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## ARTICLE I.

### THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL IN ITS THEOLOGICAL RELATIONS.

The question which we considered in our last article in this REVIEW (April, 1880), was, whether our position that the first sin was not necessitated by an efficacious decree of God is uncalvinistic and untrue. We showed that the Supralapsarians themselves maintain the distinction between efficacious and permissive decree in relation to the first sin, and hold that God did not effect that sin, considered as sin, but permitted it. We next showed that Calvin was a Sublapsarian, so far as the order of the divine decrees and the object of predestination are concerned. But the question occurred, whether he held the view that God necessitated the first sin by an efficacious decree, and, more particularly, whether he decreed to effect, and therefore actually effected, the first sin, regarded as an act or an historical event, while he permitted man to infuse the evil quality into the act, or, to fail in producing the good quality which ought to have existed. That was the particular question under discussion when we were compelled to bring the article to a close, and we now proceed with its consideration. Having remarked that we proposed to adduce and examine the most prominent passages in the writings of the Reformer which seem to place him on the affirmative of

## ARTICLE VII.

## ONE PHASE OF THE PRAYER QUESTION.

The general question is, Shall sinful, needy, helpless man pray?

1. No, said the ancient atheist; for it is absurd to pray to Nothing. We cannot adore nothing. If man is a praying animal, so much the worse for man.

No, echoes the modern atheist, we cannot adore Protoplasm. And the modern atheist is as self-consistent as the ancient. For how preposterous any worship on his part would be, appears from the substitution of his divinity for Jehovah in the noble lyrics of the Psalmist. While atheists may perhaps advocate a vague devotional frame of mind as a good sort of thing, they cannot bring themselves to say: "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before Protoplasm our Maker; for Protoplasm is our God; it is It that hath made us, and not we ourselves. Let the floods clap their hands, let the hills be glad together before Protoplasm."

2. Pantheists may dream of communion with The All, but of all dreams theirs is the idlest. The All cannot hear our cries; cannot pity, cannot help, though peradventure it may crush and destroy.

3. Deists, who believe in the being of a personal, extramundane God, but reject the Bible, differ among themselves. Some hold to the duty of prayer, and perhaps, to a limited extent, indulge in its practice; but others on various grounds object to it, theoretically as well as practically. They say that God is too wise to make any mistakes in the government of the world, and it is an act of presumption on our part to attempt to instruct him or take the reins of government out of his hands; he is immutable, and we cannot hope, and should not desire, to change his methods or thwart his plans. This we understand to be the argument of unbelief, if such paltry stuff deserves to be called an argument.

Others again, and notably Mr. Tyndall, who in his strong moments may be, at least by courtesy, classed among theists, distinguish between the objects of prayer. They admit, or rather

they will not deny, that God may answer prayer in the domain of mind, if, indeed, there be such a domain, but not in the charmed realm of matter.

4. As a matter of course, Christians, accepting the Bible as the inspired and infallible word of God, pray for blessings temporal as well as spiritual: for health, for prolonged life, for rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness. They hold that God is our Father, and will withhold no good from them that fear him; that he knoweth what we have need of before we ask him, and therefore we should not din his ears with vain repetitions, as the heathen do; that he awakens within us desires for the spiritual blessings which he intends to bestow; that he knows far better what is good for us than the wisest of us can possibly know; that prayer should be made for things agreeable to his will, and with submission to his superior wisdom, but also in reliance upon his infinite love. Hence there is in prayer no impeachment of the divine wisdom or goodness, but the highest recognition of them both; and in regard to the immutability of God's character and purposes, while there may be metaphysical difficulties in connexion with the subject, yet they bear no more upon the duty of prayer than upon the duty of effort in any other line. If his unchangeableness forbids us to pray, it forbids us to labor too.

5. Is there no concession, then, that we can make to the prayerless scientism of the day? No exhibition of candor, to conciliate its favorable regards? May we not show ourselves free from the shackles of dogmatism, and superior to the low prejudices of party?

Let us choose our ground carefully. There is that great *dictum*, that the laws of nature are uniform. The empiricists and intuitionists, John Stuart Mill and his opponents, may differ as to the origin of the conviction universally entertained on this point, and even as to the universality of the conviction itself. But it is generally considered a safe thing to believe and to say that the laws of the material world are uniform; perhaps even to pronounce this apothegm to be the grand major premiss of all induction. Anyhow, the *dictum* is safe, and perfectly "*en règle*." May we not so use it as to silence the clamors of the students of

Matter, and yet, by holding firmly to the truth of miracles, defend Christianity?

6. Some years ago the writer was a member of a debating club, composed chiefly of professional gentlemen. At one of the meetings, a member, who was a Presbyterian minister, set forth the theory that at the foundation of the world the Almighty had so arranged all the laws of matter as to answer the prayers of his people without any new adjustment or ordering of those laws, or of matter under those laws. The Christian prays for some result in the physical world. The desired result comes to pass, but it was foreseen that he would ask for it, and the train was set in motion away back on the verge of eternity, so as to accomplish at the right moment the ends wished for. A college president dissented from this view. An ex-professor of theology exclaimed with great warmth, "The doctrine is not found in the Reformed theology"—meaning, of course, the Reformed as distinguished from the Lutheran theology. The writer of this article remarked, "It is a fearful doctrine." This is the phase of the prayer question which we propose to discuss, and we begin with a word as to the conduct of the argument.

Ninety or ninety-five of every hundred readers of this REVIEW are believers in Christianity, and nearly all of these are members of evangelical churches. It is for them above all that this article is written. We weary of the war with unbelief. A while back and it was Hume and Condillac; then Lord Herbert of Cherbury, and my Lord Bolingbroke, and Mr. Chubb, and Mr. Morgan; then, passing over into France, it was Voltaire, Diderot, D'Alembert, and the Encyclopedists generally; then back again into Britain and on into America, it was Tom Paine, and now in England it is Huxley and Tyndall, Tyndall and Huxley, Protoplasm and Joshua, Prayer Tests and Lay Sermons, until we sigh for relief, and can almost adapt the words which Jean Paul puts into the mouth of the man who attempted to travel to the outside of the world-systems, and cry out, "Let me lie down in the grave and hide me from this persecution, for end I see there is none." As the elder Hodge has said, it is very trying to see men calmly endeavor to destroy all our hopes of heaven, and to

prove our adorable Redeemer to be an impostor. But we have not to do at present with them. We write now for God's own people, who already believe that he hears the cry of the young raven, much more that of his own suffering children.

In expounding the infinitesimal *calculus*, one does not need to go back to the simplest elements of arithmetic. So in writing for believers, it is not necessary to discuss the settled question as to whether God answers prayer for physical blessings. But it may be useful to the household of faith to consider whether the foregoing theory is true, or in any way necessary for the confirmation of our faith. Is the Church prepared to receive it as the explication of any part of the doctrine of prayer?

That the theory is no novelty in theological speculation will be shown in the next section. Indeed, genuine novelties are by no means so common as some people suppose. Errors long buried revive again, and old battles often have to be fought over again, and with very much the same old weapons.

7. Dr. James Buchanan, the able successor of Dr. Chalmers in the Divinity Chair, New College, Edinburgh, furnishes enough for our present purpose in his work on "Modern Atheism." He mentions four hypothetical solutions of the difficulties urged against Prayer:

1st. "That there is the same relation between prayer and the answer to prayer as between cause and effect in any other sequence of nature. . . . To this solution Dr. Chalmers seems to refer, when he says that the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer but introduces a new sequence to the notice of the mind, that it may add another law of nature to those which have formerly been observed."

"The second hypothetical solution is that of those who hold that while God, in answering the prayers of men, does not ordinarily disturb the known or discoverable sequences of the natural world, yet his interference may be alike real and efficacious though it should take place at a point in the series of natural causes far removed beyond the limits of our experience and observation. . . ."

"The third hypothetical solution is that of those who hold that a divine answer to prayer may be conveyed through *the ministry of angels*. . . ."

"The fourth hypothetical solution is that of those who hold that God has so arranged his providence from the beginning as to provide for particular events as well as for general results, and especially to provide an answer to the prayers of his intelligent creatures."

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He then quotes from three distinguished men who seem to have adopted this last solution. First from Euler, the great mathematician, a most voluminous author, and in his specialty standing in the rank next to Archimedes, Newton, Leibnitz, and La Place.

"I begin," says Euler in one of his letters to a German Princess, "with considering an objection which almost all the philosophical systems have started against prayer. Religion prescribes this as our duty, with an assurance that God will hear and answer our vows and prayers, provided they are conformable to the precepts which he hath given us. Philosophy, on the other hand, instructs us that all events take place in strict conformity to the course of nature, established from the beginning, and that our prayers can effect no change whatever, unless we pretend to expect that God should be continually working miracles in compliance with our prayers. This objection has the greater weight, that religion itself teaches the doctrine of God's having established the course of all events, and that nothing can come to pass but what God foresaw from all eternity. Is it credible, say the objectors, that God should think of altering this settled course in compliance with any prayers which men might address to him? But I remark, first, that when God established the course of the universe, and arranged all the events that must come to pass in it, he paid attention to all the circumstances which should accompany each event, and particularly to the dispositions, desires, and prayers of every intelligent being; and that the arrangement of all events was disposed in perfect harmony with all these circumstances. When, therefore, a man addresses to God a prayer worthy to be heard, that prayer was already heard from all eternity, and the Father of mercies arranged the world expressly in favor of that prayer, so that the accomplishment should be a consequence of the natural course of events. It is thus that God answers the prayers of men without working a miracle."

This extract from Euler is long, but it presents the case so fully that its admission is justifiable. It also brings out the strength of the argument in favor of the theory, and disarms prejudice by the evident good intention with which it is pervaded.

The second authority is Dr. Wollaston, who says:

"It is not impossible that such laws of nature, and such a series of causes and effects, may be originally designed, that not only general provisions may be made for the several species of beings, but even *particular cases*, at least many of them, may also be provided for without innovations or alterations in the course of nature. . . . Thus the prayers which good men offer to the all-knowing God, and the neglects of others, may find fitting effects already forecasted in the course of nature."

The third authority, Dr. Robert Gordon, delivers nothing bearing particularly upon the question.

The fourth, Bishop Warburton, says :

“We should blush to be thought so uninstructed in the nature of prayer as to fancy that it can work any temporary change in the dispositions of the Deity, who is ‘the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.’ Yet we are not ashamed to maintain that God, in the chain of causes and effects, which not only sustains each system, but connects them all with one another, hath so wonderfully contrived that the temporary endeavors of pious men shall procure good and avert evil by means of that ‘pre-established harmony’ which he hath willed to exist between moral actions and natural events.”

Dr. Buchanan, however, winds up the chapter by saying :

“On the whole, we feel ourselves warranted and even constrained to conclude, that the theory of ‘government by natural law’ is defective, in so far as it excludes the superintendence and control of God over all the events of human life, and that neither the existence of second causes nor the operation of physical laws should diminish our confidence in the care of Providence and the efficiency of prayer.”

So that he does not appear to have been convinced by the reasonings of Euler and the rest ; as we assuredly are not.

These extracts, however, will serve to place before the reader the objectionable tenet in the language of its promulgators themselves ; exhibited in the exact shade of meaning, and sustained by the arguments of its defenders.

8. Perhaps no fitter place will be reached in the discussion for a word as to the ill effect of too engrossing a study of the exact sciences. This is suggested by the mention of the illustrious Euler. We have long regarded Sir. Wm. Hamilton’s diatribe against the study of mathematics very much as Dr. McCosh seems to regard it—*i. e.*, as, after all, an absurd performance. It was a brilliant partisan harangue, not a weighty judicial opinion. At the same time, it must be allowed that a narrow range of thought will make narrow thinkers. The mind needs a variety of food ; and a one-sided training will develop one-sided men, whether that training be metaphysical, mathematical, linguistic, or what is now-a-days termed scientific. Astronomers see a great deal of the reign of law. The plane of the ecliptic remains parallel to

itself age after age. If there are any minute deviations, they merely furnish a new problem to the student. If the moon is not precisely where it should be by the tables, the tables are incorrect—that is all; and some patient Hansen must hunt about for an overlooked source of disturbance.\* It is never supposed that the Maker of the heavens has interfered with his workmanship. It is easy to see that a mind habituated to such views would come to think after a while that God never touches the complicated but perfect mechanism of the heavens and the earth at any point or for any purpose whatever. We need hardly say how narrow this view is, but we can see how eminent men may take a very contracted survey of God's works. They sink a deep but slender shaft, from whose lowest point they can behold little of the wealth of the glory of the sky.

It may be thought that Euler was a man of different stamp; and in some sense he was. The son of a Swiss clergyman, who wished him to enter the pulpit, he for a time studied theology and the oriental tongues. Blessed with a memory like that of Magliabecchi, Mezzofanti, or Addison Alexander, he forgot nothing that he had learned in botany, chemistry, history, and medicine. Strangers were astonished at his information and erudition. His adopting the hurtful error under consideration, however, shows how far a fine mind may be warped on other subjects by a too predominating attention to mathematics and physics. We do not forget his standing up manfully for revealed religion in the evil days of Voltaire and Frederick of Prussia, or his toiling away at science during the last seventeen years of his life in blindness. Only, therefore, with infinite regret, be it stated, that

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\* The moon is so accessible to observation, and so important to navigators, that it has been studied from a very early period. Five chief perturbations have been eliminated, viz.: Evection, suspected by Hipparchus; Variation, thought by some to have been known to Abul Wefa in the ninth century; Parallaxic Inequality, Annual Equation, and Secular Acceleration. To these Hansen has added two inequalities due to the attraction of Venus. The maximum error in its calculated place is now only ten seconds. So that in the whole range of science there is hardly an illustration more pertinent. Bradley's discovery of the Aberration of Light, however, as a single instance, is unsurpassable.

his was one of a few high names sustaining a mischievous theory. A few names can be adduced in favor of almost any vagary. Everybody knows that Bishop Warburton taught that the ancient Jews had no knowledge of a future state. It requires the *consensus* of both learned and sound men to give any authority to an opinion.

9. As to the hypothesis itself, it may be remarked, *in the first place*, that it is *only* an hypothesis—*i. e.*, a suggested explanation of certain facts; one, indeed, of several hypothetical solutions. The Scriptures bid us pray. The scientist says, It will accomplish nothing if you do, for nature is unalterable. By way of an Irenicum, it is replied, Perhaps God foreseeing what physical blessings his believing children would ask for, prearranged the machinery so as to bring out what is wanted just *when* and *as* it is wanted. This, we repeat, is only an hypothesis; and it is very noticeable that there is not one word of it in all the revelation which God hath given us. There is positively not one intimation looking toward such a thing, however needful some may deem it to the confirmation of the faith of the Church. Neither do the Scriptures contain any utterances, from which, by just and sound inference, any such hypothesis can be deduced. This silence of Scripture is certainly ominous; for though God's word is not a text-book in astronomy or geology, in physics or zoology, it does insist everywhere on the duty of prayer; and it would have been infinitely easy for some one of the inspired writers to say that God has thus cunningly devised this mighty frame of nature—if any of them had only believed it. Aye! there's the rub. What a help might not such a deliverance have been to weak-kneed Christians! Whether it would have promoted the discharge of the high and solemn duty of prayer, will be considered in due time. But in regard to the writers of the sixty-six books of Holy Scripture, we do not for one moment imagine that the hypothesis ever entered one of their heads. That is, of course, as a verity. If it did, what a felicitous use might not the intellectual Paul have made of it before those very distinguished Stoics and Epicureans on Mars' Hill! It seems that the *élite* of Athens could not abide the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. Some

held what would now be called Fatalism; others, that God had assigned its laws to nature and then left nature to itself. This would have been a most opportune opening for the ever conciliatory Apostle of the Gentiles. "Why, *ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι*," he might have said, "you greatly misunderstand me. I agree with both of you. I am going to reconcile Zeno and Epicurus. Just see how neatly I can do it by my hypothesis."

Again, as this hypothesis cannot be proven and is not countenanced by Scripture, so also it cannot be proven from science. A general uniformity of the laws of nature, as accepted more or less fully and intelligently by all men, is the poles apart from the Epicurean notion that God exercises no control over his works. But more of this in another section.

10. *In the second place*, it may be remarked, that this hypothesis is closely akin to Leibnitz's obsolete theory of a "preëstablished harmony." This appears to have occurred to Bishop Warburton, as is shown by the occurrence of the phrase in the above given extract.

Leibnitz came, as all thinkers sooner or later come, to the unbridged chasm between Matter and Mind. He set out from his curious, original, and, in some respects, highly erroneous theory of Monads. God is the highest Monad. A material point is the lowest. A *material point*, mark you: not a mathematical point, which has neither length, breadth, nor thickness, but position only; whereas, a material point has all three dimensions in an infinitesimal degree, and hence may, after a fashion, be said to be unextended. The whole range of monads may be represented by a continuous line, one of whose ends rests upon the earth, while the other is lost in the infinite sky. A line representing an equation that has no discontinuous values. So closely allied are his mathematical and his metaphysical conceptions. An unbroken gradation of beings from the infinitesimal, and hence unseen atom, of which a boundless number constitute a grain of sand, stretching up through the mineral, the vegetable, the animal, the spiritual kingdoms, until it ends in the last term of the series which is the unseen God—such was the conception of the universe elaborated by this brilliant and daring genius. This scheme,

it will be observed, well nigh obliterates the essential distinction between Mind and Matter. In fact, it is a species of Monism, although Leibnitz would have been far from willing to be considered a Monist in the ordinary sense of the term. It favors the "*unisubstancisme*" of Spinoza and his disciples, yet Leibnitz was an earnest believer in a personal God.\*

One would suppose from this brief exposition that Leibnitz would have no difficulty with the interaction of mind and matter. But so far from it, he denies such interaction wholly. A simple illustration from mechanics will convey our idea of his doctrine. An ivory ball rolling upon a marble slab may so impinge upon another ball that the latter shall go off obliquely at any angle less than a right angle to the original direction of the first ball. But this is due to the spherical shape of both balls. Reduce them to material points, and the only motion the first can communicate to the second is in the prolongation of the straight line along which the first was moving when it struck the second. Now, Leibnitz sometimes defines a monad dynamically—*i. e.*, as if it were a force. The result of a force must conserve the direction of the force as well as the amount. "*Lex de conservanda quantitate directionis.*" Hence a spiritual force cannot generate a mechanical effect. The soul cannot originate motion in any one of the infinitely numerous monads which constitute its body. (He defines the body as "*Une masse composée par une infinité d'autres monades qui constituent le corps propre de cette monade centrale.*") Much less, of course, can it originate motion in the infinitude of monads of which the body is the aggregation. To account, then, for the phenomena of bodily injuries awakening painful sensations, and mental conations being immediately followed by the desired bodily movements, Leibnitz had recourse to his theory of

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\* Leibnitz thought that he had overthrown Spinozism by his doctrine of Monads: "Je ne sais comment vous pouvez en tirer quelque Spinosisme ; au contraire c'est justement par ces monades que le Spinosisme est détruit. Car il y a autant de substances véritables, et pour ainsi dire de miroirs vivans de l'univers toujours subsistans ou d'univers concentrés, qu'il y a de monades, au lieu que, selon Spinoza, il n'y a qu'une seule substance." (From his Second Letter to Mr. Bourguet, quoted by Ueberweg, Hist. of Philos., Vol. II.)

a preëstablished harmony between all the monads. God in the beginning impressed such laws upon both mind and matter, that, when the one willed, the other should move, and move not only when, but as, the mind willed. In other words, if Leibnitz could not bridge over the chasm, he tunnelled under it, and based the opposite and corresponding granite cliffs of the cañon upon the eternal rock underlying them both. This is the preëstablished harmony, the *harmonia præstabilita* of Leibnitz: "*Cette admirable harmonie préétablie de l'âme et du corps et même de toutes les monades ou substances simples.*" Nothing less than divine omnipotence, he held, could accomplish such a work.

Any one can perceive at a glance the remarkable agreement between this theory of Leibnitz and the hypothetical solution under consideration. In both there is a synchronism or a near sequence between the desires of men and the occurrence of phenomena in physical nature. In both, the occurrence of these phenomena is due to physical laws without any contemporaneous divine interposition. In both there was in the mind of God an antecedent regard to the wants or wishes of his rational creatures. In one minor point they differ, viz., in the hypothetical solution there is in prayer no conation of the human will, and no synchronous conation of the divine will; in the theory there is always a human conation that effectuates nothing. Which of the two stands on the more absurd ground, our readers may decide. The theory is obsolete. It fell with the wild, gigantesque doctrine of Monads, and is as irremediably dead as the scarcely wilder or more gigantesque doctrines of the ancient Gnosis. Men will as soon believe in Æons and Demuirges again as in the preëstablished harmony; or in the hypothetical solution either. Especially will the Church never adopt that solution as a part of her doctrine or a corroboration of her faith.

11. This conducts, *in the third place*, to a prime reason why the Church never will accept the hypothesis. The intuitive conviction of a causal connexion between our mental conations and the immediately following movements of our bodies, can never be overthrown by artful ratiocinations. Men cannot be made to disbelieve that they do themselves move their limbs. What! do

we not move our fingers in writing these successive lines? Leibnitz himself no more really and practically believed such nonsense than Hume and Berkeley did the non-existence of an external world. Hume owned that, once out of doors, he felt and acted as other men do. And as long as men ask and receive, seek and *find*, knock and see the gate opened to them, so long will they hold to some kind of a causal *nexus* between the correlated phenomena.

It is very easy to quibble about this word *cause*. The word has been taken in different senses. There are Aristotle's famous four causes of the statue of Hercules in the temple. There is again the scholastic distinction of the "*causa causans*," and the "*causa sine qua non*," expressed in un-Ciceronian mediæval language, but sharply discriminating between a producing (causing) cause and an indispensable condition. And once more John Stuart Mill synthesizes, and throwing causes proper and indispensable conditions into one category, gives the name of *cause* to the whole. Time forbids our dwelling on this, and it is unnecessary to do so. We all know that what we ask another to do for us we confessedly do not do ourselves. It is enough if we honestly retain the phrase, "*efficacy of prayer*," and candidly maintain that prayer *obtains* the desired blessing. Our Saviour teaches us to pray in order that we may *obtain*. If prayer does not *obtain* anything, the word of God misleads and deludes us. Can the Church adopt such a theory? God forbid.

We cordially accept the *dictum* that our instinctive beliefs are a *quasi* revelation from God. To suppose them to be deceptive is to make the blessed God himself a deceiver, nay more, the primary and arch deceiver. Hence all right-minded persons refuse to believe that the Maker of the earth placed fossils in every geologic period and stratum down to the primitive rocks, just to induce us to think them the remains of organised substances when they were not. Going from his works to his word, can any one imagine that we are taught to ask in order to receive, when the receiving is, in truth, a mere sequence, and in no proper sense a result? Does our Maker thus delude us? And does not every tyro in philosophy see that this substitution of mere antecedence

and sequence for cause and effect is really of a piece with Hume's and Dr. Brown's denial of causation? And that it is applying their baneful philosophical heresy to spiritual things?

We go farther, and maintain that the instinct which leads even disbelievers in revelation and in prayer to cry to God in time of imminent peril, is a wise and true and God-given instinct. It is wiser than man's folly and truer than Satan's lie.

12. Notice particularly that no man ever asks God to *have* done something for him. No man in his senses, and thinking of what he is saying, will be guilty of such a solecism. We do not pray that anything be done in the past! We ask God to act *now*, or in some *future* time. If any choose to quibble about the Infinite One's having no relation to time, we need not introduce Kant or Hamilton or Mansel. It is sufficient that we ask God to act in the material world now or hereafter, as we ask him now or hereafter to regenerate an impenitent friend.\*

Against the absurd tenet of Leibnitz men are guarded by the experience of everyday life. There is no bias in the common mind toward his theory. But the natural man does not love to pray, and is but too ready to catch at anything that weakens the sense of obligation to that duty. Let him begin by not praying for health and harvests, and he will end in not praying at all. To induce him not to pray for physical blessings, all that is needful is to teach him that the material universe is a vast machine constructed indeed by the Almighty long ago, but never touched now by so much as his finger. Whoever thinks of praying that the hands of a clock shall not at the due time point to twelve? If a son were to be executed at twelve, and the mother had reason to believe that a pardon was on the way; if five minutes' time was thus a matter of life and death, and she knew that the clock was too fast; she would beseech the keeper of the clock to set back the hands. If he would not or could not do this, she might in a frenzy shriek out her anguish, but she would not address a prayer to the unfeeling brass and iron up yonder in the tower. Once

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\* A curious apparent exception, proving the rule, occurs in the Greek, *ἡ θύρα κενεῖσθω*. Let the gate have been shut; *i. e.*, let it be shut and remain so.

convince men that the world is only a vast chronometer, whose wheels were cast and whose spring and balance were fabricated, however ingeniously, thousands of years ago, and they will cease to pray that the hands may or may not point to any designated hour. So that men will either cease to pray for physical blessings, or they will pray inconsistently and illogically, and hence half-heartedly; or else they will arise and cast false philosophy to the winds.

Before passing to the next head of argument, it may be as well to state that Leibnitz himself used the illustration of two clocks running exactly together. He inquires how their keeping precisely the same time is to be accounted for, and suggests three possible answers. 1st. There is a connexion between the works of the two, so that one determines the rate of the other. Thus most people suppose that the soul controls the body. 2d. That some person is employed to keep them together by constant interference with one or the other. This he conceived to coincide with the pantheistic Occasionalism of Malebranche, and therefore by all means to be rejected. 3d. That both clocks were so perfectly constructed by the maker that they ran exactly together without any subsequent attention. This last explanation Leibnitz deemed most worthy of God. "The absolute artist could only create perfect works, which do need a constantly renewed rectification." (Ueberweg II., 110.) It will be remembered that Leibnitz applied this to the soul and the body of every man, to account for the raising of our hands, etc., when we will. The general principle is plausibly stated, but, as we shall attempt to show, is essentially a narrow and altogether inadequate view.

13. *In the fourth place*, it is an ill-founded objection to the common Church doctrine, that it involves the continued and continual working of miracles. By miracles we are to understand some suspension or contravention of the laws of nature. This is given not as a satisfactory definition of the word, but as its meaning when used in this connexion by objectors. In this way we take it that Euler employed the term in the extract already given. The objection loses sight of the obvious and most important distinction between contravention and intervention. Man can inter-

vene, but cannot contravene. God can do both. They who accept the Bible as his word, believe that he has contravened the laws of nature in many cases; that no facts of history have been better authenticated than these self same contraventions; and the reasons for them were not only sufficient but cogent. Protestant Christendom, however, apprehends that the great occasion for miraculous displays has passed away; that their perpetual recurrence is needless and might be even hurtful during the ordinary progress of affairs; but that at the close of the present system of things, if not before, a power and a wisdom greater than appertain to men or angels, will again make extraordinary exhibitions on the earth. Meanwhile, why may not God in some way intervene in the realm of nature? Every Christian holds that he perpetually intervenes in the spiritual domain. He quickens dead souls; he sanctifies the impure and imperfect; and these works are not denominated miracles. Yet they certainly are interventions. The spiritual world, then, is not in such a state as to render the intervention of God unnecessary. Quite the reverse. And if he can intervene in the higher realm without any contravention of its laws or any derangement of its delicate adjustments, why not in the lower kingdom of matter also?

And if man is permitted to intervene and produce effects that never would have been produced without his agency, why may not God do the same by his own hand, or, as some profound thinkers have suggested, by the ministry of angels? Of all men our scientists ought to have least to say against interventions. For while geology, geography, astronomy, anatomy, and in part botany and physiology, are only sciences of what has been and is, chemistry finds its chief utility in the production of new compounds. It analyses, it recombines, it seeks for not only the unknown, but the hitherto unrealised. This is the glory and the charm of chemistry, and, we may add, of physics too, in which, however, the procedure lies mostly in the visible collocation of matter.

But we must not confine our attention to the laboratory. We emphasise the great and broad truth, that *human life is maintained by a series of interventions*. Our crops, our houses, our

food and raiment, in a word, everything needed for the support of life, is obtained by intervention in consistence with and by the aid of LAW. This is precisely the theatre in which the Allwise God has placed man, surrounding him by laws which he cannot contravene, but may understand and obey; and by forces which he could not originate and cannot annihilate, but may direct and utilise. By what sort of stupidity, then, shall the sceptic say that in all this vast scene of infinitely varied intervention, the Author of all shall never intervene? He whose knowledge of all the laws of his wondrous mechanism is immeasurably superior to any that man now has or ever will have? Which leads at once to the thought, that unless God had made man a far greater being than he actually is, or else the system of laws and forces, by which he is environed, very much simpler and less admirable than it is, there must needs be a region obscure or even wholly unknown to man, but clear as noonday to the eye of the All-seeing One. Why shall not he who is not only almighty and allwise, but also of great compassion and tender mercy, succor our helplessness by timely aid, and enrich our poverty by gracious supplies from this part of his vast dominion? This is a matter well worth pondering, and one that seems to have escaped the attention of sceptical scientism.

Another fruitful theme for the meditation of the devout Christian is the way in which the Son of God acted while on earth. Nearly all who read this article believe that Jesus of Nazareth was God manifest in the flesh. From the Gospels we learn that on occasion he wrought in the domain of nature beside and above what are denominated nature's laws. He produced wine without the aid of vegetable life, bread and fishes without the assistance of either vegetable or animal life; and very probably exerted a creative power in both miracles. He also originated anew animal life in the dead bodies of Jairus's daughter, of the son of the widow of Nain, and notably of Lazarus, thus transcending human power and wisdom, and creating ORGANIC LIFE to subdue the rebellious inorganic forces, as fabled Neptune did the winds of Æolus. But during thirty years of his life, and in fact through for the greater part of his ministry of three or four years, he subjected

himself to the physical laws which he had by his own power established in the beginning, and accomplished most of his mediatorial work by intervention instead of miracle. His sacrificial death was not miraculous. Miracle proved that the Intervener was divine. Miracle convinced; intervention saved. What we contend for is that the same gracious Being still intervenes for us in answer to the cry of his own.

14. *In the fifth place*, it is an ill-founded objection that we may not be able to state just how or where the Ruler of all touches the mechanism. Your watch comes home from the jeweller's, repaired, and in running order and keeping good time. To your untrained eye the works look much as they did before. Perhaps you can detect no change in them at all; yet a change there must have been.

On a morning, in the year of grace, 1807, Fulton, surrounded by a few friends, on his pioneer boat steamed out from the pier at New York City into the middle of Hudson River. Ten thousand spectators lined the bank, ready to jeer at him in case of failure. And failure seriously threatened him, for when he endeavored to make his little craft head up stream, it refused to do so. What was the matter? What was to be done? His friends on board could not conceal their chagrin. In great anxiety Fulton went down to examine the engine, and found something or other out of position. He set it right, and the gallant little boat wheeled into line, and started on its triumphant way to Albany. Yet it is not likely that any living man can tell what Fulton did to the machinery. But how absurd to discredit the history of the case on that account. "Dr. Chalmers . . . suggests that in the vast scale of natural sequences, which constitute one connected chain, the responsive touch from the finger of the Almighty may be given 'either at a higher or lower place in the progression,' and that if it be supposed to be 'given far enough back,' it might originate a new sequence, but without doing violence to any ascertained law, since it occurs beyond the reach of our experience and observation." (Modern Atheism, pp. 294-5.) Dr. Buchanan, while endorsing the conclusiveness of this answer, amends it by saying "there is no necessity and no

reason for supposing that the responsive touch *can only* be given at a point to which our knowledge does not extend." Numberless illustrations could be given like the one from Fulton's account. The following incident occurred to the writer. We were on the cars one moonlit night long ago, returning to Princeton Theological Seminary, when a peculiar oscillatory motion of our car aroused general attention, and created some alarm. Presently a passenger arose and walked forward to the front door to see what was the matter. "Ah, yes," said he, "we have become disconnected from the rest of the train. They will find it out pretty soon, and come back for us." We looked and saw the train already some distance ahead of us, and getting farther away every moment. But in a few minutes here it came back, the connexion was reëstablished, and our journey was resumed. Two points emerge here. 1st. The engineer violated no law of mechanics in returning to us. The mode of the formation and the expansive power of steam were not interfered with in the least. If any law of nature involved in the case had been suspended, he could not have brought back the train. He worked not against, but by and through known laws and forces. 2d. Probably no man or woman in that rear car knew just what the engineer did; yet no one doubted for an instant that he did something, and indeed the very thing needed. This belief was rational, and disbelief would have been irrational.

15. *In the sixth place*, it is ill-founded to say that the Church doctrine argues imperfection in God's workmanship. How this idea arises may readily be seen from the illustrations just given. If Fulton's machinery had been perfect and perfectly adjusted, it would not have needed any readjustment out in the middle of North River. If the car coupling had been better devised, or more carefully looked after, the engineer would not have needed to reverse his engine. Such things are due to the ignorance of man and the imperfection of all his works. But, as we have already quoted from Leibnitz, "the Absolute Artist could only create perfect works," etc. We aim to give the full strength of the objection, and reply, 1st. This is an odd affirmation for a theist to make. Are there no burning deserts in which wearied travel-

lers, parched with raging thirst, lie down in despair and die? No wastes in temperate zones, producing only the thorn and the cactus? No immense uninhabitable Siberian plains? No howling wildernesses the world over? No imperfections, at least to our eyes, in the vegetable or the animal world? Yet has not the Absolute Artist created them all? But it may be rejoined that on a wide survey of the whole system of things, many, if not all of these so-called imperfections, would prove to be no imperfections. There is weight in this; for surely a man ill acquainted with any subject, and judging hastily concerning it, is liable to blunder exceedingly. For example, it may appear to be an imperfection in iron that it rusts so easily, while the precious metals are nearly free from this defect. But if iron were not oxidisable, it might be worse for us in the long run. It could not constitute a part of our soils; and where would be the red corpuscles of blood?

We do not give in to the atheistic notion that the Almighty can never create an imperfect work. In one sense gradation implies imperfection in all but the uppermost rank. Then if one kind of wood is stronger, more elastic, or more beautiful than another, the other is imperfect, forsooth, and cannot have been created by an omniscient and omnipotent God! The human eye, say recent writers, is not quite achromatic, and it analyses polarised light.\* So be it. Pray how were these imperfections discovered except by the eyes of observers? Then at least the eye is sufficiently good to discover its own imperfections. But further, if the human eye did not polarise light, the caviller might allege that it is very inferior to the eye of the eagle; if it were made equal to the eagle's eye, still it might not be sufficiently acute to discern stars of the seventh and lower magnitudes, not

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\* Fraunhofer discovered that a wire placed at the focus of the object glass of a telescope and visible by red light, was not visible by violet light, even after correcting the distance between the lenses by an amount equal to the difference in refrangibility of the colors. The further alteration needed is due to a chromatic aberration of the eye. It is a curious fact that the unavoidable spherical aberration is corrected in the eye by the iris acting as a diaphragm, *i. e.*, the very expedient resorted to by opticians. But the iris is infinitely superior to any diaphragm of man's invention.

to mention nearly all the nebulæ. There is no stopping place. The Infinite could create nothing less than itself.

2d. The mechanical notion of perfection in God's works is altogether too narrow. This narrowness of survey characterises the lucubrations of the scientism of our day. To leave out God from the universe, and all the higher departments of human nature from the world, is not the way to arrive at any adequate understanding of the world or the universe. The laws and forces of matter are not for themselves; they are for man. There are higher needs in a physical universe than a perfection of mechanism. The grand and complex system of matter has a higher purpose, a nobler outlook. Where the material arrangements approach nearest to perfection, in the tropical regions where winter never comes, where the bread-fruit and the banana grow almost without man's labor or even supervision, just there man languishes in indolence. Where human intervention is most dispensed with, or, on the other hand, in the frozen zones where it accomplishes least, where it is thwarted and well-nigh paralysed, there man is least advanced. Man is most developed in an arena not of actualities, but of capabilities. The instructed Christian carries this thought farther, even up into the spiritual realm, and adores the wisdom that has left a field for divine intervention, in order to educate man in the sublime graces of faith, hope, and charity. The great God would have us trust in him. He would have us feel as should the children of the Lord God Almighty. Of the inexpressible sweetness of this feeling sceptics know nothing. In their madness they may sneer at it. We can only respond,

"Fools never raise their thoughts so high;  
Like brutes they live; like brutes they die."

This confiding love to a person cannot be cultivated by practising a delusion upon us, and by teaching us to ask him to do now what he is not going to do now. The poor, ignorant Christian, still adhering to his primitive belief that God *hears* and *does*, might find prayer a refreshment. Its reflex influence might be most happy on him. But alas for the enlightened ones, who have discovered the imperfection of all such schemes

as admit of intervention! Can they continue to enact a farce? Impossible.

16. *In the seventh place*, the hypothetical solution is not Augustinianism, but a caricature thereof. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world (*ἀπ' αἰῶνος*). The thoughtful Arminian is bound to go with us to this extent, that God's mind is fully made up as to everything that *He* himself is to do throughout eternity. When the fulness of the times comes, then he acts most freely in executing his holy, wise, and unchangeable purpose; unchangeable, because holy and wise. But this is not the mechanical outworking of machinery, according to a popular misconception of the Augustinian doctrine. It is the acting of a free, intelligent person; who must have purposes because he is a person, and if he did not act in pursuance of his purposes, could not act at all. It will not strengthen or extend Augustinianism to incorporate into it the foreign and indeed antagonistic element of the hypothetical solution. Nor will it conciliate and satisfy unbelief. One demand submitted to, the shout of triumph from the infidel camp will hardly have died away before another demand is made. Let truth, candor, and absolute justice be maintained; but yield an inch!—Never. L. G. BARBOUR.