenging destroyer?—Let us pause awhile under this sense of our distresses, and take heed lest we increase their number by impetuous and mistaken judgment. For this purpose let us *stand still*, and weigh well all our complaints *in the balance of the sanctuary*, that so we may form our opinion of ourselves and of our situation, not from the deceitful semblances suggested by our spiritual foes, but from the unerring decision of the ETERNAL TRUTH, in conjunction with the infinite mercy with which it is ever united. Let



we ask ourselves at the same time the following questions, and let us compel our hearts to give them a sincere answer. Doth sin give us delight, and do we deliberately indulge in the gratification of our passions? Or, on the contrary, is sin our greatest torment, and do we endeavour to check the violence of our passions by all those means which the ALMIGHTY has appointed? When *the serpent* bites therefore, and when *the scorpion* stings, do we look up to Him who hath said, *Behold I give you power to tread on serpents and on scorpions, and on all the power of the enemy?* Is our prayer too attended with repentance, grounded in a deep sorrow for our offences, and doth the feeling of our infirmities and iniquities increase our humiliation and self-abhorrence? Do we learn thus that of ourselves alone we never were, and never can be any thing else than the merest defilement, ignorance, misery, weakness and death, and that consequently all purity, wisdom, bliss, strength and life, are solely from that BLESSED REDEEMER, who hath said, *Without Me ye can do nothing?*—How plain is it to see, that if our hearts answer these questions in the affirmative, the ground of all our complaints is instantly removed; our distresses are no longer real, but imaginary; the *bite of the serpent* is harmless, and the *sting of the scorpion* is deprived of it's poison! For lo! both the *serpent* and the *scorpion*, as they were intended, make manifest the mercy and the omnipotence of their DIVINE BRUISER, whilst we ourselves, humbled by our defilements, and elevated by the supplication which they excite, find ourselves driven nearer to the gates of heaven; and brought into closer and eternal conjunction of life and of love with it's God.

But some, perhaps, will say on this occasion, we do not complain of our weaknesses and defilements, and that we are subject to temptation; for we perceive clearly that in all these things the hand of the ALMIGHTY is able to save us, whensoever we supplicate it's divine aid, and humble

ourselves under a feeling sense that *of ourselves we are not able to help ourselves*. But we are grieved to think that, notwithstanding our prayers and our humiliation, and notwithstanding also the nearness and omnipotence of the divine arm of our God, we are frequently overcome by temptation, made the slaves of our passions, and left a miserable prey to our spiritual enemies, the powers of sin and darkness, who seem to gain a more terrible ascendancy over us, in proportion as our supplications for security have formerly been more frequent, and our humiliation more profound. How then can *spiritual opposites* be of any advantage to us, when they have no other effect than to counteract all our best purposes, to render our very prayers at once unprofitable and profane, and thus to set us apparently at a greater distance from heaven, than if we had never stirred a step towards the blessed kingdom?

To persons of this description it may be replied, that possibly they pass an unjust, because too severe a judgment against themselves, by supposing, for instance, that they are overcome by temptation, and made the slaves of their passions, and subjected to the power of their spiritual enemies, when perhaps the very reverse may be the case, and they are in the direct way to conquest, to triumph, and to a crown of immortal glory. For the question is, and a more important one cannot be asked; What is it to be overcome of temptation, and to be made the slave of passion, and thus subjected to infernal dominion? Can such miserable effects be produced whilst they excite only in the penitent soul the bitterness of grief, with inward and earnest abhorrence of the evils in which they originate, attended with louder and more importunate prayer that they may be averted? Can man be the slave of what he hates, or subjected to the dominion of an evil which he holds in abomination? For is not every man his own ruling love, and is not his proper quality and character such as that love is? It may be that through inadvert-

tence, and the overwhelming force of some hereditary corruption, actual sin has been committed. Be it so—but it ought surely to be remembered, that the enormity of every sin depends, not so much on it's external form at the moment when it was committed, as on the manner in which the offender is afterwards affected by it, when he comes to reflect upon it. If indeed, on reflection, he justifies it, takes delight in the thought of repeating it, never supplicates future protection with increased earnestness in consequence of the discovery he has made of his own weakness, in this unhappy case the sin is assuredly *doubled*, and becomes *exceeding sinful*, infecting the whole man by it's malignity, and thus joining him in a close confederacy with the powers of defilement and darkness, both as to soul and body. But on the contrary, if the review of transgression be attended with that *godly sorrow* which *worketh repentance*; if, on the retrospect, sin excites horror, and with horror increased watchfulness, more profound humiliation, louder and more importunate supplication, deeper self-abhorrence, and a more earnest desire to offend no more, and never again to wander from the *city of refuge*; what eye cannot discern that, in such case, the heinousness of the offence, both in the sight of God and of man, is abated, whilst the penitent offender, regaining more by repentance than he had lost by disobedience, and taking part with the ALMIGHTY in the condemnation of his iniquity, draws a line of clearer distinction in himself between the two kingdoms of good and of evil, and in this *hedge* finds security to his *vineyard*, because he makes the grand discovery, that the divine mercy and protection is always with those who have been led by sincere self-exploration to plant this *hedge*, and that the *hedge* also becomes more perfect, in proportion as sin is more distinctly noted, and more faithfully resisted.

In agreement with the above remarks, it was long ago observed by a pious writer, that *the more sin is our burden,*

*the less it is our fault; and again, that the sin which humbles is better than the virtue which exalts; because the former is the justified publican, whereas the latter is the proud Pharisee.* To the same purpose the GREAT SAVIOUR so emphatically calls the attention of His disciples to the consideration of the nature and effect of sin of this description, when He says to Simon, *Seest thou this woman? [Luke vii. 44.]* for that this woman was a sinner, we learn from verse 39 of the same chapter. But why should Simon be directed to look at a person, who had evidently been betrayed into transgression, and this repeatedly? [see ver. 47.] No reason can be assigned for this strange circumstance but this, that though she had been a transgressor, yet she had not transgressed voluntarily and deliberately; and therefore when she was informed of that SAVIOUR, who came to rescue her from the power of sin, she received Him with joy, or, as it is figuratively expressed at verses 37 and 38, *she brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at His feet behind Him weeping, and began to wash His feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment.* It is manifest therefore that the sin of this woman had wrought in her the heavenly grace of contrition, and that through contrition she was led to love her SAVIOUR with a tenderness which contrition only can excite, and that on this account she was pointed at by that SAVIOUR as an interesting object of universal regard in His church, being intended to transmit to all future ages the important and edifying lesson, that *her sins, which were many, were forgiven, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little,* [verse 47.]

Who then is that wise servant, who is desirous to escape all the mischiefs to which he is exposed from the operation of *spiritual opposites*, and at the same time to secure all the benefits which they have a tendency to promote,

both by their variety and their violence? Let him, in the *first* place, explore in himself attentively by the light of the eternal truth, which the FATHER OF MERCIES dispenses for that purpose to all his penitent children, the number, the quality, the origin, and the tendency of those *opposites*, since to discern and to note well what is evil is the first necessary step to it's removal. When he hath thus made this requisite discrimination between the two kingdoms of light and of darkness in himself, and, as it is expressed in the book of Revelation, hath *called the light day, and the darkness night*, let him, in the *second* place, prepare himself for *assault*; not of the kingdom of light against the kingdom of darkness, (for the former kingdom never fights except in the way of self-defence) but of the kingdom of darkness against the kingdom of light, inasmuch as it is the very nature and essence of *that* kingdom to attempt the destruction of *this*. Let him prepare himself, therefore, in the *third* place, for *repeated* assault, from the sure conviction that evils are *manifold*, and that, consequently, if one be conquered, another may be expected to renew the combat, according as it is written of the GREAT SAVIOUR'S warfare, that when *the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from Him FOR A SEASON*; [Luke iv. 13.] and as it is written also of Israel, *MANY A TIME have they afflicted me from my youth, may Israel now say; MANY A TIME have they afflicted me from my youth*. [Psalm cxxix. 1.] In the *fourth* place, let him endeavour to confirm himself in a full faith and persuasion that merely of himself, separate from divine aid, he is not able to withstand a single opposite, and that therefore all his strength on the occasion consists in his absolute distrust of himself, and his consequent firm reliance on the arm of the OMNIPOTENT. Finally, in this awful warfare, which is to determine whether he is to be a blessed angel, or a miserable infernal, let him *possess his soul in patience*, not in that *natural patience*, which results from mere natural causes, powers, and mo-

tives, but in that *divine patience*, with which the ALMIGHTY, as with a *shield*, covers and protects all his faithful children, and concerning which it is declared by the GREAT SAVIOUR, *He that endureth to the end shall be saved*. Thus will all the powers of evil and darkness, in their multiplied varieties, be compelled to administer to his purification and regeneration: even *natural opposites*, in their several shapes of worldly losses, disappointments, sorrows, and perplexities, will no longer depress, but elevate; no longer prove *obstacles* to salvation, but be converted into the means of securing it; whilst *spiritual opposites*, being placed under the control of the divine providence and omnipotence of the MOST HIGH, and thus combated by a divine faith, and endured with a divine patience, will increase the number of his laurels, and give additional splendour to his crown of victory, by enabling him to sing with a more elevated tone of joy and thanksgiving, *The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my strong tower*. [Psalm xviii. 2.]

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## SECTION VI.

*That the Effect of Opposites will depend on their Submission and Arrangement, since in case they are not submitted and arranged, they bring Destruction, whereas if they be submitted and duly arranged, they then tend to elevate the principles to which they are opposed.*

BY the *submission and arrangement* of opposites is here meant their subjection to the control of some ruling prin-

iple, by means of which they may be kept in their proper places beneath it, whether that principle be science, intelligence, or wisdom, science being necessary for the submission and arrangement of *natural opposites*, whilst intelligence and wisdom are alike necessary for the submission and arrangement of *spiritual opposites*.

That *natural opposites* require the control of *science*, in order to bring them into subjection and arrangement, and that without such control they are destructive of the principles to which they are opposed, whereas by virtue of such control they tend to elevate those principles, must be plain to every attentive observer. In a *concert of music*, for instance, how evident is it that discords, unless skillfully applied, destroy harmony and introduce confusion, when yet if properly introduced, and rightly arranged by the skill of the composer, they have a direct contrary tendency, viz. to elevate and increase the harmony! In *painting* again, who cannot see the necessity of skill or science in the right arrangement of lights and shades, since without such skill the shades must inevitably destroy the effect of lights, whereas if the shades be properly arranged, and by arrangement kept in their proper places, they then tend to elevate the lights, and thus add to the beauty of the picture? The same observation will be found true in regard to *natural bitters*, whether mixed in medicine or in food, the effect of which bitters, either in injuring bodily health, or in improving it, it is well known, will depend altogether on the skill with which they are applied.

And if all this be true respecting *natural opposites*, as requiring the direction and control of *science* to give them their proper arrangement, and thus deprive them of their destructive operation, by so binding them into the service of the principles to which they are opposed, that they may be instrumental in elevating those principles, instead of injuring them, it is much more true concerning *spiritual*

*opposites* and all that *intelligence* and *wisdom* which are necessary for their control and direction. For in this latter case also, as in the former, every thing will depend on submission and arrangement, and as *science* is the only power which can produce such submission and arrangement in *natural opposites*, so *intelligence* and *wisdom* are the only powers which can accomplish the same ends in regard to *spiritual opposites*.

The truth however of this remark cannot be fully proved, unless it be first seen what *spiritual opposites* properly are; what also that *intelligence* and *wisdom* are, which are necessary for their *arrangement*; and lastly what that *arrangement* is, by virtue of which those opposites are deprived of their destructive qualities, and rendered conducive to the elevation of the principles to which they are opposed.

In regard to the *first* of these points, viz. what *spiritual opposites properly are*, it is to be observed, that *spiritual opposites* are all those natural loves into which every man is born, and which being in connection with infernal agency,\* oppose in him the establishment and dominion of heavenly loves, for which loves he was also born, and for the attainment and enjoyment of which he is gifted with a continual capacity by his MERCIFUL CREATOR. These natural loves are in number indefinite, and in quality and degree various, yet altogether forming a one, which

\* That man is a subject both of heavenly and of infernal agency, is plain from the concurrent testimony of the Sacred Scriptures, which represent him as standing between two kingdoms, viz. the kingdom of light, and the kingdom of darkness, and as operated on by the inhabitants of each kingdom. It is however to be noted, that the operation of the kingdom of darkness extends only to man's *natural loves*, or to the *natural man*, and not to his *spiritual loves*, or *spiritual man*, which circumstance is described in the holy records by it's affecting only *the heel*, according as it is written concerning the *serpent* and the *seed of the woman*, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," [Gen. iii. 15.] for *natural love*, compared with *spiritual love*, is as the *heel* in respect to the *head*.



one is no other than what is commonly called the *natural man*, consisting of an assemblage of loves, with their derivative affections and thoughts, inclinations and purposes, activities and operations, appetites and delights, as countless as the stars of heaven, or as the sand on the sea shore. Nevertheless this one, or this *natural man*, like every other man, hath his *head*, his *body*, and his *members*; his *head* being *self-love*, his *body* the *love of the world*, and his *members* every *inferior* or *subordinate love and appetite*, subject to the control, and administering to the gratification of the *head* and the *body*, according to it's respective power, quality and degree. It is further to be noted respecting this one, or this *natural man*, that although it's aspect and form vary with every individual man, being in some cases *more*, and in some *less* violent in it's operation and opposition to heavenly loves, yet in all cases it is opposed, and this to such a degree, that it can never be brought into right subjection and arrangement, until it be placed under the immediate control and direction of *intelligence* and *wisdom*.—What this *intelligence* and *wisdom* are, we shall now proceed to inquire.

Man, it is plain, consists of two distinct parts or principles, one of which is *external*, and the other *internal*; one of which, therefore, may be called his *external man*, and the other his *internal man*. That the nature of man is thus *two-fold*, and that in this respect he differs from the inferior animals, may be evident from this consideration, that he is capable of thinking about *two* worlds, the *visible* and the *invisible*, and of being affected by each; whereas the inferior animals are utterly incapable of thinking about, and being affected by any other world than that *visible one* into which they are born. The part or principle of man therefore, which employs it's thoughts and affections about the visible world and it's concerns, is called the *external man*, whilst the part or principle, which hath the capacity of elevating it's thoughts and affections to the

invisible world and its concerns, is called the *internal man*. But each of these men hath a distinct *light* proper to itself, by which it is enabled to discern the objects of its own world, and to regulate its life accordingly. The light of the external man is called *science*, and is all that light which is derived from observation of natural objects, and from reasoning concerning them ; but the light of the internal man is called *intelligence* and *wisdom*, and is all that light which is derived from divine revelation, thus from the ETERNAL TRUTH, OR THE WORD OF GOD, which light is denominated *intelligence*, so long as it remains in the *understanding* only, but assumes the more venerable name of *wisdom*, whensoever it is exalted into the *will*, and thus incorporated into man's life and love. Under the title of *intelligence* then is designated all the light of revealed truth made manifest in man's *understanding*, whilst the title of *wisdom* is expressive of the same truth as operative in the superior principle of his *will*.

But it was said above, that *intelligence* and *wisdom* are *necessary* for the subjection and arrangement of *spiritual opposites*. Let us consider then further the ground of this *necessity*.

*Intelligence*, which is the light of the ETERNAL TRUTH in man's understanding, inculcates perpetually this heavenly lesson, that man ought to love God above all things, and his neighbour as himself, because his eternal happiness depends on such love. *Wisdom* again is for ever employed in practising this lesson, because wisdom finds its chief delight in the exercise of such love. In proportion then as man becomes *intelligent* and *wise*, in the same proportion he exalts the love of God and of his neighbour above every other love ; but in proportion as he rejects *intelligence* and *wisdom*, in the same proportion the love of self and of the world exalt themselves above the love of God and neighbourly love. Hence then may be discovered the necessity of *intelligence* and *wisdom* for the subjection and arrange-

ment of *spiritual opposites*, and especially of those primary opposites called self-love and the love of the world. For where there is no intelligence and wisdom, there can be no love of God and neighbourly love; and where there is no love of God and neighbourly love, self-love and the love of the world must of necessity be the ruling loves in man, and consequently cannot be brought into subjection and arrangement, since subjection implies that they submit themselves to the government of some principle which is above themselves, and arrangement is the result of such submission. They may indeed be kept in *apparent* or *external* subjection by the fear of punishment, or by the dread of temporal losses, such as the loss of gain and reputation, but this subjection is not the subjection of which we are speaking, since it is a subjection induced by mere *external* causes, not by *internal* principles, and thus it leaves self-love and the love of the world in absolute possession of the internal kingdom of man's mind, just as if no such subjection had place. That intelligence and wisdom are thus necessary for the control of *spiritual opposites*, and that all proper intelligence and wisdom are derived solely from the revealed Word of the Most High, is evident from the testimony of that Word, which perpetually teaches, *Through Thy commandments I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way*, [Psalm cxix. 104;] and again, *The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple*, [ver. 130;] and again, *Order my steps in Thy Word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me*, [ver. 133.]

It remains now to be considered *what that arrangement is, by virtue of which the above opposites are deprived of their destructive qualities, and rendered conducive to the elevation of the principles to which they are opposed.*

It has already been shown that the arrangement of spiritual opposites in man is effected solely by the admission

of the light of intelligence and wisdom, in proportion as this light prepares for the reception of the love of God and of neighbourly love, which is charity. But the love of God and neighbourly love are never fully received by man, until they are seen as the great ends of his life for which alone he was born, thus as the grand and only promoters of his proper and true bliss, because derived from God, conducting to God, and thus opening in the human bosom all the sanctities, joys, delights, and peace of the eternal kingdom of God. Whensoever then the love of God and neighbourly love are thus seen and estimated and exalted, from that moment commences the subjection and consequent arrangement of all those natural, temporal, and inferior loves which had before exercised an uncontrolled sovereignty and dominion in the mind of man, agreeable to that maxim of the ETERNAL TRUTH, that *no man can serve two masters*. It is not however to be understood; that by such subjection and arrangement those inferior loves are annihilated, so as to exert no operation, and produce no longer any effect on the life of man, but only that they are brought into proper submission and order, by being compelled to regard an eternal end, and to administer to that end. The natural affections, passions, and appetites, therefore, are not destroyed, but only change their *master*, so that whereas they heretofore were the servants of selfish and worldly love, they now renounce that infernal government, and enrol themselves in the blessed and free service of divine and heavenly love. The order also of these opposites is now inverted, for previous to the admission and exaltation of intelligence and wisdom, *external evil*, which is of the body and it's concupiscences, was regarded as being the most enormous of all evils, and was thus exalted as the greatest or chief evil; whereas it is now seen that the greatest or chief evil is that of the spirit of man, whilst it is unwilling to submit itself to the guidance and government of the divine love and

wisdom of the MOST HIGH. The *arrangement*, then, of which we are here speaking, implies *first* the arrangement of all *spiritual opposites* under the banner of the eternal love and truth of the MOST HIGH GOD; and, *secondly*, their arrangement under each other, so that what was heretofore the *head* now becomes the *feet*, and what was heretofore the *feet* now becomes the *head*, whilst all the intermediate members change their places accordingly, and add to the harmony and blessedness of the arrangement.\*

But it was said, that by virtue of this arrangement spiritual opposites are *deprived of their destructive qualities*, and *rendered conducive to the elevation of the principles to which they are opposed*. This must appear plain to every attentive observer; for who cannot see that when *spiritual opposites* are placed under the control of heavenly intelligence and wisdom, they then become like *tamed or chained beasts*, which no longer do injury; exemplifying thus the truth of the words of JESUS CHRIST to his disciples,

\* The arrangement here adverted to, of evils under each other, may be illustrated by the case of *murder*, which is an evil involving in it three distinct evils, viz. *evil intention*, *evil thought*, and *evil act*. But of these three distinct evils, it is manifest that *evil intention* is the most enormous, since all the evil both of thought and of act originates in it. Moreover, the sin of murder is a complex sin in another respect, as involving in it, not only the intention and thought of destroying the *bodily life of man*, but of destroying also his *spiritual life*, or the life of his soul; and not only the intention and thought of destroying the *life of man*, but of destroying the *life of the LORD Himself*. It is evident, however, that the natural or unregenerate man forms his estimate of the criminality of the sin of murder from the *external act* of taking away man's life, more than from any evil intention and thought either respecting man or the LORD, and that he thus comparatively makes light of *hatred* and *contempt of others*, which is the very soul and essence of murder. Thus with the natural or unregenerate man, the evils involved in the sin of murder are in an *inverted* order, the external act being regarded as more enormous than the intention and thought; whereas with the spiritual or regenerate man, the proper order is restored, and the intention and thought of murder are deemed more criminal than the mere external act separate from such intention and thought. The observations here made concerning *murder* will apply with equal force to *adultery* and *theft*, which, like murder, are *complex evils*.

*Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and on all the power of the enemy; and NOTHING SHALL BY ANY MEANS HURT YOU?* [Luke x. 19.] Who cannot again see yet further, that the dread and alarm which those beasts once excited, when they were suffered to run at large without control, tend now only, as a rich seasoning, to give a higher relish to the principles of heavenly love and joy which succeed them? Or, to alter the allusion, who cannot see that the waters of the flood, in which the ungodly perish, change their destructive operation with those who are enclosed in the heavenly ark of repentance and faith, so that instead of overwhelming, they serve only to elevate them out of the reach of danger, until they come to their place of rest on the holy mountains? [Gen. viii. 4.] Self-love and the love of the world, therefore, with all their infernal brood of *serpents, scorpions, and wild beasts*, are only so far hurtful to man as they are suffered to live without a ruler: whereas, from the moment that heavenly intelligence and wisdom are let in, and permitted to establish their innocent and blessed dominion in the human mind, all those opposing powers, by their very opposition, tend to strengthen that dominion, by bringing into fuller exercise the contrary powers of the divine love and truth of the MOST HIGH. This is what the psalmist teaches when he says, “*Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross, THEREFORE I LOVE THY TESTIMONIES:*” and again, “*It is time for Thee, LORD, to work, for they have made void Thy law; THEREFORE I LOVE THY COMMANDMENTS ABOVE GOLD, YEA, ABOVE FINE GOLD;*” [Psalm cxix. 119, 126, 127.] from which words it is manifest, that his love for the *testimonies* and *commandments* of God was increased by the wicked principles themselves, which opposed their authority. Thus *the head of leviathan* is not only *broken in pieces*, but is GIVEN TO BE MEAT TO THE PEOPLE IN THE WILDERNESS; [Psalm lxxiv. 14.] and thus too A TABLE *is prepared* IN THE PRESENCE OF ENEMIES; [Psalm xxiii. 5.] and *the people of the land*

BECOME BREAD. [Numb. xiv. 9.] Hence also the divine mercy is more magnified than it could have been, had it remained unassailed, so that the angelic song is sung with a higher tone of thankfulness, "*I will extol Thee, O LORD, for Thou hast lifted me up, and hast not made my foes to triumph over me* ; [Psalm xxx. 1.] *When GOD arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth, the WRATH OF MAN SHALL PRAISE THEE, the remainder of wrath Thou shalt restrain.* [Psalm lxxvi. 10.]

Did this subject want any further proof, either in the way of illustration or confirmation, the reader might be referred to the common experience of mankind, in regard to the bodily appetite of *eating* and *drinking*, wherein he would abundantly find it. For who doth not see that if this appetite be gratified without check or restraint, it then operates to the destruction both of soul and body, by introducing disorder into both, and thus separating both from the life and blessing of order and it's GOD; whereas, if it be placed under the guidance and government of intelligence and wisdom, it then imparts health to both; to the *former*, by leading it daily to the humble and grateful acknowledgment, that not only bodily food, but also the appetite which requires it, are the continual gifts of the DIVINE BOUNTY; and to the *latter*, by supplying it with such bodily health and strength as may render it a meet instrument to effect the purposes of it's soul or spirit, and thus to administer to the will and intentions of the divine providence of the MOST HIGH? Yet what is thus true concerning the natural appetite of *eating* and *drinking*, must be acknowledged to be equally true respecting every other natural appetite, and also respecting every natural affection, since both the appetite and affection are alike capable of *lifting up their heels* above heavenly intelligence and wisdom, and thus destroying their possessor, or of bowing down to their salutary restraints, and thus promoting his salvation.

Is it then true that all *spiritual opposites* have this *double tendency to destroy and to elevate*; to plunge man into eternal death, or to be instrumental in exalting him to a fuller participation of heavenly life and peace? Is it true also that the direction of this tendency will depend upon the man himself, and will turn upon this single point, whether he *cherishes* or *controls* such opposites; whether he suffers them to operate without restraint, or looks up to the FATHER OF MERCIES for the light and comfort of His HOLY WORD to bring them into due subjection and arrangement? Then what an importance hence attaches to our daily conduct; to all the determinations of our free-will; to the current of our daily thoughts; to the movement and posture of all our daily purposes, inclinations, tempers, and activities; all which things are to decide in what manner the above opposites are to affect us; whether they are to govern us with their *iron rod* to our destruction, or to be governed by us with the *golden sceptre* of heavenly intelligence and wisdom to our salvation! Then, too, how dear and precious ought heavenly intelligence and wisdom to appear in our eyes, when they are seen to be the only possible instruments whereby the enemies of our peace and salvation can be controlled! And in what estimation ought we to hold, and with what attention and diligence to study that revealed Word of the MOST HIGH, from which alone such intelligence and wisdom flow, and by the light of which alone we can hope either to discover our spiritual adversaries, or to subdue them!



## SECTION VII.

*That, without Opposites the Life, which Man receives momentarily from God, would be merely transfluent, like that of the Brute Creation, and thus there would be no Re-action on the part of Man upwards towards God.*

BEFORE the truth of this proposition can be clearly seen, so as to be fully acknowledged, it must first be admitted as an axiom, that all life, whether appertaining to man or to other animals, is a continual emanation from God; *immediate*, as it relates to man, but *mediate*, as it relates to other animals; and that thus neither man, nor any other animal, has any life properly *self-derived*, but receives life momentarily from the only life, and only fountain of life, the LIVING LORD, whose high and holy name is JESUS CHRIST, and who to this purpose declared, *As the Father hath life in Himself*, (or self-derived life,) *so hath He given to the SON* (or the humanity which he assumed,) *to have life in Himself*,\* [John v. 26.] But this derived life, it is observable, is of two distinct qualities, or characters, being *transfluent* with the brute creation, so that a brute is compelled to act according to it's tendency, and cannot possibly *re-act*, either in the way of controlling it, or yet in the way of referring it to it's DIVINE ORIGIN; and

\* That the LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST is the Only Fountain of life, is manifest from His own declaration, where He says, *I am the resurrection and the LIFE*, [John xi. 25.]; and in another place, *I am the way, and the truth, and the LIFE*, [John xiv. 6.]; for if He be THE LIFE, He must of necessity be the *fountain of life*, and if He be the fountain of life, he must by a like necessity be the *only fountain*, since it is impossible to conceive that there can be *more than one fountain of life*; and if He be the ONLY FOUNTAIN OF LIFE, He must of necessity be the ONLY GOD, since GOD and THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE are synonymous terms.

being *re-active* with the human species, so that man can both refer it to it's divine original, and can also control all those natural propensities in himself which are in opposition to it. From this consideration may be discovered the peculiar feature of discrimination which marks the grand essential difference between the human species and the bestial. It has been long supposed, and indeed strongly insisted on by eminent writers, that this difference consists solely in the *faculty of rationality*, and accordingly it is generally believed and maintained that man is a *rational* animal, and a beast *irrational*. But is it not a fact that in many instances beasts prove themselves more *apparently* rational than men, since beasts invariably pursue the great ends of their creation, and consult with prudent sagacity the best means of preserving the life which they have received; whereas men, though born with far higher capacities, and created for infinitely higher ends of life, are in many cases not only totally forgetful of those ends, but abuse also their higher capacities to their own destruction, exhibiting thus a proof of *irrationality*, which cannot be chargeable on a beast? We must look then for some other distinction besides rationality, before we can establish the precise difference between the human species and the bestial; and if we look attentively, we shall not long look in vain, because we shall soon make the interesting discovery, that the human species universally *have the capacity*, whether they exert it, or not, of becoming both rational and religious, whereas the bestial species have no such capacity. For that a beast is totally incapable of becoming *religious*, all experience testifies; and that he is alike incapable of becoming *rational*, whatsoever appearances may be presented to the contrary, must be evident to every one from this consideration, that he is governed solely by *instinct*, which instinct compels him, without any *reflection* of his own, consequently without any *reasoning*, to act in one way rather than another, and thus to fulfil the

ends of his creation.\* But that a man, on the contrary, is *capable* of acquiring both rationality and religion, whether he exerts the capacity or not, must be plain to every considerate person both from reason and revelation; from *reason*, which teaches that without rationality and religion, man is not a man, but a brute; and from *revelation*, which continually applies itself to the above capacity as a necessary ground for the reception and improvement of the divine truths which it inculcates. We conclude then that life, as infused into a beast, is *transfluent*, and utterly incapable of any *re-action*; but that the life which man momentarily receives by immediate influx from God, is not *transfluent*, being endowed with a *re-active* energy, by virtue of which it can refer itself to its divine origin in grateful acknowledgment of the bounty which dispenses it, and can thus at the same time control all those natural propensities which are in opposition to it.

But here arises a most important inquiry—whence comes it to pass that the life of man is not *transfluent* like the life of a beast?

The proper answer to this question will lead us to form a just conclusion respecting *opposites*, especially respecting *spiritual opposites*, by demonstrating, not only their expediency, but absolute necessity, for the purpose of forming that perfection of the human character, by which man is so eminently distinguished above the brute creation.

For the true reason why the life of man is not *transfluent* is evidently this, that had it been *transfluent*, it could not have been *free*, since *transfluent* life implies *compulsion* in regard to the subject of it, and this of such

\* If it be here objected, that beasts are capable of being trained by man into certain habits, which bespeak a semblance of rational thought and consideration, it may be replied that such habits are the result, not so much of the exercise of any reasoning faculty on the part of the beast, as of the impulse of love or of fear, and, in some cases, of imitation, grounded in the faculty of instinct.

a sort, that the subject is constrained to think and act in agreement with the tendency of the life received; and cannot possibly think and act otherwise. To the intent then that man might enjoy that high prerogative, called *freedom of the will*, without which he would not have been a *man*, but a *machine*; unaccountable therefore to his Creator; incapable alike of virtue and of vice, of holiness and iniquity; it was absolutely necessary that he should be endowed with a capacity of *reflecting* on the life which he received, and thus of either referring it humbly and gratefully to its proper divine source, or of regarding it as *his own*, and *self-derived*, independently of that source. It was absolutely necessary also that the life, though not *really* his own, should yet *appear to be* his own, and that he should exercise it freely under that *appearance*, since otherwise its reception would have been deprived of its principal blessedness, by suggesting continually the painful idea that he was a *constrained* agent, and not the free arbitrator of his own purposes, thoughts, words, and works.

Here then we may discover the true ground of the necessity of *opposites*, since it is evident that without them man would have been utterly incapable of *freedom*, and alike incapable of referring his life to its proper DIVINE SOURCE, or of regarding it as *his own*, independent of that Source. For what shall we say is the *proper freedom of the human will*, and in what doth it consist? Is it any thing, and doth it consist in any thing, but an *equilibrium* between good and evil, or such an *equipoise*, that man can incline to and choose the one in preference to the other, according to his own *voluntary* decision and determination? For if good be supposed to operate without any counteraction from evil, then man must be a *necessary* subject of good, consequently not a *free* subject; and if evil be supposed to operate without any counteraction from good, in this case again man becomes a *necessary* subject of evil, and is again deprived of *freedom*; whereas if we

suppose man to be placed in an exact *equilibrium* between both good and evil, with the power of inclining to either, according to his own free choice, we then view him in possession of a *freedom of will*, which renders him properly a *man*, and not a mere *automaton*, and which at the same time is the ground of his true *blessedness*, by giving him the capacity of enjoying his life freely *as his own*, at the very moment that he refers it humbly and gratefully to the continual bounty and merciful providence of his HEAVENLY FATHER.

It is in agreement with this idea of *free-will* that we find, even in paradisa, *two trees* placed, the one of *life*, the other of *the knowledge of good and evil*, and at the same time a positive command given by the ALMIGHTY to the man and woman, *not to eat of the latter, lest they should die*; from which account it is evident, not only that man was originally endowed with free-will, but that he was born also with the faculty of inclining to evil, as well as to good, and was thus in the equilibrium between the two faculties, yet with the free power of determining himself to either. For had not this been the case, what satisfactory reason can be assigned for the prohibition respecting the tree of *the knowledge of good and evil*? If man had been created with no other capacity than that of inclining to good, that tree could never have been heard of, still less the prohibition respecting it, because both the tree and the prohibition manifestly imply a capacity at least of inclining to evil. On the other hand, if man had been created with no other capacity than that of inclining to evil, *the tree of life* would then have been as unmeaning as *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*, and for this plain reason, because it would have been utterly impossible for man to have tasted of it's blessed fruit. The *two figurative trees* then announce loudly and plainly this important lesson, that man was originally created in the possession of *free-will*, and also that *this free-will* consisted in

an exact equilibrium between good and evil, so that he had the power either to eat of *the tree of life*, by the humble and grateful acknowledgment that his life is the continual momentary gift of the FATHER OF MERCIES, or to eat of *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*, by ascribing his life to himself, or calling it *self-derived*, and thus independent of the DIVINE GIVER.

When it is said that man was originally created with a capacity to incline to evil, it is not intended to assert that he was created in *sin* or for *sin*, and that thus *sin* was the *necessary* result of his creation, for this would be to charge the ALMIGHTY as being the author of *sin*, and also to make man sinful of *necessity*. It is therefore to be well noted, that there is a striking difference between the capacity of inclining to evil, and the *sin* to which that capacity may lead; and that the capacity of inclining to evil is not in itself evil, only so far as man makes it so by giving way to the inclination wilfully and deliberately, and thus confirming himself in the love of evil, and the hatred of good. The capacity therefore of inclining to evil, or, what amounts to the same, temptation to fall into evil, never brings man into condemnation and spiritual death, but, on the contrary, if it be resisted, has a tendency to elevate him into life, agreeable to what has been shown in a former section; whereas *sin*, or the yielding to such inclination and temptation, is the certain cause of man's destruction, since, if persisted in without repentance, it unavoidably separates man from the influences of heaven and it's God, by leading him to conclude that his life is *self-derived*, and altogether independent of the ALMIGHTY. Accordingly the GREAT SAVIOUR testifies concerning the HOLY SPIRIT which He was about to send, that *when He is come, He will convince the world of sin*; [John xvi. 8, 9.] and to instruct us in what *sin* properly consists, He adds these remarkable words, *Because they believe not on me*, evidently intimating that all *sin* is attended with this tremendous effect, to

destroy all belief in divine influence, and thus to separate man from his God, since if there be no faith in the INCARNATE God, from whom alone all divine influence proceeds, there must of necessity be an eternal separation from all that can be called God and DIVINE.

From this view of the subject under consideration, we are presented with a simple, but satisfactory solution of another perplexing point, which has so often engaged the attention, and evaded the scrutiny, of the learned and inquisitive in all ages, viz. *the origin of evil*. For how plain is it to see, from what has been said, that evil first commenced at the fatal moment, when man first began to pervert his *free-will*, by inclining to live to himself, separate from God; in other words, by loving to confirm himself in the belief that his life was *self-derived* and independent on divine influence, and by delighting in this infernal and deadly persuasion! For what shall we say is evil, and in what doth it consist, but in separation from the life, the love, and the wisdom of the GREAT FATHER of being and of bliss? What then can be it's *origin*, but the primary original inclination on the part of man to effect this separation? And how was this separation effected, but by an unholy motion of man in his free-will, inclining him to love himself more than his God, or what amounts to the same thing, inclining him to love self-dependance and confidence in his own guidance and government, in preference to a humble submission of his life, with all it's purposes, thoughts, and joys, to the all-blessed and all-blessing government and guidance of his MERCIFUL CREATOR? This therefore was what is commonly called *original sin*, because this is what is meant and described in the figurative language of *eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree*. This too was the predicted *death*, announced in the admonitory caution of divine mercy, where it is written, *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou wilt surely die*. For what is *death*, properly so called, but separation

of life from God, by not submitting to the rule and guidance of His *living* spirit of love and wisdom? In the *common* acceptation of the word, indeed, nothing is called *death* but the separation of the soul from the body, and the consequent dissolution of the body; but that the terms *death* and *dying* are applied in the Sacred Scriptures according to another idea, is evident from the general testimony of those Scriptures throughout, and especially from the words of JESUS CHRIST, *I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and he that liveth and believeth in Me SHALL NEVER DIE*, [John xi. 25, 26.]; and again, *This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and NOT DIE*, [John vi. 50.]; and again, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep My saying, HE SHALL NEVER SEE DEATH*, [John viii. 51.]; in all which passages it must be evident to every intelligent reader, that the terms *death* and *dying* are not to be understood according to a natural, but a spiritual idea, as denoting separation of life from the ETERNAL.

From the same view too we may not only discover the *origin of evil*, but also the cause of it's *continuance* in the world, and of that terrible *accumulation*, which, at the present day, excites apprehension and supplication in the bosoms of the serious and considerate. For as evil first commenced at the fatal moment, when man first inclined to live to himself more than to God, and thus to regard his life as self-derived and independent of it's DIVINE SOURCE, in like manner it's destructive influence is *still operative* in the world, and with perpetual increment of disorder and of mischief, in proportion as the infernal persuasion is suffered to prevail, that man possesses life *from himself*, and not momentarily from God. For how numerous and tremendous is the progeny of this persuasion! Doth it not, in the first place, give birth to an inordinate self-love? and is not self-love the fruitful parent of every enormity,



defilement, sin, and disorder, by which the little kingdom of the human mind is miserably changed from a house of prayer and praise, which it was intended to be, into a wretched den of thieves and murderers, into a hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird? The origin of evil, then, and it's continuance, are to be referred to the same source, and are in reality one and the same thing, though they differ as to times and persons and other contingencies. For evil originated with our first parents in the first ages of the world, when the fruit of the forbidden tree was first tasted, but it continues it's ravages and defilements with ourselves, in this latter period of time, yet from the same cause, and with the same consequences. May not then the continuance of evil be regarded as a new and perpetual origin of evil, in like manner as preservation is a new and perpetual creation? In other words, doth not evil still originate with every man according to the determinations of his free-will? It is granted, that in consequence of original sin, and the hereditary corruptions which followed it in a long series of succeeding generations, every man is born with propensities to evil much stronger than what existed in the original state of integrity and innocence; but then it deserves to be considered, that he is born also under the influence and operation of stronger powers to counteract and control those propensities, agreeable to the apostolic testimony, that as sin abounded, grace did much more abound. It merits also further consideration, that the propensities to evil, as hath been shown above, are not in themselves evil, and only become evil, so far as man cherishes and indulges them in himself, through disobedience to the ETERNAL TRUTH. For let it be supposed for a moment that man, instead of cherishing and indulging his evil propensities, renounces, combats, and rejects them, under a deep sense of their contrariety to the revealed will and word of the MOST HIGH; how plain is it to see, in this case, that evil gains no birth.

in him, consequently hath no *origin*, and that therefore it still originates only with those who do *not* renounce, combat, and reject it! And how plain is it to see, still further, that every man living, in regard to good and evil, is precisely in the same state with our first parents (in paradise) being born in perfect freedom either to eat of *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*, and thus separate himself from the life of God, or to eat of *the tree of life, and live for ever!* Moreover these two trees are ever near him, in his intellectual garden, whilst the voice of the ALMIGHTY still suggests caution, and the voice of the serpent still utters the language of seduction. It is not therefore the sin of Adam which at this day keeps any man out of paradise, only so far as a man makes it his own sin by loving and cherishing it; for from the moment that he renounces it by a vigorous repentance, the gates of paradise are immediately opened to him, and the tree of life, with all its blessed fruit, is presented to his view and to his acceptance, agreeable to the divine promise, *To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.* [Rev. ii. 7.]

It is manifest then, from what has been said, that we have no reason to complain of any *opposition* which we at any time feel in ourselves to the counsels of the ETERNAL TRUTH, let it be ever so violent, and from whatsoever accumulation either of hereditary or of actual evil it may have derived its birth. For this opposition, so far from exciting our regret, ought rather to be a ground of thankfulness, since it forms the basis of our *free-will*, and by preventing our life from being *translucent*, like that of the brute creation, endows us with the capacity of *reflection*, and thus of referring ourselves and all our concerns to the FATHER OF MERCIES, our adorable CREATOR, PRESERVER, and REDEEMER. Moreover, be the principles of opposition ever so strong and powerful, there are other principles which counteract, and thus maintain an *equilibrium*, so

that although on the one hand we are pressed by the enemies of our salvation to *eat of forbidden fruit, and die*, we are equally urged on the other by a host of heavenly friends and associates to resist the temptation, and thus to *eat of the tree of life, and live*. All then that we have to complain of is our own irresolution and unfaithfulness, which lead us, by the perversion of our free-will, to take part with our enemies, and to turn our backs on our heavenly friends; and thus to renew and confirm the original transgression and banishment from paradise. For let us only be firm and faithful, and behold the blessed and immediate consequences! The garden of Eden is again opened to our delighted eyes, and we are allowed to enter in and taste of its immortal fruits, rendered more precious by the labours, necessary for our introduction, in that other garden, the *garden of Gethsemane*. *The strong man armed no longer keepeth his palace, nor are his goods in peace, for lo! a stronger than he cometh upon him, and overcometh him, and taketh from him his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils,* [Luke xi. 21, 22.] Thus the perils of combat are succeeded by the rewards of victory, whilst the rewards of victory are rendered more numerous and more brilliant by the perils of combat. And thus also in a measure is fulfilled in the person of every sincere follower of the GREAT REDEEMER what is written of that Redeemer Himself, *Yet it pleased JEHOVAH to bruise Him: He hath put Him to grief; when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed; He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand: He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied,* [Isaiah liii. 10, 11.]

## SECTION VIII.

*That without Opposites Man could not be a Subject of Happiness.*

**THE** truth of this proposition cannot possibly be seen and acknowledged, until it be first defined in what peculiar sense the term *happiness* is here used; and intended to be understood.

By *happiness*, then, is here meant that principle of human joy which is connected with an *eternal object*, and which is thus proper to the human species, being perfectly distinct from that *animal pleasure*, which is common alike to the rational and brute creation. The inferior creatures, therefore, though capable of enjoying *animal pleasure*, are yet incapable of *happiness*, because they are incapable of attaching themselves to, and being affected by what is eternal; whereas man, by virtue of his superior faculties, and as born for an everlasting existence in the kingdom of his adorable CREATOR, is endowed with the high capacity both of knowing and tasting *happiness*, because he is gifted with the high talent of knowing and loving eternal objects, such as GOD, HIS WORD, HIS KINGDOM, and HIS PROVIDENCE.

It is further to be observed concerning *happiness*, as distinguished from *pleasure*, that it flows into the human mind from an *internal* source, and affects by *internal* considerations; whereas *pleasure* comes from *without*, and all it's sensations are excited by things *external*. *Happiness* again is independent on external circumstances, and though it can associate with *pleasure* as a companion, and find it's joys increased by such association, yet it has a kingdom of it's own, which, whilst it does not refuse the alliance of *pleasure*, can yet subsist without it. It deserves notice,

therefore, that man may feel *happy* under the deprivation of *external delights*, and even under the loss of their principal sources, such as bodily health, wealth, reputation, dignity, &c. &c.; whereas *pleasure* finds these sources of external gratification so absolutely *necessary* for its subsistence, that it cannot subsist without them. Sensible joys too, which increase the amount of *animal pleasure*, by cherishing the lusts of ambition, of vanity, of avarice, &c. &c. are frequently found to be destructive of *happiness*, since every augmentation of dignity, of talents, of property, &c. &c. if not accompanied by due submission to the divine providence of the Most High, and acknowledged to be His merciful gift for universal benefit, tends only to beget the anxiety of self-love, and by this anxiety to separate from the fountain of true peace and comfort.

From this view, then, of what *happiness* properly is, and means, and from what has been already said on the subject of *opposites*, it may now be plainly seen that *without opposites man cannot be a subject of happiness*.

For it has been already shown that without *opposites* man would be utterly incapable of *reflecting* on the source of his own life, and still more so of *referring* it to God, who alone is life, and the supreme fountain of life to all his living creatures. Without *opposites*, therefore, the life of man would be *transfluent*, like the life of beasts, and consequently, like the beasts, he would be a *necessary* agent, utterly destitute of *free-will*, and of course incapable of choosing an eternal good in preference to a temporal one. In this case, therefore, how plain is it to see that he would be incapable of *happiness*, since *happiness*, according to the definition just now given, results solely from connection with an eternal good, thus from conjunction with God, His word, His kingdom, and His providence. In short, without *opposites* man would be a mere animal, and incapable of any other than animal gratifications; because, being affected by sensible delights, and having no power of ele-

vating those delights to their eternal source by a grateful acknowledgment of their DIVINE GIVER, he would be immersed solely in their defilements, and would thus dance perpetually round the *golden calf* of his own concupiscent desires, without any ability either to renounce his idolatry, or to discover and worship the true God, as the DIVINE GIVER of his faculties.

Such is the *general* connection between *happiness* and *opposites*; but to see the true and certain ground of this connection, it will be necessary to consider it more particularly, by examining the *several links* of which the chain is composed. And since this cannot be done until the several degrees of man's life are clearly ascertained, together with the means by which they are opened, and an ascent is effected from one degree to another, and afterwards a descent; therefore these preliminaries must be previously adjusted, before the subject under consideration can be viewed in all the distinctness of its truth, and all the grandeur of its importance.

In regard to *the several degrees of man's life*, it must be obvious to every attentive observer, that they are as various and distinct as the *goods* which he is capable of enjoying, which goods may be arranged under the following classes; viz. *corporeal good, sensual good, natural good, rational good, spiritual good, and celestial good*. For man, it is well known, at his birth is merely *corporeal*, and consequently at that period he is the subject only of *corporeal good*, in other words, of *corporeal delight*; yet with a capacity from God of attaining other and higher orders of good, to which higher orders he is gradually and successively admitted, in proportion to his application of the capacity of attaining them with which he is gifted. The next order of good therefore, to which he is introduced, is *sensual good*, by which is meant the good, or delight, which he derives from the use of his several senses of *seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching*, by

means of which he attains communication with the outward visible world which he inhabits, and gains acquaintance with the indefinite variety of it's objects, and this successively, according to the perfection of those senses and their application. To this order of good succeeds a third, which may be called *natural good*, consisting in the exercise and delight of natural affections, combined with the science of natural things, which had been let in by the senses, and thus forming what may properly be called the *natural man*, with all his powers, activities, enjoyments, thoughts, purposes, and works. But this natural man, it is plain, possesses the faculty of becoming *rational*, because he can exalt his natural ideas into an interior or higher region of his mind, and there reflect upon them, and form analytical conclusions, from which he derives notions of good and evil, of right and wrong, of justice and injustice, of moral and civil virtues and their opposites, so far as an estimate can be formed of such things by mere rational light and investigation. Here then we see another scale in the gradation of human good, which scale may be termed *rational good*, comprehending in it all the gratifications of the rational mind, as resulting from the exercise of rational affection and thought, employed on subjects of an interior nature, or such as concern man as a social being, and which have more immediate relation to the duties imposed on him by a state of society here below.

We are now then arrived at a degree of *good*, with which some people, alas! rest satisfied, because it is impossible to ascend higher without the aid of divine revelation, or THE WORD OF GOD; and therefore all who reject the evidence of revelation, and with it the bright truths which it unfolds, conceive *rational good* to be the supreme good, and thus never think of any further elevation, into the superior sphere of *spiritual and celestial good*. (But, not so the humble Christian, who, feeling something in himself which temporal things cannot satisfy, and panting

thus after eternal objects, as the only sources of true contentment and bliss, willingly and gratefully receives the glad tidings announced in the Word of the Most High concerning an everlasting kingdom, it's inhabitants and it's bliss, the laws of the divine order and providence respecting it, and that rule of life necessary to be observed on the part of man, before he can hope for an inheritance in that region of rest and immortality. To such a Christian therefore another degree of good is presently opened in his interior mind, called *spiritual good*, resulting from his reception of the blessed truths of THE WORD OF GOD in his *understanding*, by virtue of which his eyes are opened to the light of heaven, and his mind is made sensible of an interior delight, as far exceeding all his former gratifications, as the Divine Fountain from which it flows is superior to the ordinary sources of mere animal satisfactions. For a time however this delight is confined to the region of the *understanding*, because as yet the subject of it is more affected by the *light of truth*, than by the *love of that heavenly good* to which it points, nor can he conceive at this period that the *joy* derived from the latter infinitely surpasses the *gladness* resulting from the former.\* But this ignorance is not of long duration, for, lo! presently, when the *blossoms* of the eternal truth have sufficiently manifested both their fragrance and their beauty in the

\* The terms *joy* and *gladness* are here applied according to that sense, of which we find them expressive in the book of divine inspiration. For in that book nothing is more common than to join the two terms together, when the subject treated of is concerning any high gratification. To the inattentive reader, this circumstance may possibly appear as a blamable and unmeaning tautology, when yet there is every reason to believe that each term has reference to a distinct degree of bliss, the term *joy* being applied to the sensation excited in the human will by what is good, whilst the term *gladness* is applied to the sensation excited in the *understanding* by what is true. Thus the two terms combined are expressive of the conjunction or *spiritual marriage* of GOOD and of TRUTH, this marriage constituting the very essential life and soul of the HOLY WORD.



intellectual mind, the *fruit* begins to show itself in the *voluntary* or *will principle*, and according to the richness of its flavour proves to a demonstration, that howsoever man may be affected for a time with the light of intelligence, the good of heavenly love and charity is still more affecting, because productive of a bliss both more durable and more satisfying. This good then may be termed *celestial good*, which is the highest to which the human mind is capable of attaining, conducting man, not only to the presence of his God, but to the closest conjunction of life with Him, and thus eminently distinguished from *spiritual good*, which only introduces to His presence.

From this view, now, of the several degrees of *good* which the human mind is capable of tasting and enjoying, it may be manifest what are the several degrees of man's life, and that these degrees are successively opened, so far as man suffers them to be opened, by the influent life of the GREAT CREATOR, even to the CREATOR himself.\* It may

\* What is here said concerning the opening of the degrees of man's life to the GREAT CREATOR, may be illustrated by the duty of *prayer*, the performance of which duty, if sincere, is always attended with an *opening* of man's interiors towards heaven, agreeable to what is observed of the GREAT SAVIOUR's prayer, where it is written, that *JESUS also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened*, [Luke iii. 21.] But if prayer has a tendency to open the interiors of the devout supplicant towards heaven, and thus to introduce him to the heavenly inhabitants, it must of course have a tendency to open the interiors towards God, and thus to introduce into the divine presence, since God and heaven are one. It is however to be understood, that this effect of prayer is not to be ascribed to any power of man alone separate from God, but to the divine power with which man is continually gifted from God; consequently it is an effect of prayer *derived from God*, rather than of prayer *addressed to God*, since prayer may be *addressed to God* from very imperfect and impure motives, as is the case with the prayer of hypocrites, in which instance it cannot be supposed to open the mind towards God, but rather to close it against Him. To give then to prayer the blessed power of opening heaven, and of introducing man to the divine presence, it is necessary that it be *derived from God*, as well as *addressed to God*; in other words, that God be acknowledged as it's FATHER and FOUNTAIN, and that under this devout acknowledgment it be *returned to Him* with a grateful heart, as well as *directed to Him* with a suppliant and contrite spirit.

be manifest also that every degree has it's peculiar delight or joy, and though we have no appropriate terms in our language to express the distinct delight or joy proper to each degree, yet this proves nothing but the imperfection of our language, and is no argument at all against the distinctness here adverted to. Perhaps, at some future period in the history of the human race, when the degrees of human life are more attended to, and it is thought necessary to mark them more accurately, a peculiar name may be assigned to the delight or joy proper to each, so as to distinguish it from that of every other degree. Suffice it, at present, only to discriminate between the delight proper to the four first degrees, viz. the *corporeal*, the *sensual*, the *natural*, and the *rational*, and that which is proper to the two last degrees, viz. the *spiritual*, and the *celestial*, and to call the former by the name of *pleasure*, and the latter by the name of *blessedness*; applying at the same time the term *happiness* to designate the conjunction of *pleasure* in it's several degrees, and of *blessedness* in it's degrees, with an eternal end, that is to say, with God, His word, His kingdom, and His providence. For it merits the most profound consideration on the part of man, that all the above degrees of his life, together with all their respective *pleasures* and *blessednesses*, are capable of being conjoined, more or less remotely, with the DIVINE SOURCE of life, but then it is to be observed that this conjunction will depend altogether on the due subordination and arrangement of those degrees, and especially on the exaltation of the *celestial* and *spiritual* degrees above the rest. For should it come to pass; through the folly and profligacy of man, that the inferior degrees are suffered to exalt themselves, and that thus the *heel* of corporeal, sensual, and natural *pleasure* lifts itself above the *head* of spiritual and celestial *blessedness*, from that moment confusion succeeds in the place of order, and with confusion, disjunction, and separation from God and heaven, and with disjunction and separation from

God and heaven, the utter annihilation of every thing that can properly be denominated *happiness*.

From the above view of the several degrees of man's life, and of the distinct joy or delight proper to each degree, it must be evident that it is intended of the divine providence, that man should be continually ascending in the scale of gratification, from it's lowest step, which is *sensual* and *corporeal*, to it's highest, which is *spiritual* and *celestial*, and that from this highest step he should again descend, by connecting all degrees with an eternal end, which is God and His kingdom, and thus infusing into all a principle of *happiness*. It remains now to be shown how both this *ascent* and *descent* are effected through the instrumentality of *opposites*.

It would be tedious to note the operation of *opposites*, during the opening and formation of the inferior degrees of the human mind, and to point out all the instances of the necessity of such operation for the accomplishment of that purpose. For every reader, who hath been at all attentive to his own mental growth and progress from sensuality to rationality, must of course have been led to mark the opposition which he has experienced on the occasion, and at the same time how that very opposition has been over-ruled to his advantage, by strengthening the degree of life which it threatened to destroy. Who hath not made this discovery in the pursuits of science, and especially in the formation of the rational mind, on both which occasions the sensual mind would have tempted him to be content with it's low gratifications, rather than ascend a hill difficult to climb, and which presented no prospects but of fancied and uncertain joys? Yet when this temptation hath been combated and overcome, how plainly hath it been seen, that the enjoyments of science and rationality have received a hundred-fold increase from the difficulties attending their acquirement, and that thus the repugnance excited by the sensual mind enhanced, rather than de-

stroyed, the higher good to which it was opposed! And if all this be true respecting the opening and formation of the inferior degrees of the human mind, and respecting the corresponding ascent from a lower pleasure to a higher, how much more is it true in regard to the higher degrees, and the elevation from the region of *pleasure* into that of *blessedness*! For this elevation, it has been shown above, cannot be effected but by the reception of the ETERNAL TRUTH, first in man's *understanding*, and afterwards in his *will*; and what a host of enemies are leagued against this reception, representing it as at once visionary and fruitless, and opposing it with all the might of an enraged Pharaoh and his Egyptian host, setting the battle in array against the departing Israelites! But when Pharaoh and his host are overwhelmed in the Red Sea, and *seen dead on the shore*, [Exod. xiv. 30.], in other words, when all opposing principles are subdued, and the powers of nature submit themselves to the control and government of the divine love and wisdom, how is the tone of the victorious song of praise and thanksgiving to the OMNIPOTENT CREATOR heightened by the consideration of the adversary's strength and numbers, and how plainly is it seen that it is this consideration *alone* which gives birth to the song, since without it the blessed confession could never be made, *Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power; Thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy!* [Exod. xv. 6.]

It is evident then that without *opposites* man can never be a subject of *happiness*, and for this plain reason, because happiness consists in the humble grateful acknowledgment of the divine mercy and wisdom ruling in and blessing every degree of man's life; from the lowest to the highest, and back again from the highest to the lowest, and without *opposites* this acknowledgment can never be fully made. For without *opposites*, how would it be possible for man ever to attain a state of heartfelt humility and gratitude

to his HEAVENLY FATHER? Doth any consideration tend so completely to humble and abase man, as a sense of the numberless deadly evils by which he is surrounded, to which also he hath so frequently given the reins, and by which his whole soul, in it's natural unregenerate state, is so miserably contaminated? And in regard to *gratitude*, how can this delightful affection be ever fully felt, except under a sense of divine favour and protection? And what instance of divine favour and protection can equal that of the remission of sin, and preservation from it's power? Yet what *opposite* is so formidable to man as *sin*? If then this *opposite* may, through man's sincere repentance and the consequent operation of the divine mercy, be compelled to administer to the increase of his humility and gratitude, and thus to the perfection of his *happiness*; if under all his transgressions, and the sorrows which attend them, the tear of penitence and contrition not only washes out the stain, but magnifies the divine tenderness from which it flows; how reasonable is it to conclude that every other *opposite* hath a similar blessed tendency, and that thus what are commonly called losses, disappointments, perplexities, troubles, embarrassments, and the like, may, through the divine blessing and providence, be converted into materials for the fabrication of that most wonderful and most complex of all spiritual substances—HAPPINESS.

Do we complain then of *opposites*? We complain of the ingredients which enter into the composition of our bliss, and without which it is absolutely impossible for any true bliss either to be formed or tasted. We complain of the providential means by which we are enabled to ascend from one degree of life to another; thus from ignorance to intelligence, from pleasure to blessedness, from blessedness to happiness,\* and by happiness to conjunction with the

\* For the precise meaning annexed by the Author to the terms *blessedness* and *happiness*, see above in this Section.

LORD in every degree of life, from the highest to the lowest. We complain too of the means of our purification, by which our humility and gratitude are perfected, and all our joys are thus brought into an eternal connection with the divine joy. But is it wise thus to quarrel with the evil, which, if it be not our own fault, may be turned into good, or to fret at that *gall* and *wormwood*, which may be converted into the *milk* and *honey* of eternal delights, and *will be so converted*, whensoever we have the pety to supplicate the GREAT REDEEMER for that purpose? Is it not much wiser to regard all the enemies of which we complain as designed to increase the number and splendour of the victories of that ALMIGHTY BEING, who saith of them as He said of Pharaoh of old, "*And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee my power, and that my name may be declared throughout the earth?*" [Exod. ix. 16.] For what can so effectually tend to enhance our true bliss, as the manifestation of the divine omnipotence in our favour? And how can this manifestation be so fully made as in and by the subjugation of *opposites*? Let then all our complaints, and murrainings, and sorrows, be henceforth silenced by patience, thankfulness, and joy, grounded in the recollection of the wisdom which enjoined of old that the passover *should be eaten with bitters*, [Exod. xii. 8.], and which afterwards taught the consolatory maxim, *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted*, [Matt. v. 4.].

## SECTION IX.

*That the Providence of the ALMIGHTY is principally concerned about Opposites, to prevent their preponderance, that so Man may be kept in an Equilibrium between Good and Evil, and thus in the full enjoyment of Free-will.*

IT has already been shown in a former section, that the freedom of the human will results from the equilibrium between good and evil, in which every man is kept, during his abode in the world, with a view to his reformation and regeneration. For was either good or evil to preponderate, man would be in a state of *compulsion*, in which state neither good nor evil could possibly be imputed to him as his, since nothing can be imputed to man but what he *freely chooses*, and all freedom of choice is necessarily destroyed by *compulsion*. Was either good or evil, therefore, to preponderate, it would be impossible for man either to be reformed or regenerated, inasmuch as both reformation and regeneration imply a change in man's love, or that heavenly love begins to prevail over earthly: but this change cannot by any possibility be effected, unless by the free determination of the man himself, since to *compel* love is to *destroy* it, in case the compulsion be from another, and not from the man himself. Man may, indeed, *compel himself*, but this compulsion differs totally from that which comes from a source *without* himself, the latter constituting properly the most absolute *slavery*, whereas the former, as it proceeds from the most perfect freedom, so it tends to establish and confirm such freedom.

To maintain then an exact equilibrium of good and evil, so that man may be kept in the continual possession of free-will, constitutes a principal part of that divine

government which the ALMIGHTY exercises here below over his creature man. And since this equilibrium may be preserved in two ways, either by increasing the power of good in proportion to the increase of the power of evil, or by diminishing the power of evil, so that it may keep pace with the power of good, therefore this increase and diminution have, in all ages of the world, and amongst all nations, been objects of the peculiar concern of the divine providence, in respect both to the church in general, and to the individuals who compose it. Perhaps this subject has never been regarded with that attention and seriousness which it's infinite importance demands. Let us then stop awhile to take a more distinct view of the interesting particulars which enter into it's composition.

If we believe in that divine revelation which is announced in the Sacred Scriptures, or WORD OF GOD, we must be well aware that the Deity, on various occasions, has been pleased to manifest Himself personally to His children here below, and at other times has spoken to them by His servants the prophets. We are bound to believe also, that at one important period He assumed a body of flesh in the person of JESUS CHRIST, and under this manifestation declared His divine will more fully and specifically than He had done before, whilst at the same time He performed an act of judgment by subduing the powers of darkness, and through the combats and victories attendant on that subjugation, glorified, or made divine the Humanity which He had assumed, so as to make it one with Himself, and thus to give all mankind access to Himself in that glorified or DIVINE HUMANITY. But are we aware that in all these cases of divine interposition, whether by personal appearance, by prophetic warning and instruction, or by the assumption of human nature, the equilibrium of good and evil was principally consulted and provided for, and thus respect was had to the freedom of the human will, that man might always be preserved in a state



in which he might be capable of being reformed and regenerated? Are we aware, therefore, that every personal appearance of the ALMIGHTY to the patriarchs and prophets of old, and also every prophetic dictate and expostulation, was attended with a descent of the heavenly principles of divine goodness and truth, by virtue of which the opposite principles of evil and error were counteracted, the equipoise between good and evil restored, and mankind were thus re-established in a freedom of choice, which had been invaded and nearly destroyed by the preponderance of iniquity? In like manner, when God, in his adorable mercy, was made manifest in the flesh, have we ever reflected, that the extraordinary and alarming increment of evil, which at the time threatened the whole human race with eternal destruction, because it threatened the annihilation of free-will, was one principal cause of that gracious manifestation? Accordingly we are informed, that, during the period of the residence of that GREAT GOD and SAVIOUR here on earth, a work of judgment was effected, by virtue of which the infesting powers of darkness, who had gained an undue ascendancy, not only over the minds, but even over the bodies of mankind, were brought into subjection, and mankind thus rescued were restored to the blessed liberty of will and of intellect, which had been nearly lost. This restoration of the equilibrium of good and evil, in consequence of the subjugation of the powers of darkness, is thus announced by the REDEEMER Himself, where He says, *Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out; and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all [men] unto ME,* [John, xii. 31, 32.]; and also in these words, *When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils,*" [Luke xi. 21, 22.]. Thus, by His continual combats against the

powers of darkness, and their consequent subjugation, which acts are here called *the judgment of this world*, and by the glorification at the same time of His Humanity, which is here expressed by being *lifted up from the earth*, the BLESSED JESUS accomplished the great work of man's redemption, by rendering salvation possible to all, which otherwise would have been impossible. For whilst the *strong man armed kept his palace* in the vitally affectionate and thoughts of men, who had submitted themselves entirely to the rule of his iron sceptre, such a preponderance of evil prevailed throughout the earth, that the whole race of mankind must inevitably have perished in one universal destruction, had not the preponderance been counteracted, *first*, by a diminution of the power of evil, in consequence of *taking from the strong man his armour, and dividing his spoils*; and *secondly*, by an increment of the power of good, which was effected through the union of the divine and human natures in the glorified person of the GREAT SAVIOUR.

And as the divine providence of the Most High has thus, in all ages of the world, been watchful over mankind *in general*, to check the preponderance of evil, and thereby to preserve the principle of free-will inviolate, so hath it exercised, and still continues to exercise the same attentive care and caution in regard to *individuals*. For should the powers of evil so far prevail in the mind of any individual, as to destroy the freedom of will and of thought, from that moment destruction would be inevitable, since the man himself, being urged downwards by an irresistible impulse, unchecked by any contrary tendency, would fall like a stone down a mountain, by the force of his own gravity, or like *the herd of swine*, into which the devils were permitted to enter, and of which it is written, that *they ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters*, [Matt. viii. 32.] And again, should the powers of good so far prevail, as to *compel* man to be good, independent of

any choice of his own, how plain is it to see that his goodness, in such case, would be the goodness of *compulsion*, not of freedom, and of course would be the goodness of an *animal*, not of a *man*; since man is no further good, than in proportion as he cherishes goodness *voluntarily*, or with all the force of his own *free determination*!

Hence then it is evident, that the operation of the divine providence, as exercised in regard to every individual human being, is directed by this universal law of divine love and wisdom, which requires that the principle of free-will should be preserved inviolable, and that for this blessed purpose an exact equilibrium should be perpetually maintained between the powers of good and evil, so that the man, during every successive period of his life here below, may be kept in the capacity of turning either to the one or the other, and thus of *voluntarily* fixing himself either in the blessed kingdom of celestial love and life, or in the opposite miserable kingdom of infernal love and death.

But in order to exhibit this truth in it's proper brightness and splendour, it will be necessary to take a distinct view of the above providential operation, as we find it manifested in two distinct states of the life of man, viz. *first*, during the period of his *unregenerate* life, or at the time when he is led and governed by mere natural love, before he submits himself to the guidance and government of the love and the wisdom of his MERCIFUL CREATOR; and *secondly*, during the process of his *regeneration*, or from the time that the divine love and wisdom begin to be consulted, until they are exalted to pre-eminence in the human bosom, and their kingdom of purity, truth, and blessedness, is finally established in all the fulness of heavenly power, lustre, and benediction.

In regard to the *first* of these states, it may be expedient to premise, that it is the state into which all mankind universally are born, and in which they continue during

a considerable portion of the time allotted for their sojourn-  
 ing here below. For, as the apostle testifies, *that was not  
 first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and  
 afterwards that which is spiritual*, [1 Cor. xv. 46.], con-  
 sequently all men are born in a natural and unregenerate  
 state, and this with the intent that they may be made spiri-  
 tual and regenerate.\* This change, however, from natural  
 to spiritual, from unregenerate to regenerate, is not, and  
 cannot be effected until man arrives at a state capable of  
 thinking for himself, and thus of determining freely re-  
 specting the comparative value of what is temporal and  
 what is eternal, of what concerns him as an inhabitant of  
 this world, and what concerns him as born to inherit a hea-  
 venly and everlasting kingdom in a future world. It is  
 necessary then, during the earlier years of his life, until  
 the natural mind be formed, and in some degree matured,  
 that every man shall remain under the government and gui-  
 dance of mere natural loves, or such affections as regard  
 only his temporal well-being, since these loves and affec-  
 tions cannot be controlled but by regeneration, or the im-  
 plantation and fruitfulness of heavenly goodness and truth.  
 Nevertheless, in this state, which may be compared with  
 that of the *earth*, where it is written, that *the earth was*

\* What is here asserted concerning the state of every man at his birth,  
 will apply even to our *first parents*, or to the first race of mankind here on  
 earth. For from the apostle's declaration, that *that was not first which is  
 spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual*, it is  
 evident that they were born in a *natural*, not in a *spiritual* state, as may be  
 further confirmed by this consideration, that man never becomes *spiritual*,  
 but by regarding and obeying some *spiritual law*; thus by regarding and obey-  
 ing the declared will of his CREATOR, and in so doing, by attaching himself  
 to his CREATOR in filial affection and dutiful submission. Our first parents,  
 accordingly, had such a spiritual law given them for their direction, to the  
 intent that they might, from *natural*, become *spiritual*, and thus, like all their  
 descendants, they were left to the exercise of their judgment, and the  
 determination of their free-will, differing from their descendants only in this,  
 that they were in a state of greater integrity, in consequence of being exempt  
 from the taint and pollution of hereditary evil.

*without form, and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep*, how conspicuous and transcendent is the mercy of the ALMIGHTY in providing a counterpoise to man's natural evils, and thus establishing such an equilibrium, that he may be kept in the perpetual freedom of deciding for himself whether he will be a blessed angel, to live and rejoice eternally in the kingdom and presence of his HEAVENLY FATHER, or a miserable infernal, to be banished for ever from the life, the peace, and the glory of God!

For let us for a moment attend to the growth of this child of immortality, from the period of his entrance into the world, until he makes the awful decision, which is to determine whether he will *eat of the tree of life, and live for ever*, or, by yielding to the seducing serpent of sensual love, taste of the *forbidden tree*, and die to all the blessedness which an infinite mercy had intended for him.

We behold him first under the form of a sweet infant in the arms of his mother, presenting an aspect of the most endearing innocence, which is at once a sure indication of the tranquillity of his mind, and of the divine mercy in which it originates. In judging therefore of his proper character from this early portrait, we are led to suppose, that he is such *within*, as he appears to be *without*, and that the innocence, simplicity, tenderness, and love of all the angelic host have fixed their eternal residence in this young bud of beauty and of fragrance. This judgment however is soon found to be premature, for, lo! no sooner do the days of infancy pass away, and give place to the next succeeding period of human life, than we are both alarmed and perplexed at observing a change, which seems to threaten the destruction of all our fond expectations, by convincing us to a demonstration, that other inhabitants besides the angelic host, and of a quality in direct contrariety to angelic innocence and peace, have their abode in that germ, which we had imagined to be the consecrated habitation *only of celestial beings*. Who

hath not witnessed more or less of the truth of this remark, whilst he has noted how, in process of time, anger, envy, revenge, obstinacy, perverseness, and every other deadly and infernal passion, begin to show their malignant countenances, and to manifest their direful sway, in the same identical human form, which had before given so fair a promise of becoming a celestial garden, in which no noxious weed would be found to grow, and no poisonous serpent to tempt, to ensnare, and to destroy?

But how now shall we account for this strange and *apparently* lamentable circumstance? Whence comes it to pass that both good and evil, both what is heavenly and what is infernal, both what wears the aspect of the most blessed tranquillity, and what alarms and terrifies by the direful malignity of its countenance and its gestures, have their abode in the same house, and make parts as it were of the same family? Shall we say that the FATHER OF MERCIES, the GREAT CREATOR and GOVERNOR of all things, hath originally constituted this mixture of heterogeneous principles, and placed in the same fold the *lamb* and the *wolf*; inclosed in the same cage the *dove* and the *kite*; and planted in the same garden the *rose* and the *thorn*? Surely it were impiety, it were blasphemy, to cherish such an idea, since to ascribe to God the birth of evil is to contradict the divine testimony which announces, that God *saw every thing that He had made, and, behold! it was very good*, [Gen. i. 31.] The evil then is not of God, but of man, resulting, as hath been above observed, from the abuse of his free-will. Nevertheless, though the evil is not of God, and though its origin therefore cannot, without impiety and blasphemy, be ascribed to God, yet it is neither impious nor blasphemous to assert, that God *permits* the evil, in all its shapes and sizes, and that he *permits* it also for an end, which end is its subjugation; and that moreover, to promote this end, He gifts all His intelligent creatures with additional power from Himself to

subdue evil, so that notwithstanding it's malignity, man is kept ever in a state of freedom, and thus in a capacity to expel the *wolf*, the *kite*, and the *thorn*, that so the *lamb*, the *dove*, and the *rose*, may be the blessed inmates of his spiritual house and garden.

Behold here then the merciful, the astonishing provisions of the divine love and wisdom in regard to every individual of the human race! For by natural birth, every man derives hereditarily from his natural parents a principle of evil, which is in direct opposition to the divine mercy and loving-kindness, because it prompts him to exalt himself above others, and thus to despise others in comparison with himself. By natural birth therefore he is proud, vain, arrogant, self-conceited, calling nothing good but self-indulgence, and nothing evil but what opposes his own corrupt will and inclinations. In this state therefore, instead of bowing down before his God in the humility of self-abasement, which is the only true worship, either acceptable to God, or profitable to man, he sets up his idols in his heart, and worships the molten images of his own imagination, which have no other life in them than lust, and no other origin than self-love and the love of the world. Moreover, since all evil is in close connection with the powers of darkness, being the filthy and dark element in which those powers most delight to dwell, therefore this defiled and unhappy mortal, although not at all aware of his awful and tremendous situation, wills, thinks, and acts in confederacy with those powers, and is fast bound in the iron chain of their diabolical and miserable tyranny. But how now is it possible that such a polluted and infernal being can be saved? How is it possible that the love of evil should be eradicated in his bosom, so that the love of good, which is the love of God and of his neighbour, should be implanted, and bring forth it's blessed fruits in his life and conversation? Adored be the divine mercy! we have not far to look for the existence of this possibility. For lo! even from the first moments of the conception and birth of this

child of disorder and defilement, the FATHER of unutterable love hath been present with him, fulfilling His own gracious words, *Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee*, [Jer. i. 5.] But what shall we say is the effect of this divine *knowledge* and *sanctification*? Can it be any other than the communication of heavenly good, for the purpose of counteracting the principle of hereditary evil? And do not we accordingly observe, in the case of every individual, a manifest proof of this effect, whilst we note the amazing stores of innocence operative in the *infant*, the delightful affection of knowledge superadded in the *child*, the improving results of this affection discovering themselves in the *youth*, together with a proportionable confirmation in goodness and truth, so far as the *grown-up man* suffers himself to be guided and governed by that affection? Moreover, doth not the ALMIGHTY, by means of this affection, and in all the several ages both of *childhood*, *youth*, and *manhood*, instruct His intelligent creatures in the sublime and edifying truths of His MOST HOLY WORD, opening their minds thus, if they are disposed to have them opened, to the bright knowledge of Himself, and of His eternal kingdom; and doing, as in the day of creation, where it is written, *And God divided the light from the darkness; and God called the light day, and the darkness He called night*? [Gen. i. 4, 5.] Doth He not also, when He sees His creatures inattentive to such instruction, exercise a judicial, yet merciful authority over them, by visiting *their offences with a rod, and their sins with scourges*, through some awakening calamity, in the several shapes, either of bodily sickness, the loss of friends, the loss of reputation, worldly disappointments, &c. &c. to excite reflection, and thus convert them to Himself? It is therefore most evident, that man, from his birth, is not left a single moment to the unrestrained power of hereditary evil, but is attended constantly with an



opposite power from the FATHER OF HIS BEING, so that he stands, as it were, between two kingdoms, the one of light, and the other of darkness, the one of good, and the other of evil, gifted also with the faculty of *free-will*, by virtue of which he is enabled to make his election and decide freely for himself, whether he will be an angel or an infernal; whether he will obey the truth or reject it; thus whether he will inherit eternal blessedness in the kingdom of God, or take up his everlasting abode in the opposite kingdom of darkness and of misery.

Having thus then taken a brief view of the operations of the divine providence of the MOST HIGH, for the purpose of maintaining an equilibrium of good and evil in the minds of the unregenerate, and of preserving them in freedom of determination, let us now turn our eyes to the contemplation of the same providence, as we find it exercised towards those who have entered on the process of *regenerate life*, or who have begun to consult and exalt the divine love and wisdom above all the concerns of time and of sense.

On this occasion two distinct operations of the divine mercy call for our more particular attention. The *first* is that by which the ALMIGHTY guards against the *too sudden removal* of evils; and the *second* is that by which He leaves some evils for a time *unremoved*, until the powers of good and of truth have attained their full conjunction, order, and arrangement. The *first* of these operations was figured by the divine injunction delivered to the children of Israel in these words, respecting their enemies, *I will not drive them out from before thee in one year, lest the land become desolate, and the beast of the field multiply against thee. By little and little I will drive them out from before thee, until thou be increased, and inherit the land*, [Exod. xxiii. 29, 30.] The *second*, again, was figured by this declaration of the ALMIGHTY, concerning the same people, *I also will not henceforth drive out any from*

*before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died, that through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the LORD, [Judges ii. 21, 22.]*

In regard to the first of the above operations, viz. the divine caution to prevent the too sudden removal of evils, it may be expedient to observe that this operation is grounded, *first*, in the nature of evils, in that they are innumerable in every human being; and *secondly*, in the unregenerate nature of man, in that he is nothing of himself but a defiled mass of such evils: and therefore if these evils were to be removed *suddenly*, before the goods and truths of heaven are opened and formed in him, he must immediately expire, being left without any life either of good or evil. It is therefore written in the parable concerning the *wheat and the tares of the field, Let both grow together to the harvest, and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn, [Matt. xiii. 30.]* For by the *harvest* here spoken of is manifestly meant the time and state when a full separation is about to be effected between good and evil, between truth and error, and this separation cannot be effected, until a sufficiency of good is acquired to remove evil, and a sufficiency of truth to remove error. Moreover, the removal of evils and of errors requires that they be first distinctly noted as to their several genera and species, their particular characters and qualities, together with their close connection or confederacy one amongst another, and with the powers of darkness, and this cannot be done *immediately*, but only in the degree of man's advancement in the love of good, and his consequent advancement in the light of heavenly truth, without which it is absolutely impossible that the filthiness and darkness of the opposite kingdom can be detected and made manifest. It deserves also to be further considered, that the removal of evils implies their arrangement, so that whereas, at the beginning

of man's regeneration external evils are exalted above internal evils, in consequence of being thought more heinous and abominable, a different order takes place in the course of regeneration, during which, internal evils are seen to be at once greater and more alarming than external, and are accordingly put down in a lower place.\* It ought likewise to be considered that all evils, in their arrangement, are to be regarded only in a state of *removal* from man, and not in a state of *absolute expulsion* or *annihilation*, inasmuch as evil, even with the regenerate, still remains, and is never totally *destroyed*, but only subjugated, whilst the regenerate man is elevated to dominion over it, so that the only difference between evil in the regenerate and unregenerate man is this, that in the regenerate man the *lion* is chained and kept in such subjection, that however he *roars* and is *rampant*, he cannot do the smallest act of violence or injury, whereas with the unregenerate man he is without a chain, and commits depredation at pleasure, being under no restraint or check whatsoever from the keeper of his den. Thus the ALMIGHTY, in His adorable mercy, provides that the *lion*, in his *chained* state, shall still operate upon man, not indeed, as heretofore, to his hurt, but rather to his benefit, by exciting to a more attentive watchfulness; to a greater distrust of himself; to a deeper and more continual dependance on divine aid, together with a more profound humiliation under a sense of the dangers by which he is surrounded, yet at the same time with a blessed tranquillity from a firm and full conviction that under the *feathers* of his Almighty guardian he shall be *covered* and safe. Thus too is the principle of free-will preserved inviolable in every stage of man's regeneration, and not only so, but is seen every day in brighter lustre, and enjoyed with increasing benefit, since it is now discovered to have its origin in the divine mercy, and to be instrumental in con-

\* See Section V. of the Submission and Arrangement of Opposites.

ducting man, every instant, more and more to conjunction of life with that origin, by leading him more and more to reject every evil suggestion, and to love, cherish and obey every good one.

Such then are the advantages derived to man from the *first* of the above providential operations relative to the gradual removal of evils. Let us now proceed to the consideration of the blessings resulting from the *second*, viz. from that which permits some evils to be *unremoved*, until the powers of good and of truth have attained their full conjunction, order and arrangement.

It is the common imagination of man, on his first entrance into a regenerate state, that every evil, whether hereditary or actual, should instantly be removed, and that in consequence of his setting his face towards his HEAVENLY FATHER and the kingdom of his purity, and at the same time renouncing from his heart and life both the principles and the practices of iniquity, he should be kept in the undisturbed enjoyment of divine rest, free from all molestation to which he had before been exposed from his unruly passions and that infernal kingdom with which they are closely connected. This imagination however is as groundless and delusive, as it is flattering and common, being in direct contrariety to the counsels of the ETERNAL, thus equally opposed to the economy of the divine providence, and the best interests of that human being, over whom that providence is momentarily and in every minutest circumstance of his life exercised. For what, let us inquire, would be the probable consequence of all evil being entirely removed at the commencement of man's regeneration, before this great work was fully accomplished, by the implantation and complete conjunction of the heavenly powers of good and of truth in his purified bosom? What would be the sure consequence, if none of the hostile nations were *left to prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord, or not?* Would it not come to pass,

in such case, that man would be left without trial, without temptation, without a cross, without difficulty, and without combat? For what can be meant by *proving* Israel, but his painful exercise in these spiritual labours? And if these spiritual labours were to cease, or be entirely suspended, how could he, in such case, make progress and advancement in the regeneration? For what shall we say is regeneration; but the formation of a new man; the implantation of new life; the conjunction of the blessed principles of heavenly goodness and truth in the regenerate mind; together with the descent of those principles into the external or natural man, and their operation there; and all this attended with the humble and grateful acknowledgment on the part of man, that this formation, implantation, conjunction, descent, and operation, are entirely the work of God, and only so far of man, as he willingly complies with the divine purpose in effecting it? But how incomplete would this work of the ALMIGHTY be, or rather, how impossible would be it's full accomplishment, if it be supposed that man is left without trials and temptations, without labours and combats to *prove* him, as he must of necessity be, if all evils be suddenly removed, and none be left to bring him into spiritual exercise and difficulty! For in such case, would not his very virtues and graces; the illumination of his understanding and the purification of his will; the splendour and number of his good deeds, and even the costly sacrifices which he is in the habit of making, whilst he takes up his daily cross to follow his suffering SAVIOUR, tend all of them to nourish in him a more subtle and dangerous self-love, by leading him to suppose that these excellencies were *his own*, independent of their divine source and beneficent donor? Besides, it is a fact confirmed by every day's experience, that large measures both of goodness and truth are imparted to man from above, long before their divine origin is humbly and gratefully acknowledged, and especially before it is seen that they

are the bountiful results of an unmerited mercy, and that notwithstanding their reception and their purity, man, *of himself*, is and ever must be the same defiled, ignorant, and miserable being that he was, previous to the communication of such supereminent gifts and graces. But how now is man to be taught the edifying lesson, that he may perish in his very virtues, as well as in his sins, unless he is wise to renounce the pride of virtue, by ascribing all excellence wholly and entirely to that DIVINE BEING of whom it is written, *There is none good but one*? How is he to become truly *just*, by rendering back to the DIVINE GIVER all that he has received, and by returning it *not void*, [Isaiah lv. 11.], but *with usury*? [Matt. xxv. 27; Luke xix. 23.] Alas! is there not too much reason to conclude, that if no enemy was left to *prove* him, he would convert even the favours and mercies of his HEAVENLY FATHER into sources of condemnation, by seizing upon them as *his own*; by thus robbing God of His property, and profaning it; and finally by exposing himself to the terrible severity of the sentence denounced against the king of Egypt in these awful words, *Therefore thus saith the LORD God, Behold, I will bring a sword upon thee, and cut off man and beast out of thee; and the land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste; and they shall know that I am the LORD, because he hath said, THE RIVER IS MINE, AND I HAVE MADE IT*? [Ezek. xxix. 9.]

It appears evident then, from what has been said in this section, that the providence of the ALMIGHTY has been operative in all ages, and is still operative, both in His church *generally*, and with every member of His church *individually*, to maintain the exact balance between good and evil, that so His creature man may be endowed, during every period of his life here below, with the blessed faculty of free-will, and thus with the wonderful capacity of turning himself from all the powers of sin and destruction, to seek and find an eternal asylum of righteousness.

and salvation in the presence, the mercy and truth of his adorable SAVIOUR. Well then might the psalmist exclaim, *If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, Thou art there.* [Psalm cxxxix, 8.] For it is not only in the bright mansions of bliss, and around the throne of His own glorious perfections, that we discern the presence, the power, and the operation of the INFINITE and the ETERNAL. *He boweth the heavens also and cometh down, and darkness is under His feet,* [Psalm xviii. 9.], so that He is the LAST, as well as the FIRST, extending His blessed dominion from the centre to the circumference; from the highest principles of His own transcendent light and love to the lowest principles of corrupt nature, and even to the very remotest depths and dregs of infernal defilement and misery. To discover then the path of His majesty, we must trace His divine footsteps in the lowest regions of sin and disorder, as well as in the highest of purity and order; we must note *the keys of hell and of death*, which He bears in His hand, [Rev. i. 18.] as well as the keys of heaven; we must observe the control which He continually and minutely exercises over the powers of darkness, to prevent their preponderance both generally and individually, that so His church here on earth, and all its members may be kept in an exact equilibrium, and thus in the most perfect exercise of free determination of will or love. We must learn, in short, the edifying lesson, that our HEAVENLY FATHER, every day and every moment of the day, extends over us the golden sceptre of His *double* sway, by guarding us, in the *first* place, with the thousands and ten thousands of His angelic ministry; and in the *second* place, by permitting our faith and love to be every instant tried, and through trial purified, whilst the countless host of the enemies of our salvation *hide a snare for us, and cards, and spread a net by the way side, and set gins for us.* [Psalm cxl. 5.]

But who is that enlightened Christian, whose mental

eye shall be qualified to look beyond the veil of nature; so as to penetrate into the above mysteries of the divine providence and loving-kindness? Alas! what is finite cannot by any possibility comprehend what is infinite, and therefore we must all of us be content to see here *as through a glass darkly*, and to confess in humility, *Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me; I cannot attain unto it.* Nevertheless, if we are not able to see *all*, we may, if it be not our own fault, see enough to excite our adoration; to confirm our faith, and to quicken our pace towards mount Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem. Only let us turn our backs on our natural darkness, on the dimness and uncertainty of our conjectures, on the false and delusive lights of our sciences and reasonings, looking for, and ardently panting after, that higher and brighter light of revealed wisdom, concerning which it is written, *In Thy light we shall see light.* How will our night then be turned into day! How will invisible things become visible, distant things near, uncertainties be seen as realities, and the limits of our former vision extended far beyond what we could have conceived, either probable or possible! For as a benighted traveller, when the sun arises, is at once surprised and delighted at beholding distinctly all the beauties and varieties of outward creation presented to his view, and as he advances in his journey, discovers one horizon succeeded perpetually by another, and thus proving to demonstration that the boundaries of natural vision are constantly changing and new, according to his progress; in like manner the Christian traveller, when the sun of the divine love and wisdom, in the person of the GREAT REDEEMER, begins to dawn on the organs of his intellectual sight, and thus to dissipate the darkness with which he was before encompassed and perplexed, is lost both in astonishment and joy at noting distinctly a new creation of wonders and of delights, perpetually changing according to his advancement in celestial light and life. His horizon thus of to-day



is not the horizon of to-morrow, because as he proceeds in his journey, the limits of his present vision are removed, and give place to more extended prospects, whilst his *general* ideas of the divine providence and operation become every day more *particular*, and his *particular* ideas more *singular*.\* Thus at length he discovers, to his inexpressible satisfaction, that to preserve the human will in its original freedom, and for this purpose to maintain an exact equilibrium of good and evil in every human being; to control thus every event the most minute, whether affecting man's joys or sorrows, his temporal prosperities or adversities, his health or sickness, &c. &c.; to shut the doors of the infernal kingdom, so that no evil may infest man but what may be turned to his advantage, and at the same time to keep open the doors of the heavenly kingdom, that so man may approach and eat daily of the *tree of life*; these are the eternal designs and counsels of the divine mind, and to accomplish these adorable ends is the ground of that law of divine operation; which, regarding man as to his *two-fold* connection with the kingdom of light on the one hand, and the kingdom of darkness on the other, accommodates itself to him in both; saying concerning the former kingdom, *He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways*, [Psalm xci. 11.], and concerning the latter, *He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence! He shall cover thee with His feathers; and under His wings shalt thou trust;*

The distinction here made between *general*, *particular*, and *singular* ideas of the Divine Providence, may be illustrated by the ideas formed by different persons of the anatomy of the human body. For of this anatomy every man conceives a *general* idea, whilst he observes the *external* human form with its several limbs and members; but it is the anatomist only who acquires a *particular* idea, whilst he contemplates its *internal* structure, together with the several organs and viscera which compose it; and if he extends his research still further to the constituent parts of these organs and viscera, he then gains what may be called a *singular* idea, or the particular of a particular idea.

*His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day.*  
 [Psalm xci. 3 to 7.]

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## SECTION X.

*That the full Blessedness resulting from Opposites cannot be revealed to Man during his Abode in the World, but remains to be revealed when he puts off his mortal Covering, and enters into the great Realities of future Existence.*

**IT** hath pleased the GREAT CREATOR, in His adorable mercy, to place His creature man in the splendid habitation of this lower or external world, after providing in it all things necessary for his sustenance and comfort in an astonishing variety. It hath further pleased the same ALMIGHTY BEING to make known to man, by the revelation of His HOLY WORD, the existence of another world, in which it is intended man should live for ever, and at the same time to inform him that that other world is in close connection with this, insomuch that all effects produced in this lower or external world are from causes which exist in that higher or interior world; and not only so, but that the soul or spirit of man, being in it's nature spiritual and immaterial, is an inhabitant of that higher or interior world, even during it's connection with it's material body here below. The two worlds therefore, though called *two*, are evidently *one*, in like manner as soul and body are *one*, constituting together the LORD'S kingdom in heaven and

in earth, and not separated from each other by any distance of space, but only by this condition of their existence, that all things in the higher or inner world are spiritual, and from a spiritual origin, whilst all things in the lower or external world are natural, and from a natural origin.

One striking difference, then, between our existence in the present life and in the future, is evidently this, that in the present life we are encumbered with a *material body*, and consequently subject to the pressure of all it's wants, it's infirmities, it's grossness, and it's pains; whereas in the future life we are emancipated from this body, and thus are not only freed from the shackles and necessities of matter, but being invested with a spiritual body, the activities, sensations, and powers of which are infinitely better accommodated to our immortal spirits, we are in a capacity of enjoying all the bliss, and executing all the purposes of our minds far more exquisitely and more rapidly than when that bliss was blunted, and those purposes cramped by a tenement of clay. It was accordingly a maxim of ancient wisdom that *the corruptible body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things*, [Wisdom of Solomon ix. 15.]; from which we are instructed that *matter* and *mind* are of a quality and character perfectly distinct from each other, inasmuch that the inertness of the former operates rather as a clog and impediment to the superior energies of the latter, and thus at once obstructs it's powers, and renders it's joys less sensible and affecting.

Another remarkable difference also between the present life and the future is this, that the world which we at present inhabit is a *mixed* world, in which, it is plain, there is a perpetual contention of opposing principles; so that, let the mind of man be ever so well disposed to tranquillity and peace, it cannot help feeling disturbance more or less from the unsettled state of the elements with which it is surrounded, whilst *heat* and *cold*, *light* and *darkness*, *calm*

and *storm, salubrity, and distemper, &c. &c.* are in such a constant succession to each other. It is not meant to insinuate by this observation, that the purposes of the DIVINE PROVIDENCE in regard to man would, or could have been more effectually promoted, had the present world been *less mixed* than it is; since there is every reason to believe that in the present, *mixed* state of the human mind, a corresponding *mixture* in the elements of matter may be rather conducive than otherwise to it's purification and reformation: it is only intended therefore to say, that whilst the jarring sounds of discord thus assail our *external* ears, and keep us in perpetual alarm, it is scarcely possible for the mind to enjoy fully the harmony of it's own purposes, and thoughts, be they ever so well regulated, or ever in such perfect concord with the divine will and counsel. In the future life, however, we are taught to believe on the high authority of divine Revelation, that if the state of the mind be at peace and in concord, so will also the world around it be; since it is an immutable law of the eternal world, that *external* things shall harmonize perfectly with things *internal*; in other words, that such as the *internal* state of the mind is, such will be the *external* appearances by which it is encompassed. Heaven accordingly is described as an exact pattern of this harmony, because it's blessed inhabitants are not only the subjects of all that is good and wise and orderly in their affections and thoughts, but behold goodness, wisdom and order in every thing around them, each inhabitant seeing himself, with all his purposes and persuasions, all his tempers and dispositions portrayed, as in a picture, in every *external* object, howsoever minute, which is presented to his view. In the other life therefore, every mind makes it's own world, and this in agreement with the unchangeable law of the divine providence, whereas in this life every mind is compelled to live in a world made, not from itself, and it's own ruling principles, but from jarring materials, which, howsoever they

may administer to its future purification, are by no means conducive to its present happiness.

There is yet a *third* consideration, and this of no small moment, which marks an essential difference between the present life and the future on the score of happiness, and that is *the state of society, or of social intercourse.* For that this state contributes much either to the increase or diminution of our joys, is a truth which every one must allow; who has lived long enough in the present world to see, that he cannot command his associates, and that he is frequently therefore compelled to hold intercourse with those, whose spheres of life clash with his own, and thus disturb his peace. Besides, the very circumstance of living in a world, where, to say the least of it, the light of truth is so frequently darkened by error, and the life of purity defiled by transgression, is of itself a sad counterpoise to the bliss of a sincere Christian, who takes his chief delight in observing the prevalence of evangelical life and principles amongst his fellow-men. But how delightfully will this state of things be changed in that world, in which we are taught to believe that every one is *gathered to his people*! [see Gen. xxiv. 8, 17; chap. xlix. 29, 33.]; in other words, where all are associated to *their like*, or to those who are of similar dispositions, qualities, and characters with themselves. For the grand characteristic of the other world, according to the testimony of revelation, appears to be that of *separation and discrimination*, consisting not only in the separation of the *sheep from the goats*, as it is described, Matt. xxv. 32, but in the discrimination also of the sheep of one fold from the sheep of another fold; since there is every reason to believe that these sheep vary in their properties and features like the several members, organs, and viscera in the human body, and are hereafter arranged accordingly. The GREAT REDEEMER therefore speaks of the *many mansions in His FATHER'S house*, [John xiv. 2.], to instruct us that in the heavenly king-

dom there is an indefinite variety of good, and that every inhabitant enjoys association and habitation with those, who are principled in good affections and thoughts harmonizing with his own. But what human tongue or pen is able to describe the full and complete bliss, which must of necessity result to the sincere Christian from a separation and discrimination, which is thus to place him for ever in the society of those he most loves, and of those also, from whose examples, precepts, and intercourse, he may hope to be continually making new advances in wisdom, purity, and happiness?

A *fourth* instance of the above difference between the two worlds, the present and the future, must not be forgotten, because perhaps it is more marked and conspicuous than any of the foregoing, and is of itself a sufficient proof of the truth of the proposition, "that the full blessedness resulting from opposites cannot be revealed to man during his abode in the present world; but remains to be revealed, when he puts off his mortal covering, and enters into the great realities of future existence."

The instance here alluded to is this; that the present life manifestly is, and was intended to be, a *state of trial*, which state is to determine whether we are to live hereafter as blessed angels in the kingdom of our HEAVENLY FATHER, or as miserable infernals, for ever banished from the realms of light and peace. But every state of trial implies *conflict* of contending principles, and all such conflict must of necessity be attended, in a greater or less degree, with sorrow, pain, and suffering. Is it asked *why* the present life is a state of trial, and in *what* the trial is grounded? It may be sufficient to reply, that the present life is a state of trial, because it is the time appointed of the divine providence of the MOST HIGH for fixing the determination of our free-will, thus for deciding on the direction of our ruling love, that so it may be ascertained what are the chief objects of our regard, God or ourselves; the good-

ness, wisdom, and glory of God, or what we call *our own* goodness, wisdom, and glory; eternal things, or temporal; the great realities of the kingdom of God, or the perishable vanities and uncertainties of the world of nature: For until the free-will is thus determined, and the point of the compass is thus discovered, towards which the ruling love turns itself, we are totally void of all quality and character, so far as regards an eternal state, and may therefore be compared with that *salt, which hath lost it's savour*, concerning which JESUS CHRIST says, *It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill, but men cast it out*, [Luke xiv. 35.] It is impossible however for the free-will to be thus determined either in favour of God and the things of His kingdom, or in favour of their opposites, without some degree of pain and suffering, since in determining itself in favour of God and the things of His kingdom, the passions and appetites of the natural man make resistance; and in determining itself in favour of their opposites, it has to contend with the united powers of the divine love and wisdom, which are ever striving to effect a contrary determination. Thus every man, during his abode here below, is under the absolute necessity of living in a state of combat, either against *heaven*, or against *hell*, because the former is at all times striving to impart to him it's own blessed life and light of purity and truth, whilst the latter is at work to plunge him into all it's own miserable abominations and delusions.

Adored however be the FATHER OF MERCIES, who hath ordained that trial and combat are comparatively of short duration, and are then to be succeeded by endless rest and peace! For such is the decisive testimony of His MOST HOLY WORD, which accordingly announces to the sincere Christian, that *they who sow in tears shall reap in joy*; and that *he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him*. [Psalm cxvi. 5, 6.] Whatever

then may be the dangers, the difficulties, the perplexities and the sorrows, with which we are beset, annoyed and alarmed in the present world, they are only preparatory and introductory to a new state of things in the eternal world, where *there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.* [Rev. xxi. 4.] Danger is thus to give place to security; difficulty to facility; perplexity to clearness of apprehension; sorrow and suffering to joy and gratification; whilst every principle opposed to our salvation is constrained to bow down to and confess a divine power superior to itself, and ever converting it into an instrument of our bliss.

It is evident then that no fair decision can be made on the subject of *opposites*, unless we take into the account a state of future existence, regarding that state as the concluding scene of our present lives, when every event and contingency, every determination of our affections and thoughts, will be brought to it's final issue, either in the eternal kingdom of bliss or of misery. With a view therefore to our being enabled to form a just judgment of our present state of probation, we ought to be often *undrawing the curtain*, which hides from our eyes the grand realities of the invisible world, that so we may discover the *termination* of what we now discern only the *commencement*. Is it asked, how shall we *undraw this curtain*? It is replied, by *thinking above matter*, which is the only veil that hides from our intellectual sight the things of futurity, and by bounding us within the regions of time, prevents our looking into the purer and higher regions of eternity. Is it asked again, *How shall we think above matter*? It is again replied, by elevating our thoughts and affections towards God, His WORD and KINGDOM, and by accustoming ourselves to think in such a state of elevation, until we make the happy discovery, that God, His WORD, and KINGDOM, are not only more interesting objects than any



other, but are also nearer to us, and at the same time more real, and more properly belonging to us. We shall thus, even during our continuance here below, pass the barriers of time and space, and ascending with our spirits into the eternal world, we shall there behold the close of all our present sorrows in the dawn of that everlasting rest to which they have been instrumental in introducing us. The film of unjust judgment will thus be removed from our eyes, and we shall be enabled to see, what otherwise we never can see, that what we commonly call adversity is, in many cases, more our friend than prosperity; that the foundation of our purest joys is frequently laid in our deepest sorrows; that the gates of heaven are never so effectually opened as by combats against the powers of hell and darkness; and that consequently we have nothing to complain of here below, but that impotence and unfairness of our own hearts, which either render us unwilling to enter into that combat, or make us irresolute, impatient, and fretful in the prosecution of it.

Is it evident then that all things here below are hastening to a grand eventful period, which is to be the true interpreter of their meaning, by disclosing all their secret springs, their hidden tendencies, and their weighty importances? Have we every reason to believe that a day is about to dawn, which is to justify all the permissions of the divine providence in regard to the present evils of which we complain; by convincing us that there is not a single one, which may not be converted into an instrument of adding brightness to the jewels of an immortal crown? With what affection then and interest ought we to accustom ourselves to contemplate that period and that day which, by thus *destroying the face of the covering cloud over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations,* are to convince us, that there is not a single moment of our present lives in which we have not been under the immediate inspection and operation of the divine mercy of

the Most High, extending to us it's divine arm for guidance, for protection, and for purification! that every evil, therefore, with which we have been assaulted, hath had a powerful and present controller! that not *a hair of our heads* hath been unattended to! and that our deepest distresses have been made subservient to our highest consolations! With what affection, too, and interest ought we to contemplate, not only the *period* and the *day* which are to reveal to us such high mysteries, but also the *passage* which is to introduce to them, and which we commonly designate by the name of *death*; a name, alas! too generally fraught only with the tidings of terror and dismay? Yet why should this name excite in the minds of Christians any painful emotion? For what is death, properly considered, but the separation of matter from spirit, or rather the emancipation of spirit from matter, thus it's liberation from shackle, from inertness, and from infirmity? And is there any thing terrible in the idea of such *liberation*; or shall we feel dismay at the thought of the removal of those incumbrances which suffocate our true joys? Surely we ought rather to rejoice and be thankful for that change by which *this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality*. Surely we ought rather to endeavour to despoil death of it's common title, by which the wickedness and folly of mankind have marked it, as *the king of terrors*, and to designate it, by it's proper *Christian names*, as the *true Christian's friend*, because *the termination of his fears, the accomplishment of his hopes, the gate of introduction to his purest joys, thus the closing period of all his trials, pains, and sufferings*, and at the same time *the commencement of that state of durable bliss when there shall be no more curse, but the throne of GOD and of the LAMB shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him*, [Rev. xxii. 3.] For death, it is evident, howsoever it may affect *matter*, has no power at all over *mind*, and of course the mind, or that

spiritual substance which we call *soul*, and which is all that properly constitutes what we term *ourselves*, remains untouched by death, suffering no diminution, but rather experiencing increased energy in all it's purposes, affections, thoughts, and operations, by being set at liberty from it's temporal connection with it's material associate.

From the above considerations, then, let us learn to arm ourselves with increased patience under the operation of every *opposite*, which, in our present state of probation, adds to our difficulties, by stréwing our path with *thorns and briers*; recollecting the happy day, when *instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree; and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that there shall be no cutting off.* [Isaiah Iv. 13.] And let us recollect further, that the sole ground of the permission of the existence either of the *thorn* or *brier* of our natural evils and errors is this, that being seen, rejected, and rooted up, by a vigorous repentance and evangelical faith, they may finally make more manifest that divine unutterable mercy of the Most High, which is ever disposed to plant in their place the *fir-tree*, and the *myrtle-tree*, of every saving good and truth, and thus to make to itself *a name*, by giving to the humble and the penitent an unequivocal *sign* of it's everlasting endurance in that eternal kingdom, where *there will be no cutting off*, but where the blessed promise will be for ever accomplished, *My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.* [Psalm lxxxix. 28, 29.]

## SECTION XI.

*On the Effects intended to be produced in Man by the above Doctrine of Opposites, together with the important Duties incumbent on him, as resulting from those Effects.*

**EVERY** doctrine derived from the **WORD OF GOD** is manifestly designed to produce some beneficial effect on the human mind, and in consequence to call and bind man to the practice of some religious duty: Thus the doctrines concerning the manifestation of God in the flesh, concerning the redemption wrought by Him, concerning repentance, reformation, regeneration, a future state, &c. &c. have each of them a tendency to operate, more or less, on the will, the understanding, and the actions of man, by leading him to see either how great things his **HEAVENLY FATHER** hath done for him, or to discern how he ought to conduct himself, in order that the divine mercy and loving-kindness may not be extended to him in vain. For the **WORD OF GOD**, it is evident, in it's inmost bosom contains the whole of the divine will and wisdom in the closest union, and consequently, in proportion as mankind admit it by faith and love into their affections and thoughts, and thence suffer it to govern and direct their lives, it changes them from natural to spiritual; begets in them a new will and a new understanding; restores in them the divine image and likeness; purges and purifies them from all the defilements of sin, and thus accomplishes what is written in the prophet concerning it, *For as the rain cometh down, and the snow, from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My*

*mouth; it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it, [Isaiah lv. 10, 11.]*

And as this is the law of operation respecting the Sacred Scriptures or WORD OF GOD *in general*, so is it the law of operation in regard to every doctrine derived from those Scriptures *in particular*, consequently it is a law of operation extending to *the doctrine of opposites* which is the subject of the present pages, inasmuch as this doctrine is grounded in divine revelation, and supported continually by its enlightening and edifying testimony. For when the WORD OF GOD teaches that there is a heaven and a hell, and that man is a subject of influence from each of these kingdoms, whilst by influence from heaven he is continually drawn upwards, to believe in, to love, and to obey the ONE ETERNAL GOD, his merciful CREATOR and REDEEMER, and by influence from hell is as constantly drawn downwards, to believe in, to love, and to obey no God but himself and his passions; and when it is expressly said, that *no man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other, [Matt. vi. 24.]*, what surer proof can be given that the doctrine of opposites is a Scripture doctrine?

Let us proceed then to consider some of the more important effects, which the doctrine of opposites is calculated to produce on the human mind, together with the more interesting duties incumbent on man, as resulting from those effects.

And First—The doctrine of opposites has a powerful tendency to open man's eyes to the knowledge of the awful situation in which he is placed here below, by convincing him that he stands in the midst between two invisible kingdoms, the kingdom of light, and the kingdom of darkness, and by demonstrating further that the inhabitants of each kingdom have perpetual access to him; consequently, that

in all places and at all times, whether he be in company or alone; whether engaged in the business of life or in retirement; whether humbling himself before God in the sacred duties of the temple and the closet, or rebelling against God by a neglect of those duties; he is for ever encompassed by a multitude both of heavenly and infernal associates, who enter into all his thoughts, labour to attain possession of his will and affections, and use every effort to conjoin him with themselves, by inclining him either to good or evil, and by thus either opening his eyes to the bright light of the ETERNAL TRUTH, or closing them for ever against it's splendour and it's blessedness.

No human being, therefore, as to his soul or spirit, is absolutely isolated, or separated from other spirits, because such is the divine economy, discoverable throughout the universe of creation, that all created subjects stand in connection, more or less close, with the first and only fountain of life, called GOD, JEHOVAH, or LORD,\* and if that connection were broken, the created subjects must instantly perish. And as they stand thus in connection with the UNIVERSAL PARENT of life, they stand also in connection with each other; the nature of which connection is such, that heaven, or, what is the same thing, the angelic hosts who compose it, are closely associated, like soul and body, with the human race, whilst the human race again are in the same nearness to, and association with the kingdom of

\* In the Scriptures of the Old Testament the DIVINE BEING, we find, designated by the two distinct names, JEHOVAH, and GOD, the term JEHOVAH having more immediate reference to, and thus being intended to express, the divine principle of His *love* or *goodness*, whilst the term GOD has more immediate reference to, and is therefore intended to express the divine principle of his *wisdom* or *truth*. But in the Scriptures of the New Testament, the same Divine Being is perpetually called LORD, or JESUS, or CHRIST, the term LORD being expressive of the union of DIVINITY and HUMANITY in the glorified person of the GREAT SAVIOUR, whilst the terms JESUS and CHRIST are expressive of the two divine principles which constitute that union, viz. the divine *love* and *wisdom*, or the divine *goodness* and *truth*.

darkness, or the disorderly spirits who compose that kingdom.

Was any evidence besides that of Revelation required of the truth and reality of the above connection, it might be sought for, and found in the documents of every man's daily experience, if he would attend to what passes continually in his own mind. For whence comes it that the human mind is the subject of so many various opposite, and contending influences? How shall we give any satisfactory account of this fact of daily occurrence, that the evil purposes and thoughts, which man holds in most abhorrence, shall suddenly intrude on his mind without his consent, and put him to a momentary torture, whilst at the same time the good purposes and thoughts, in which he takes his chief delight, seem to fly away like so many birds of passage, and leave him in perplexity and misery at their departure, but destitute of power to recal them? It is absolutely impossible to explain these phenomena on any rational ground, but on that which rests on the authority of revealed truth, and which teaches that both good and evil spirits have continual access to man, and that thus all his purposes and thoughts are not self-derived, but originate, according to their quality, either in the kingdom of light and purity, or in the opposite kingdom of darkness, defilement, and disorder.

But how awful is this consideration, especially when attended with the melancholy reflection that few people, comparatively, are fully aware of their situation! How ought we then to be affected by that *doctrine of opposites*, which has a tendency thus to open our eyes to a view of the countless hosts of invisible friends and enemies which beset us! And how ought we further to attend to those serious and interesting duties, to the discharge of which this view so loudly and imperatively calls us!

For if it be true that the ministers of life and the ministers of death are thus continually around us, the former

meditating our salvation, and the latter plotting our destruction, (and what can be true, if this is not true?) then who cannot see the grand duty imposed on him by a principle of self-security, to be upon his guard, and at the same time to consult how he may give full effect to the blessed purposes of his heavenly friends; and most effectually defeat the destructive attempts of his infernal foes? For if angels from heaven were to visit us in bodily and visible forms, as they once visited the patriarchs of old, who amongst us would refuse them a friendly reception, and thus shut his doors against the inhabitants of heaven? On the other hand, were we assured that a spirit of darkness, with a dagger in his hand, was lurking under our beds at night, who amongst us would think it safe to come into himself to sleep with a murderer so near him? It is evident then that the *doctrine of opposites* is calculated to place us in the best posture of defence against all infernal agency, and at the same time to prepare our minds for the reception of the richest blessings of our HEAVENLY FATHER; by disposing us to pay a becoming attention to His ministers. Watchfulness therefore over the corrupt motions of self-love; habitual attention to the sources of our daily purposes and thoughts; devout supplication to be preserved from the numerous *foes of our own houses*; constant application to the light of divine truth, to enable us to draw the exact line of demarcation between good and evil; these are some of the weighty obligations imposed on us by the *doctrine of opposites*.

But **SECONDLY**—The *doctrine of opposites* teaches, not only that we are perpetually beset with an indefinite variety of evils, and of evil spirits, but also that the nature of evil is such, that it cannot by any possibility be annihilated, but only brought into subordination and subjection, thus that it must ever remain with us, yet with this difference, that so long as we continue to cherish it, we are its servants, bound in its chains, and hurried on to its den of



destruction, whereas from the moment we renounce it, we become it's rulers, break it's chains, and see it under our feet beneath us, producing no other effect upon us, than to increase our adoration of that DIVINE BEING, by whose power we are so miraculously preserved from it's defilements, it's subtleties, and it's dangers.

That this is the case with all evil, both generally and particularly, must be obvious from the representation given in the Sacred Scriptures, of the state and arrangement of evils in the regenerate mind. Thus we read in the prophet Isaiah, *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.* [Isaiah xi. 6, 7, 8, 9.] For in these words no intimation at all is given of the *annihilation* of the principles of evil, whether signified by the *wolf*, the *leopard*, the *bear*, the *lion*, the *asp*, or the *cockatrice*, but only of their *subjection* under the blessed spirit of innocence, which innocence and it's rule are figured by the *little child* that shall lead them, also by the *sucking child playing on the hole of the asp*, and the *weaned child putting his hand on the cockatrice' den*, in which case the principles of evil, though still existing and operative, are under divine control, and thus are deprived of their power of *hurting* and of *destroying*.

Hence then results another important duty binding on every Christian, which is this. In opposing his natural evils, and the powers of darkness with which they are connected, he will never attempt to *annihilate*, but only to *put them down* in their proper place of subordination, and submission, and to keep them there, by exalting the spirit of innocence from JESUS CHRIST, and thus JESUS CHRIST

Himself above them. He will, therefore, consider attentively what principles are in the *centre* of his own mind; and what in the *circumference*, and he will discover clearly, that if the principles of heavenly innocence, of love and charity from JESUS CHRIST are in the centre, and all opposite principles be driven to the circumference, then no evil can injure him, since every man is, and will be judged by, what is in the *midst* of him, and not by what is in the *extremities*. His grand concern therefore will be to exalt JESUS CHRIST to dominion, by maintaining the empire of His blessed spirit in the *inmost* recesses of his own mind; being well assured that if he continues faithful in this work, then what is *within* will presently manifest itself *without* in all its heavenly power of purification and separation, agreeable to the divine maxim, *"Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also."* [Matt. xxiii. 25.] Thus all evils will by degrees be removed from their *central holds* in his supreme love and affections, and banished to their *circumferential prisons*, where they will lose all their powers of injury and destruction; and thus too the mind of the humble and penitent Christian will become like the *orange* at his table, all sweetness and full of excellent flavour *within*, whilst the bitterness is only to be found in the *very extremity of the rind*.

THIRDLY—The above doctrine of opposites teaches, and this also on divine authority, not only that we are encompassed with evils and evil spirits, and that we must ever remain in some sort of contact with them, either as our lords and masters, or as our slaves and servants, but also that our emancipation from the tyranny of these our spiritual adversaries will depend upon ourselves, and on this single condition of life and conduct respecting ourselves, viz. whether we sincerely *repent of our sins*, and believe in JESUS CHRIST as *God manifested in the flesh*, to destroy in us the works of the devil, and at the same

time to open and form in us the eternal and blessed kingdom of His own pure love, wisdom, peace, purity, and well-doing.

That the doctrine of opposites is supported by divine authority in the above instruction, must be plain to every attentive reader of the WORD OF GOD. For what point is more frequently or strongly insisted on in the sacred volume, than the necessity of *repentance* for the removal of evil, and the necessity also of *faith* in a power above ourselves for the accomplishment of the same purpose? The everlasting Gospel is accordingly ushered in with the solemn admonitory precept, *Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*, [Matt. iii. 2; chap. iv. 17.]; whilst at the same time the BLESSED JESUS is announced as the *manifested* God, in whom all ought to believe, and to whom all ought to draw near and abide in, for the remission of their sins, and for *power to become the sons of God*. [See the Gospel throughout.]

Here then we find the doctrine of opposites pregnant also with other most important duties, and pressing them upon our attention and practice with irresistible force and eloquence. For what is the strong language of *opposites* on this occasion? Doth it not declare to all the families of the earth the edifying lesson, that every man *is* what he *loves to be*, and that he *is not* what he *hates to be*, and consequently that his state in eternity will depend altogether on the determination of his *love* in regard to good and evil, or, what amounts to the same thing, on the determination of his choice, whether good or evil shall be his lord and master? Doth it not declare therefore to all the families of the earth, that *repentance* and *faith* in the INCARNATE GOD are the two grand saving duties, and the *only two*, by the proper discharge of which man may hope for deliverance from eternal death, and admission into eternal life? For what shall we say is *Gospel repentance*, but a sincere hatred and detestation of all the evil of sin?

And what is faith in the INCARNATE GOD, but a sincere love of all the good which proceeds from that God, and of which He is at once the fruitful parent, and the beneficent disposer? Whilst *repentance* therefore shuts the door of the infernal kingdom, and keeps it shut, faith in the INCARNATE GOD opens the door of the heavenly kingdom, and keeps it open.

But how many graces and virtues are involved both in *repentance* and *faith*? For who can repent without diligent *self-exploration*; without a *competent knowledge* of the number and quality of his natural evils; without the *courage* to resist them; without *patience* and *perseverance* in such resistance, grounded in the conviction that they are not to be subdued *suddenly*? Who again can have *faith in the INCARNATE GOD*, unless he be previously enlightened with the knowledge who and what that God is, and that in Him DIVINITY and HUMANITY are inseparably united, and make one, inasmuch that no access or approach is given to DIVINITY, but by and through the assumed HUMANITY? Who again can have this faith, unless he has discovered also his own *weakness*, and his consequent need of DIVINE AID; unless too he be convinced that an eternal good is infinitely more deserving of his love than any temporal good; and lastly, unless he sees clearly that this eternal good is the love of God and of his neighbour, and that this love can never be secured and incorporated into his life, until it's precedency is acknowledged, and all other loves are submitted to it's blessed government and control? The *doctrine of opposites*, then, in conducting to *repentance* and *faith*, is a guide at the same time to the temple of wisdom, and to the possession of all the *gold, silver, and precious stones* included in that temple.

FOURTHLY—The doctrine of opposites, if well digested and understood, has a tendency to explain, in a manner the most satisfactory, the nature of those *spiritual trials* and *temptations*, to which man is exposed in the course of

his regeneration; and not only so, but likewise to demonstrate the expediency, and even necessity of such painful exercises for the removal of evil, and the consequent establishment of the love and the life of heavenly good in the human mind.

For all evil, it is well known, is a violent and restless principle, being perpetually under the impulse of the spirits of darkness; so that whensoever any attempt is made to bring it into submission and subjection, it immediately makes resistance, and strives to maintain its sovereignty in its own kingdom.

That such is the nature of evil, we learn from the constant testimony of the book of Revelation, which accordingly represents the life of man as a state of *combat* and *warfare* against his spiritual enemies, and as a consequent state of *sorrow*, until through victory he is introduced to the repose of peace, and his *sorrow is thus turned into joy*. The same truth is also confirmed by the general experience of mankind, which testifies universally that whensoever any one begins to do the work of repentance, by opposing any evil in his own heart and life, he never fails to be exposed to trial and temptation before the evil is subdued; nor doth he cease to be tried and tempted until the opposed evil bows down before a superior power, and submits to divine control.

It is however to be well noted, that no one is ever admitted into a state of trial and temptation until, in the *first* place, he is sincerely desirous to do the work of repentance, and thus to effect a separation in himself between the powers of heavenly good and of infernal evil, and until, in the *second* place, he is instructed in the distinct qualities both of good and evil, so as clearly to discern their indefinite varieties, and thus to see the precise boundaries by which the kingdom of light and bliss is separated from the kingdom of darkness and misery. For if there be no desire to do the work of repentance and separation, it is a most con-

vincing proof that man is under the dominion of evil, in which case he willingly suffers himself to be carried down it's stream, and making no resisting effort, is not made sensible of the violence of the current, as he immediately would be, if he attempted a change in the direction of his motion. Again, if there be no instruction received, as to the distinct qualities of good and evil, it is again impossible that a state of trial and temptation can be experienced, and that for this plain reason, because without such instruction derived from the ETERNAL TRUTH, man would be utterly incapable of maintaining successful combat against his spiritual adversaries, and consequently, if exposed to such combat, would become an easy prey to their malice and artifices.

Here then we may discover several other important duties resulting from the *doctrine of opposites*. For, if the great work of repentance cannot be effected without *trial and temptation* on the part of man, in other words, without *spiritual warfare and combat*, then it is expedient, in the *first* place, that every Christian be aware of this necessity, and in the *second* place, that he make provision accordingly, by *consulting* (as it is expressed in the parable) *whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand*. [Luke xix. 31.] But who, shall we say, is the wise disciple that thus *consulteth*? Who is the spiritual combatant that maketh the exact computation of the number and strength of his spiritual friends and foes? Let the words of JESUS CHRIST, with which the parable concludes, answer these questions—*So likewise, whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple*. [Ver. 33.] The true Christian, then, must *forsake all that he hath* before he can be taught of JESUS CHRIST how to conduct himself, so as to fight to the greatest advantage against his spiritual foes. But what, shall we say, is to be understood by *forsaking all that he hath*? It cannot

surely mean that he should part with his *lands and houses*, and other *temporal property*, since if this law were to become general, it would be impossible for society to exist. We are compelled then to conclude, that when **JESUS CHRIST** made this a condition of becoming His disciples, that man should *forsake all that he hath*, He had other property in view besides *lands and houses*, and that this other property is nothing else than man's natural will and natural understanding, thus all his natural affections, natural thoughts, and natural delights, to *forsake* which is no longer to regard them as *his own*, but to refer them all to a source above himself, that is to say, to the divine fountain of life, the INFINITE and ETERNAL.

Behold here then the great duty of the spiritual combatant, or that rule of life which every man is called to attend and practise, "when in a state of *spiritual trial and temptation*." For his strength in this state is to renounce all dependance on himself, by ascribing all that he hath to divine bounty, and thus possessing it as a continual gift from the **FATHER OF MERCIES**, rather than as property either self-derived or self-protected. The more absolute therefore that this self-renunciation is, the more complete will be his security, since in proportion as he acknowledges all of goodness and truth, all of will and understanding, all of affection and thought, to be from **GOD**, and not from himself, in the same proportion he places those principles under the protection of omnipotence, and thus, fighting under the banner of the **ALMIGHTY**, his warfare cannot fail to conduct him to victory, agreeable to the tenour of the divine promise, *Because thou hast made the LORD my refuge, the MOST HIGH thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways: They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder, the*

*young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet,* [Psalm xci. 9 to 14.] Thus too the true believer, in all his spiritual trials and temptations, like Jonah in the belly of the whale, experiences an immense increase of faith and love, resulting even from the principles of destruction, being enabled to say, *I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever; yet hast Thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God. I will sacrifice unto Thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay Thee that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.* [Jonah iii. 6, 9.]

FIFTHLY—Another effect of the doctrine of opposites is, to convince us of the danger of *mixing them together*, and at the same time to point out the benefit and the blessing which may be expected to result from preserving them in a state of distinction and separation.

Opposites are said to be *mixed*, when they are not distinguished or discriminated the one from the other, thus when no line of separation is drawn in the mind between good and evil, between truth and error, between *the fat cattle and the lean cattle*, [Ezech. xxxiv. 20.], between what is of God, and in agreement with His divine love and wisdom, and what is not of God, consequently what is opposed to Him and to all His sanctities. This confused state of good and evil, of truth and error, was figured by the *mixed multitude*, of which we read in the book of Exodus, where it is written concerning the children of Israel, at the time of their going up out of Egypt, that *a mixed multitude went up also with them, and flocks and herds, even very much cattle.* [Chap. xii. 38.] The same state is also described by the *hedge of the vineyard* which was to be *taken away*, and the *wall* which was to be *broken down*, of which it is thus written in the prophet Isaiah, “And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard; I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be



“*trod*dden down ; and I will lay it waste ; it shall not be “pruned, nor digged ; but there shall come up briars and “thorns,” [chap. v. 5, 6.] For under the figure of a *vineyard* is here manifestly described the church, called *the house of Israel*, and the men of Judah, according as it is written, *The vineyard of the LORD OF HOSTS is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah His pleasant plant*, [ver. 7.] ; and under the figure of a *hedge* and a *wall* is as plainly marked the discrimination of principles which ought to prevail in the church, together with the security thence derived, the former being signified by a *hedge*, and the latter by a *wall*, since the *hedge* of a vineyard, we know, is for separation and distinction of the vineyard from what is not the vineyard, whilst the *wall* is for defence. When therefore it is said by the ALMIGHTY, that He will *take away the hedge* of the vineyard, and *break down the wall*, we are instructed in the most significant language concerning the miserable and defiled state of the Jewish Church, viz: that for want of proper discernment and discrimination of principles, it would be left in the confusion of darkness, and the consequent terrible mixture of good and evil, of truth and error, of what is of God and what is not of God.

Hence then may be seen, in some degree, the *danger* to which we are exposed, whensoever, from want of due watchfulness and attention to the light of heavenly truth, we suffer the contending principles of our minds to be so confounded together, as not to be discerned by us in their proper distinct colourings, characters and tendencies. For, in such case, what must be the necessary consequence, but that our spiritual vineyard will be left without a *hedge*, or a *wall*, and will thus be *eaten up*, and *trod*dden down, whilst *the boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it?* [Psalm lxxx. 18.] Or, to speak without a figure, will not the evil affections, and false persuasions in our minds, being left unnoticed, and of course unrestrained by the light of the DIVINE TRUTH, im-

pose themselves upon us under the aspect of good affections and true persuasions, and thus tempt us to yield to their seducing and overwhelming influence? Will not evil thus clandestinely supplant good, and error truth, until at length we be left in such a miserable state of confusion and darkness, as not even to know what is good, or what is evil, what is true, and what is not true? And what must be the terrible result, but that, according to the dream of Pharaoh, *the ill-favoured and lean-fleeced kine will eat up the seven well-favoured and fat kine, and the seven thin ears will devour the seven rank and full ears?* [Gen. xli. 4, 6.] Or, to speak again without a figure, will not the evil affections, with their direful and delusive persuasions, destroy all the good affections, and extinguish every ray of heavenly truth in such a dark and disorderly mind, until they have established in it their own unlimited, yet infernal and destructive dominion?

But whilst we view with mingled horror and compassion the perilous state of a mind thus unexplored and unarranged, and thus confused and ~~unmixed~~, let us recreate our delighted eyes with the contrary portrait of that enlightened Christian, who hath begun to *set his spiritual house in order*, by noting, discriminating, and separating the several principles of good and evil, of truth and error, which he finds operative in himself, and contending for sovereignty. Behold him then, in the first place, planting in his spiritual vineyard, or rather suffering it to be planted by the GREAT HOUSEHOLDER, [see Matt. xxi. 33.], a *hedge of the most marked discrimination*, for separation and for defence! Behold him for this blessed purpose opening his mind continually to the light of heavenly truth, as it is imparted in the sacred pages of the revealed Word, since it is by this light alone that he can be qualified to distinguish the indefinitely various and contending principles of which his life is compounded; so as to *call them all by their names*, and to assign to each its proper place! Be-

hold him thus distinguishing accurately between the *lamb* and the *lion*, between the *sheep* and the *wolf*, between the *ox* and the *bear*, between the *dove* and the *owl*, between the *fir-tree* and the *thorn*, between the *myrtle-tree* and the *bramble*, and not only distinguishing, but arranging each principle in his own mind according to its proper precedence, as graduated in the scale of divine estimation! Can any one doubt of the infinite benefit and blessing which must of necessity result from such an arrangement? For in this case, will not all the principles of evil and of error, of defilement and of destruction, not only be deprived of their power, but be converted also into the happy means of promoting good, by bringing their opposites into fuller exercise, and thus by making them strike deeper root in the regenerate mind, comparatively as a stormy wind, by the agitation which it excites, fixes the disturbed tree more firmly in its soil? Will not harmony thus arise out of discord, peace out of conflict, rest out of labour, and this in proportion to the violence of those opposites? And will not thus the riddle of Samson be again verified and explained, *Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness?* [Judges xiv. 14.]

LASTLY—The doctrine of *opposites* has a tendency to unfold to us the mystery of all those changes of state and vicissitudes of events, which every man experiences here below, and thus to conduct us to the most edifying views of the stupendous operations of the DIVINE PROVIDENCE, in the regulation of those changes and vicissitudes; and at the same time, to compose our minds into such a Christian temperament of submission, gentleness, tranquillity, patience, and even cheerfulness, as may best secure to us all the blessings and benefits with which that providence is so abundantly fraught.

By the *changes of state* here adverted to, are to be understood all those perpetual and almost momentary fluctua-

tions in the affections, the thoughts, the sensations, the joys, the sorrows, &c. &c. which all men feel in a greater or less degree, and more especially those who are attentive to the operations of their own minds, and who from such attention are led to note more minutely all the risings and fallings of their mental *barometers* and *thermometers*.

For, in regard to the *affections*, how variable are these living principles in the course even of a single day, not only as to their intensesness, but likewise as to the multiplicity of objects and purposes towards which they are directed ! Alternately *warm* and *cold*, *elated* and *depressed*, *fixed* and *unstable*, how plainly do they demonstrate that the mind of man is not it's own master, but is under the control of foreign agency and influence of contending powers and principles, which drive it, as the wind drives chaff, in every direction, and this without even asking the consent of it's owner and lord ! What child of Adam hath not felt more or less of this alternation, whilst not only in the concerns of natural life, it's business, recreations, pursuits, and associations, but also in the more momentous interests of spiritual and eternal good, hope is suddenly supplanted by fear, joy by sorrow, and all the bright prospects of successful issues by the melancholy gloom of disappointment and despondency, and *vice versa* ? It is not, however, intended by this remark to insinuate that the determination of the human will in respect to good and evil, eternal life and eternal death, is not unchangeable ; because so far as such determination is in conjunction with the unchangeable purpose of the ALMIGHTY, so far it becomes itself unchangeable, fixed, and permanent, notwithstanding the changes which take place in the lower principles of the natural and sensitive mind. It is only intended to say, that so long as man continues in connection with matter, he must of necessity be subject, as to his *outward* man, to it's fluctuations, whatsoever may be the firmness and fixedness of the principles and persuasions of his *inner* man.

Yet what is thus true of the *affections* is equally true of the *thoughts, sensations, joys, sorrows, &c. &c.* to which they give birth, and which therefore, like their parents, are subject to perpetual vicissitudes. For who can say to any particular present thought, sensation, joy, or sorrow, *Stand still?* Let him only notice it's current, during the course of a single day, and he will find that he has no command over it, so as to render it stationary. How rapidly, for instance, does one *delight* succeed another in the short period of twenty-four hours! And who can count the variety of delights through which he passes during that period? Yet what are *delights* but the children of affections and thoughts, which thus by their continual variations make manifest the mutability of the sources from whence they spring?

Nor is this mutability more evident in the affections, thoughts, sensations, &c. of the human mind, than in the circle of human events, or of what are commonly called contingencies in the affairs and concerns of this lower world. This subject however is in itself so *trite*, having employed the pens of moralists in all ages, and being confirmed moreover by the common experience of mankind, that it may be sufficient to observe concerning it, that the fluctuation of all things merely temporal bespeaks the existence and operation of a *tide* in other things, besides the waters of the sea, and that this tide hath both it's *flux* and *reflux*, and is also, like the tide of waters, under the influence and action of superior powers. For what enlightened eye, which has been accustomed to contemplate the ebbings and flowings of human prosperity and adversity; the risings and fallings of empires, as well as of individuals; the summer and winter, the heat and cold, the seed time and harvest, the storm and calm, which so rapidly succeed each other in the various regions of men's purposes, pursuits, business, and employments, cannot discern also, that *the waters of the life of man*, as well as

those of the ocean, are kept in a continual agitation; that they move besides in alternate opposite directions; that *flux* is thus succeeded by *reflux*, and *reflux* again by *flux*; and that all this mutability is absolutely unaccountable without recourse had to the operation of the *opposites*, which have been the subject of the preceding pages, as they are acted upon and influenced by foreign powers, and those of an order infinitely superior to the subjects on which they act?

But what shall we say are these *foreign* and *superior powers*, which thus produce a daily *tide* both in the minds of men and their affairs? The thoughtless and unbelieving refuse to acknowledge any such powers, and therefore refer all contingencies to what they call *chance*, or *fortune*. The self-taught philosopher again, who sets his own conjectures above divine revelation, ascribes all human events to what he terms *the fixed laws of nature*, and of course supposes them to be the creatures of *necessity*. Shall we then, in agreement with these sentiments, exalt these visionary beings, called *chance* and *fortune* and *necessity*, by placing them on the throne of the MOST HIGH GOD? Or shall we not rather adopt the ideas and language of revealed wisdom, and say in our hearts, as well as with our lips, *JEHOVAH hath prepared His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom ruleth over all*, [Psalm ciii. 19.]; *Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before GOD; but even the very hairs of your head are all numbered?* [Luke xii. 6, 7.] Shall we not therefore bow down under the heartfelt acknowledgment of a DIVINE PROVIDENCE, which extends it's blessed superintendance, not only *generally*, but *particularly*, and thus to the most minute concerns of our lives? Surely if we believe in a divine revelation, we must be compelled to adopt this acknowledgment, and to confess in agreement with it that *chance* and *fortune* and *necessity* are mere *nonentities*, and that all things are under the control and

government of the INFINITE and the ETERNAL, whose name in the Old Testament is called JEHOVAH-GOD, but in the New Testament JESUS CHRIST.

But perhaps, on this occasion, some will object, and say, How can the *unchangeable* God, by His providence, either produce or tolerate the above-mentioned *changes* amongst men? If this ALMIGHTY BEING extends His divine influence and authority, His divine rule and government here below, whence comes it to pass, that we observe so much of a contrary influence and operation? and why does not the divine omnipotence instantly interpose itself to prevent all that vicissitude, mixture, and misrule, which such contrary influence and operation are perpetually introducing into the world both generally and individually?

The above *doctrine of opposites* can alone give a satisfactory answer to these objections, because this doctrine alone teaches, that the providence of the Almighty is principally employed in controlling *opposites*, that so they may become productive of all that good, which was originally intended by them, and which, there is every reason to believe, could not be produced without them. God therefore does not annihilate *opposites*, since in so doing, He would annihilate at the same time the free-will of man, and thus render him incapable of happiness, but he permits and governs *opposites*, agreeable to what was shown above in Section VIII, for the purpose of compelling them to administer to the blessedness of His kingdom. It is moreover to be observed, that the providence of God is not so much concerned in providing *temporal* gratifications, as in securing *eternal* joys, and is therefore operative rather in begetting a capacity for future bliss, than in promoting present indulgence. And since the capacity for future bliss depends entirely on man's purification from his natural evils, and these natural evils cannot be purged away and separated by any other means so effectually as by trials, troubles, difficulties, perplexities, vicissitudes and

alternations of joys and sorrows, through all the various states and stages of human life from the cradle to the grave, therefore the divine providence permits and directs those means, solely with a view to the blessed end to which they conduct the humble, the faithful, and the obedient.

Have we still any doubts on this interesting subject? Let us consider how the case stands in regard to the acquirement of any one evangelical grace and virtue. Let us take, for instance, the grace of *humility*, and then let us ask ourselves, what are the most likely and probable means of securing this inestimable grace, without which all other graces are of no account in the sight of God? But first let us consider well what *humility* really is, and implies, until we discern clearly that humility is the heartfelt acknowledgment that *of ourselves*, separate from divine influence, we are mere defilement, ignorance, misery, death, and hell, and that all the good we are capable of willing, thinking, and doing; all the truth too, which we are capable of seeing, acknowledging, and delighting in; all the happiness also, which we ever did or can enjoy; are perpetual gifts of a divine unmerited mercy, and no more originate in ourselves than the heat and light which we receive every day from the body of the sun. *Humility* therefore implies a profound sense of the all of God, and the comparative nothingness of man, consequently a sense that the all of merit, of glory, of power, and of every other excellence, is to be ascribed solely and exclusively to the INFINITE and the ETERNAL. It implies further, that we find our chief happiness in the above acknowledgment and sense, and in thus being restored to the true knowledge of God and of ourselves.

But who now, shall we say, is most likely to be the greatest proficient in this divine grace of humility, the man who is never made sensible of the fluctuations to which his own mind is exposed, and of the unsettled state



of human events, and of the continual operations of the divine providence in the control of both, or the true Christian, who is accustomed to attend to what passes daily both within him and without him, and to note a DIVINE HAND regulating all the wheels both of mind and matter, and directing their conflicting powers to the production of the greatest possible good? Surely both reason and religion agree in setting the bright crown of pure gold, whether constructed of any single virtue, or of all the virtues, on the head of the latter, and in declaring concerning the former that he is not as yet prepared to wear it. For what is more humbling to man than a right knowledge of God, and of himself; of God, as riding on the storm of human passions, and saying to the winds and waves, *Be still*; and of himself, as the continual subject of those boisterous agitations which expose him every instant to danger, and from which nothing can preserve him but the arm of an omnipotent God and SAVIOUR, perpetually stretched out for his protection? What, again, can be more humbling than a due and correct sense of human life; the uncertainty of its best-arranged plans and most flattering prospects; the very thin partition which separates between its brightest joys and its darkest sorrows; its sudden transitions from prosperity to adversity, from the enjoyment of friends, of honours, of reputation, of health, of property, &c. &c. to all that waste, desolation and destruction, which the whirlwind of opposites sometimes brings along with it so suddenly and so tremendously? Yet what is thus true of the heavenly grace of *humility*, is equally true of every other heavenly grace and virtue, not one of which can be deeply and firmly rooted in the human mind and life, until the recesses of the heart be attentively and diligently explored; until the collisions of contending principles be thus discovered; until likewise the uncertainties and fluctuations of all temporal things be seen and acknowledged; and, lastly, until recourse be had to the divine providence of

the MOST HIGH, as to the only regulating power by which those collisions can be restored to concord, and those uncertainties and fluctuations can be made to hear the divine voice, which says in the midst of them, *Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew you to-day,* [Exod. xiv. 13.] . . .

Do we wish then to attain unto the fulness of Christian perfection, as resulting from a full assemblage of all Christian graces and virtues? Do we wish to arise out of the lower regions of fretfulness, of discontent, of repining, either with regard to our own frailties and imperfections, or those of others, and to ascend into the pure atmosphere of unlimited submission to the divine will and providence in all things? Do we wish thus to maintain in our souls all that tranquillity, patience, and peace, of which JESUS CHRIST spake when He said to His disciples, *Peace I leave with you; My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you?* [John xiv. 27.] We must then, taking the light of the divine truth for our guidance, be bold to enter into the inmost recesses of our own minds, and there explore, as in the divine presence, all the conflicting principles, persuasions, joys, and delights, of which they are composed. We must also note, with a discerning eye, the unstableness of all things around us, and how, like the atmosphere with which we are encompassed, all our temporal concerns are subject to sudden alternations of *cloud and sunshine, of storm and calm, of cold and heat, of depression and elevation*, which are altogether out of the reach of human control. But we must not stop here. When we have thus contemplated with our spiritual microscope all that is passing in ourselves and in the world around us, we must then turn from this *valley of the shadow of death, and lift up our eyes unto the hills from whence cometh our strength*. And here, if we would secure all the advantages which our situation presents to our acceptance, we must acquaint ourselves well with the

**DIVINE BEING**, who dwells on these *hills*. We must observe how by His divine love and wisdom He is continually present in every part of His creation, in like manner as the sun of this world, which is an exact emblem of Him, is present by his reviving heat and light in every part of the system in which he shines. We must observe further how by His providence, which is nothing else but the government of His divine love and wisdom, He directs and rules all events, even the most minute, in the outward world of nature, and especially in the little kingdom of every human mind, that He may bring good out of evil, harmony out of discord, and order out of disorder. But we must not be content with *observation* only, nor even with the privilege, great as it is, of being introduced into the *divine presence*, and of *beholding* all the wonders of the divine administration. For to make that *presence* and *administration* blessings to us, it will be necessary that we connect ourselves with them in will, in purpose, in thought, and in operation; and especially in the will, purpose, thought, and operation, of renouncing all our natural evils from this pure and heavenly motive, because they are directly opposed to the divine will, the divine purpose, the divine thought, and the divine operation.

Here then let us fix our feet firm in the persuasion and the practice of the duty which most concerns us. Let us hate all sin and folly, because it is opposed to God, and let us love, cherish, and do all that is good and wise, because it is of God, and conducts to God. Thus may we humbly hope to connect ourselves with the divine omnipotence, the divine order, and the divine stability; and in the degree that this connection is perfected, divine omnipotence, order, and stability, will descend into all our affairs, and our *house will be founded on a rock*. And what words can describe the blessedness of such a state? For shall we not then be taken out of our own hands, and out of the hands of every enemy, and placed in the hands

of the GREAT FATHER OF MERCIES, the GOVERNOR OF THE UNIVERSE? And in this case will not mutability be converted into constancy, fluctuation into fixedness, in the affections, tempers, and dispositions of our minds, since whether we be in joy or sorrow, in prosperity or adversity; whether our passions be at rest or in commotion; whether we are basking in the sunshine of divine peace and consolation, or are left still to struggle with the waves of trial and temptation; in each and all of these states we shall be enabled to sing with the holy man of old, "*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swellings thereof. There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early,* [Psalm xli. 1. to 6.]

## CONCLUSION.

IF the reader wants any further evidence on the interesting subject of the foregoing pages, the Author is desirous of referring him to a work, which, he thinks, cannot fail to give him every satisfactory information. It was written originally in the Latin tongue by the learned, pious, and honourable EMANUEL SWEDENBORG, and was translated into the English language several years ago by a learned physician of this country. The work is divided into sections, and every section into distinct propositions, which are afterwards proved by the clearest reasonings grounded both in the documents of revelation and of philosophy. The heads of the several sections, together with the propositions into which they are divided, are as follow.

x *entitled Angelic Wisdom concerning the Divine Providence, and is*  
SECTION I.

THAT Divine Providence is the government of the divine love and the divine wisdom of the Lord.

*Propositions.*

1. That the universe, with all and singular it's contents, was created from the divine love by the divine wisdom. 2. That divine love and divine wisdom proceed as one from the Lord. 3. That this one is in a certain image in every created thing. 4. That it is of the divine providence that every created thing in general and in particular be such a one; and if it be not, that it be made so. 5. That the good of love is only so far good as it is united to the truth of wisdom; and that the truth of wisdom is only so far truth, as it is united to the good of love. 6. That the good of love not united to the truth of wisdom is not good

in itself, but is apparent good ; and that the truth of wisdom not united to the good of love is not truth in itself, but is apparent truth. 7. That the Lord doth not suffer any thing to be divided, wherefore it must be either in good and truth together, or it must be in evil and what is false together. 8. That what is in good and truth together is something, and that what is in evil and what is false together is not any thing. 9. That the divine providence of the Lord is efficacious in compelling evil and what is false together to serve for equilibrium, for relation, and for purification, and thus for the conjunction of good and truth with others.

## SECTION II.

**THAT** the end regarded by the Divine Providence of the Lord is the formation of heaven from the human race.

### *Propositions,*

1. That heaven is conjunction with the Lord. 2. That man by creation is of such a quality, as to be capable of nearer and nearer conjunction with the Lord. 3. That in proportion to the nearness of man's conjunction with the Lord, in the same proportion he becomes wiser. 4. That in proportion to the nearness of man's conjunction with the Lord, in the same proportion he becomes happier. 5. That in proportion to the nearness of man's conjunction with the Lord, in the same proportion it appears to him more distinctly that he is his own, and he observes more evidently that he is the Lord's.

## SECTION III.

**That** the Divine Providence of the Lord, in every thing which it doeth, hath respect to what is infinite and eternal.

*Propositions.*

1. That what is infinite in itself, and eternal in itself, is the same thing with what is divine. 2. That what is infinite and eternal in itself cannot but regard what is infinite from itself in things finite. 3. That the divine providence, in every thing which it doeth, hath respect to what is infinite and eternal from itself, especially in saving the human race. 4. That an image of the Infinite and Eternal exists in the angelic heaven, consisting of the human race who are saved. 5. That to regard what is infinite and eternal in forming the angelic heaven, that it may be before the Lord as one man, who is His image, is the inmost [principle] of the divine providence.

## SECTION IV.

THAT the laws of the Divine Providence are such as are unknown to man.

## SECTION V.

THAT it is a law of the Divine Providence, that man should act from freedom according to reason.

*Propositions.*

1. That man hath reason and freedom, or rationality and liberty; and that those two faculties appertain to man from the Lord. 2. That whatsoever a man doeth from freedom, whether it be of reason or not of reason, provided it be according to his reason, appears to him as his. 3. That whatsoever a man doeth from freedom according to his thought, is appropriated to him as his, and remains. 4. That man, by those two faculties from the Lord, is reformed and regenerated; and that without them he cannot be reformed and regenerated. 5. That man, by means of those two faculties, may be reformed and regenerated, so

far as he can be led by them to acknowledge that every thing good and true, which he thinketh and doeth, is from the Lord, and not from himself. 6. That the conjunction of the Lord with man, and the reciprocal conjunction of man with the Lord, is effected by those two faculties. 7. That the Lord, in every progression of His divine providence, keeps those two faculties appertaining to man untainted and as holy. 8. That therefore it is of the divine providence that man should act from freedom according to reason.

## SECTION VI.

THAT it is a law of the Divine Providence that man, as of himself, should remove evils as sins in the external man, and that thus, and no otherwise, the Lord can remove evils in the internal man, and at the same time, in such case, in the external.

### *Propositions.*

1. That every man hath an external and internal principle of thought. 2. That the external principle of man's thought is in itself of such a quality as his internal is. 3. That the internal cannot be purified from the concupiscences of evil, so long as evils are not removed in the external man, because they stop up the way. 4. That evils in the external man cannot be removed by the Lord except by the instrumentality of man. 5. That therefore man ought as of himself to remove evils from the external man. 6. That in such case the Lord purifies man from the concupiscences of evil in the internal man, and from the evils themselves in the external. 7. That it is the continual endeavour of the divine providence of the Lord to join man to Himself, and Himself to man, that he may give him the happy things of eternal life, which cannot be effected, only so far as evils with their concupiscences are removed.



## SECTION VII.

**THAT** it is a law of the Divine Providence, that man should not be compelled by external means to think and will, thus to believe and love the things which are of religion; but that man should induce, and occasionally compel himself.

*Propositions.*

1. That no one is reformed by miracles and signs, because they compel. 2. That no one is reformed by visions, and by discourse with departed spirits, because they compel. 3. That no one is reformed by threats and punishments, because they compel. 4. That no one is reformed in states of non-rationality and non-liberty. 5. That it is not contrary to rationality and liberty for a man to compel himself. 6. That the external man must be reformed by the internal, and not contrariwise.

## SECTION VIII.

**THAT** it is a law of the Divine Providence that man be led and taught from the Lord out of heaven, by means of the word, of doctrine, and of preaching from the word, and this in all appearance as from himself.

*Propositions.*

1. That man is led and taught from the Lord alone. 2. That man is led and taught from the Lord alone, through the angelic heaven and out of it. 3. That man is led of the Lord by influx, and is taught by illustration. 4. That man is taught from the Lord by means of the Word, of doctrine, and of preaching from the Word, thus immediately from himself alone. 5. That man is led and taught from the Lord in things external in all appearance as from himself.

## SECTION IX.

THAT it is a law of the Divine Providence that man should not perceive and be sensible of any thing respecting the operation of the divine providence, but that he should still know and acknowledge that operation.

*Propositions.*

1. That if man perceived and was sensible of the operation of the divine providence, he would not act from freedom according to reason, neither would any thing appear to him as of himself: In like manner if he foreknew events. 2. That if man manifestly saw the divine providence, he would bring himself into the order and tenor of it's progress, and would pervert and destroy it. 3. That if man manifestly saw the divine providence, he would either deny a God, or would make himself a God. 4. That it is given to man to see the divine providence from behind and not from before; also in a spiritual state, and not in a natural state.

## SECTION X.

THAT man's own proper prudence is no prudence, and only appears to be prudence, and likewise ought to appear to be so: but that the Divine Providence, as operating in things most singular, is universal.

*Propositions.*

1. That all the thoughts of man are from the affections of his life's love, and that there are no thoughts at all, nor can any be given, without those affections. 2. That the affections of man's life's love are known to the Lord alone. 3. That the affections of man's life's love from the Lord are led by His divine providence, and at the same time, in such case, the thoughts which give birth to human prudence. 4. That the Lord by His divine providence compounds the affections of the whole human race into one form, which is human. 5. That hence heaven and hell, which are from the human race, are in such a form. 6.

That they, who have acknowledged nature alone, and human prudence alone, make hell; and that they, who have acknowledged God and His divine providence, make heaven. 7. That all these things cannot be effected unless it appears to man that he thinks from himself, and from himself manages his concerns.

### SECTION XI.

THAT the Divine Providence hath respect to things eternal, and to things temporal in no other way, than so far as they are in agreement with things eternal,

#### *Propositions.*

1. That temporal things have reference to dignities and riches, thus to honours and gains, in the world. 2. That eternal things have reference to spiritual honours and wealth, which are of love and wisdom, in heaven. 3. That things temporal and things eternal are separated by man, but are joined together by the Lord. 4. That the conjunction of things temporal and things eternal is the divine providence of the Lord.

### SECTION XII.

THAT man is not let into the truths of faith, and into the goods of charity, interiorly, unless so far as he can be kept in them, even to the end of life.

#### *Propositions.*

1. That man may be let into the wisdom of spiritual things, and likewise into the love of them, and yet not be reformed. 2. That if man afterwards recedes from them, and goes away into what is opposite, he profanes holy things. 3. That there are several kinds of profanations, but that this kind is the worst of all. 4. That on this account the Lord doth not let man interiorly into the truths of wisdom, and at the same time into the goods of love, unless so far as man can be kept in them, even to the end of life.

## SECTION XIII.

THAT the laws of permission are also laws of the Divine Providence.

*Propositions.*

1. That the wisest of men, Adam and his wife, suffered themselves to be seduced by the serpent, and that God did not avert this by His divine providence. 2. That their first son Cain slew his brother Abel, and that God did not prevent it at the time by speaking with him, but only cursed him when the deed was done. 3. That the Israelitish nation in the wilderness worshipped a golden calf, and acknowledged it for a god, who brought them out of the land of Egypt, when yet Jehovah saw this from Mount Sinai, which was near, and did not deprecate it. 4. That David numbered the people, and that on this account pestilence was sent, by which so many thousands of men perished, and that God sent the prophet Gad to him, not before, but after the deed was done, and denounced punishment against him. 5. That Solomon was permitted to establish various kinds of idolatrous worship. 6. That many kings after Solomon were permitted to profane the temple and the holy things of the church. 7. That the Jewish nation were permitted to crucify the Lord. 8. That every worshipper of self and worshipper of nature confirms himself against the divine providence, when he sees so many wicked people in the world, with so much impiety, and in some cases a glorying in impiety, and still that they are not punished by God. 9. That the worshipper of self and the worshipper of nature confirms himself against the divine providence, when he sees wicked people exalted to honour, and crowned with distinction and pre-eminence, abounding also in wealth, and living in luxury and magnificence, whilst the worshippers of God live in contempt and poverty. 10. That the worshipper of self and the worshipper of nature confirms himself against a divine providence, when he thinks that wars are permitted;

attended with the destruction of so many men, and the ruin of their property. 11. That the worshipper of self and the worshipper of nature confirms himself against the divine providence, when he thinks, according to his own view, that victory turns on the side of prudence, and sometimes not on the side of justice; also that it is of no moment, whether a general be upright or otherwise. 12. That the mere natural man confirms himself against the divine providence, when he looks at the religious state of various nations, and observes that there are some who are altogether ignorant of the being of a God, and some who worship the sun and moon; some likewise who worship idols and graven images. 13. That the mere natural man confirms himself against the divine providence, when he looks at the religion of Mahomet, and sees that it has been received by so many empires and kingdoms. 14. That the mere natural man confirms himself against the divine providence, when he sees that the Christian religion is received only in a small part of the habitable globe, called Europe, and that there it is divided. 15. That the mere natural man confirms himself against the divine providence from this circumstance, that in several kingdoms, where the Christian religion has been received, there are some who claim to themselves divine power, and wish to be worshipped as gods. 16. That the mere natural man confirms himself against the divine providence from this circumstance, that amongst those who profess the Christian religion, there are some who make salvation to consist in certain expressions which they think and speak, and not at all in the good things which they do. 17. That the mere natural man confirms himself against the divine providence from this circumstance, that there have been, and still are, so many heresies in the Christian world, as Quakerism, Moravianism, Anabaptism, and several others. 18. That the mere natural man confirms himself against the divine providence from this circumstance, that Judaism still continues. - 19. That doubt may be inferred against the divine

providence from this consideration, that the whole Christian world worships one God under three persons, that is, three Gods; and that still it is unknown, that God is one in person and essence, in whom is a trinity, and that that God is the Lord. 20. That doubt may be inferred against the divine providence from this consideration, that heretofore it hath not been known that in singular the things of the Word there is a spiritual sense, and that it's sanctity is thence derived. 21. That doubt may be inferred against the divine providence from this consideration, that hitherto it hath not been known that to shun evils as sins is the very Christian religion itself. 22. That doubt may be inferred against the divine providence from this consideration, that hitherto it hath not been known, that man liveth a man after death, and that this hath not been before discovered.

#### SECTION XIV.

THAT evils are permitted for an end, which is salvation.

##### *Propositions.*

1. That every man is in evil, and that he must be led away from evil that he may be reformed. 2. That evils cannot be removed, unless they appear. 3. That so far as evils are removed, so far they are remitted. 4. That thus the permission of evil is for the sake of an end, that there may be salvation.

#### SECTION XV.

THAT the Divine Providence is operative alike with the wicked as with the good.

##### *Propositions.*

1. That the divine providence is universal in things most singular, not only with the good, but also with the wicked; and that still it is not in their evils. 2. That the wicked continually lead themselves into evils, but that the Lord continually draws them from evils. 3. That the

wicked cannot be drawn altogether from evil, and led in good, so long as they believe that their own intelligence is every thing, and that the divine providence is not any thing. 4. That the Lord rules hell by opposites, and that in regard to the wicked who are in the world, He rules them in hell as to the interiors, but not as to the exteriors.

### SECTION XVI.

**THAT** the Divine Providence doth not appropriate evil to any one, nor good to any one, but that man's own prudence appropriates each.

#### *Propositions.*

1. What man's own proper prudence is, and what the prudence not properly his own. 2. That man, from his own proper prudence, persuades and confirms himself, that all good and truth is from himself and in himself, in like manner every thing evil and false. 3. That every thing of which man is persuaded, and in which he is confirmed, remains with him as his own. 4. That if man believed, as the truth is, that every thing good and true is from the Lord, and every thing evil and false from hell, he would not appropriate good to himself, and make it meritorious, neither would he appropriate evil to himself, and make himself guilty of it.

### SECTION XVII.

**THAT** every man is capable of being reformed, and that there is no such thing as predestination.

#### *Propositions.*

1. That the end of creation is the formation of heaven from the human race. 2. That hence it is of the divine providence, that every man is capable of being saved, and that they are saved who acknowledge a God, and lead good lives. 3. That man himself is in fault, if he be not saved. 4. That thus all are predestinated to heaven, and none to hell.

## SECTION XVIII.

THAT the Lord cannot act contrary to the laws of Divine Providence, because to act contrary to those laws would be to act contrary to His own divine love and divine wisdom, thus contrary to Himself.

*Propositions.*

1. That the operation of the divine providence to save man commences at his nativity, and continues even to the end of his life, and afterwards to eternity. 2. That the operation of divine providence is continually effected by means [or mediums] out of pure mercy. 3. That instantaneous salvation from immediate mercy cannot possibly be given. 4. That instantaneous salvation out of immediate mercy is a *fiery flying serpent* in the church.



Such are the interesting subjects discussed in the work under consideration; and therefore it is earnestly recommended to the reader, who is desirous of gaining a satisfactory idea of the wonderful operations of the Divine Providence, and of the nature and use of *Opposites*, to consult the volume from whence the above extracts are made, that so he may be fully gratified by observing the luminous and convincing proofs which follow and confirm every proposition.



**FINIS.**