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ARTICLE I.

THE HISTORICAL AND GEOLOGICAL DELUGES COMPARED.

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[Concluded from p. 374. Vol. X.]

THERE is one other branch of the argument for a deluge from diluvial phenomena, which we must not pass in entire silence. It is derived from an examination of the contents of certain caverns and fissures. We can, however, give but a very brief view of it; although to make it well understood, requires a volume. And happily that volume has been written. We refer to Dr. Buckland's *Reliquiae Diluvianae*.*

* In the Repository for January 1837, we expressed doubts as to what were the real opinions of Dr. Buckland at present respecting the geological evidence of a deluge; or rather, how far his opinions, as given in his *Reliquiae*, had been modified. On receiving his *Bridgewater Treatise*, we found that he had not abandoned the opinion that there has been a recent inundation of the earth, as shown by geology: but he doubts whether its identity with the Noachian deluge can be made out. The following are his views — "The evidence which I have collected in my *Reliquiae Diluvianae*, 1823, shows that one of the last great physical events that have affected the surface of our globe was a violent inundation which overwhelmed a great part of the northern hemisphere, and that this event was followed by the sudden disappearance of a large number of the species of terrestrial quadru-

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ARTICLE IV.

THE ADVANCEMENT OF BIBLICAL KNOWLEDGE.*

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"ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." These are the words of an aged apostle, addressed to a youthful minister of Christ. The general truth which they assert is, that the holy Scriptures, given by inspiration of God, constitute a perfect rule for the direction of the christian teacher in all circumstances; and that his perfection as a teacher consists in a perfect understanding of their principles, doctrines, and precepts. From the rich treasury of God's word, he is to furnish himself with sound doctrine for the illumination of the minds of those over whom the Holy Spirit has made him overseer; from its bright and glorious principles, he is to convince men of sin, and put to silence gainsayers; from its precepts, he is to reclaim offenders, rectify what is amiss in the church, and train up her members to holiness and usefulness. If the Scriptures of the Old Testament merited the high eulogium of the apostle, how much more the sacred canon as we now possess it, complete in all its parts, containing not only the writings of "Moses and the prophets," but also the words of Christ and his apostles! Of this it may be said with emphasis, that the man of God who fully understands the truths which it embodies, and how to apply these truths skilfully to the wants of his people, is "perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" pertaining to his office.

The grand business, therefore, of every one who aspires to the work of the christian ministry, is to learn *what* truths the Scriptures contain, and *how* to apply these truths to the understandings and consciences of men. The former is accomplished by study; the latter, mainly by practice. Both are indispensably necessary to constitute an efficient minister of the gospel; "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." The present occasion, however, leads us

* This article was delivered by the author as an Inaugural Address. Ed.

to consider more particularly that branch of ministerial qualification which consists in a thorough acquaintance with God's word.

In pursuing this subject we shall inquire, first : What is involved in a thorough knowledge of Scripture ? and, secondly : How can this knowledge be most effectually diffused throughout the christian ministry ?

I. What does a thorough knowledge of Scripture involve ?

1. It involves a thorough acquaintance with the original languages of the sacred volume. This proposition, few, if any, will be inclined to dispute. We have a most excellent translation of the Scriptures into our vernacular tongue. For this inestimable boon we bless the God of our fathers. The sound learning and judgment of its authors, their freedom from a sectarian spirit, their scrupulous fidelity, and the majestic simplicity of their style are worthy of all praise. This translation we have ever been ready to defend against the cavils and inuendoes of superficial smatterers in sacred literature, and have felt that those sects, or fragments of sects, who find it in the way of their favorite dogmas, have a bad cause to maintain. Still, it is but a translation, and no translation, however perfect, can fully express all the delicate shades of meaning and connections of thought that belong to the original. Moreover, since its execution, biblical science has enjoyed the advantage of more than two centuries of investigation and research, in the progress of which much additional light has been elicited. In some few cases (not involving any fundamental doctrine or precept) it is generally admitted that the translators have erred ; in more still, the sense which they have expressed is one of two or more, either of which may be the true meaning of the original. Their " various readings " show that they themselves often hesitated as to the manner in which a particular word or phrase should be rendered. With all due deference, therefore, to these venerable men, we maintain that it is the duty of the man of God, to consult the original oracles of divine truth, and to judge for himself of their meaning. This was the doctrine of our pilgrim ancestors ; it has ever been the doctrine of their descendants to the present day ; and we mean to hand it down in its purity to our posterity.

2. A thorough knowledge of Scripture involves an acquaintance with the geography, and antiquities of ancient Palestine, and of the surrounding nations with whose history that of the

children of Israel is connected. The eager demand for this species of knowledge among the conductors of Sabbath schools, Bible classes, and others who desire to qualify themselves for the work of expounding the word of God to the rising generation, (a demand which has called forth some of the noblest intellectual efforts of the age,) is a commentary on its value which all can read and understand. Without the light which it affords, no one can clearly apprehend the force of the numerous allusions to the location and relative position of the cities and civil divisions of Palestine, and of the surrounding nations ; to their natural scenery, climate, and productions ; and to the manners and customs of society ; which crowd almost every page of inspiration. Who, for example, can intelligently read the narrative of the apostle Paul's journies and labors, without an acquaintance with the natural and civil geography of the regions over which he travelled ? Who, that does not understand the posture in which the ancients were accustomed to take their meals, can comprehend how "a certain woman" could stand at our Saviour's feet "*behind him*," while he was "at meat in the Pharisee's house," could wash his feet with her tears, wipe them with the hairs of her head, kiss them, and anoint them with ointment ? Who can fully understand the parable of the ten virgins without a knowledge of oriental nuptial ceremonies ? The above are a few obvious examples, selected from among many hundreds equally striking. Nor must the biblical student limit himself to the geography and antiquities of the Jews. In the course of their eventful history, the people of God were brought into contact with all the great monarchies of the ancient world, and from the geography and antiquities of all these are illustrations of Scripture to be sought. In the New Testament, more especially, Jewish, Grecian, and Roman geography and archaeology are all blended together, and are all indispensable to a full elucidation of the sacred page.

3. A thorough knowledge of Scripture involves an enlarged acquaintance with ancient history. We have remarked above that God in his providence brought his ancient people successively into contact with all the great monarchies of the earth. Let it be remembered that this was not for a day, or a month, or a year, but for long periods of time ; not when these monarchies were in their infancy, but when they were in their prime of glory and strength. It seems ever to have been Jehovah's plan to place his chosen people in the very heart of the

civilized world, a conspicuous object of attention to all the surrounding nations. To the north and east, they had the great Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires ; to the south, Egypt ; to the west, Greece and Rome. Thus, while God kept them constantly surrounded by the instruments of his pleasure, he made them, in turn, a spectacle to the world, whether in victory or defeat, whether exalted by his favor above their enemies, or sunk by his frown beneath their iron yoke. Hence the history of ancient Israel becomes the *leading element* in the history of mankind before the Messiah's advent, even as the history of the christian church is the leading element since that era. Take away this element from the annals of antiquity, and they are left, like the primeval chaos, "without form and void, and darkness is upon the face of the deep." Restore it, and all becomes order, harmony, and unity of design. We see one empire springing into existence at the fiat of Jehovah, that it may be the instrument in his hand of accomplishing some deep and glorious purpose respecting his church, and then sinking into its original nothing, to make room for another, destined, in like manner, to subserve the interests of Zion. It is no exaggeration to say that the record of God's dealings with his church is the key to the universal history of mankind ; and that her destinies are the hinge upon which the destinies of all nations have ever turned. Viewed in this light, how important does profane history become ! Isolated from sacred history, it is but a barren and disgusting detail of human passions and crimes ; but studied in connection with it, every page is luminous with instruction. What is it but a part and parcel of God's stupendous plan of subjecting all nations to the reign of the Messiah ?

Profane history, moreover, is *the key of prophecy*. How many predictions were uttered by the ancient prophets whose fulfilment is nowhere recorded in the Bible ! Many of these related to periods prior to the advent of Christ ; others have been accomplished since that day ; others, again, are yet future ; but the interpretation of all is to be sought from the page of uninspired history.

4. A thorough knowledge of Scripture involves an acquaintance with the internal history of the ancient world, that is, with its moral, religious, and political condition. The Mosaic economy was designed to be introductory to a nobler dispensation. Its perfection (the Holy Ghost being judge) was not *absolute*,

like the perfection of the Gospel, but *relative*, as a means to secure a further end, having reference to the existing circumstances of mankind. Whoever, therefore, would judge correctly of its provisions, must understand both the *final end* which it proposed to accomplish, the *means* which it selected for securing this end, and the *adaptation* of these means to the condition of the world. Many captious objections, for example, which have been urged against the policy which it prescribed with reference to the surrounding idolatrous nations, might have been spared, had their authors well understood the bearing of this policy upon the great end of this dispensation, which was to establish upon an immovable basis the doctrine of Jehovah's unity and infinite perfections, in opposition to the polytheism and image-worship that then prevailed throughout the world, that thus the way might be prepared for the introduction of the christian dispensation. The same remarks are, to a great extent, applicable to the New Testament. Without an acquaintance with the moral, religious, and political condition of the world at the period of our Saviour's advent, we cannot fully enter into the meaning of many passages which occur in the writings of the evangelists and apostles. For want of this knowledge, many a sincere inquirer after truth has felt himself greatly embarrassed and perplexed in the commencement of his investigations. But, as his acquaintance with the internal history of the ancient world has gradually increased, his difficulties one after another have vanished; light has succeeded to darkness, and order to confusion.

5. A thorough knowledge of Scripture involves an acquaintance with the laws of human language. For the Bible, though containing a revelation from God, is expressed in the ordinary language of common life, and is to be interpreted accordingly.

Whatever advantages we may imagine that we can secure to the cause of truth (or what we esteem the cause of truth) by deviating from the well established principles of interpretation which are employed in ascertaining the meaning of all other written documents, we shall find to our cost that, like the apocalyptic book, they are only sweet at the first taste. For one argument on the side of truth which can be thus wrested from Scripture, ten can, by the same method, be gained in behalf of error. How many forced constructions of the most simple passages of God's word would a rigid adherence to the laws of interpretation have prevented!—and how much angry logomachy!

6. A thorough knowledge of Scripture involves an acquaintance with the constitution of man considered as an intellectual and moral being. The word of God addresses itself to the whole complex nature of man, his understanding, his natural and moral susceptibilities, his powers of free agency. The more thoroughly, therefore, the minister of the gospel understands human nature, in the most enlarged sense of the term, the more clearly will he apprehend the great principles of revelation, which all address themselves to human nature; and the more skilfully will he be enabled to apply these principles in the interpretation of the inspired volume. There is a philosophy, "falsely so called," which "leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind;" but true philosophy will always be found in perfect harmony with divine truth, for the book of the human mind, and the book of revelation, are both from God, and the one cannot contradict the other. We do not advocate the introduction of metaphysical subtleties into the pulpit. This is not their place. But we would have the man of God, when he enters the pulpit, understand the intellectual and moral constitution of the immortal minds upon which he is to operate. The more of this substantial philosophy he possesses, the better.

If, in the above attempt to show what is involved in a thorough knowledge of Scripture, we have not confined ourselves exclusively to the field of sacred literature, we hope we shall be pardoned for the digression. We wished to lay a foundation broad enough for the superstructure which we intend presently to rear upon it, and, in doing this, we could not well confine ourselves within the limits of any one branch of theological knowledge.

We cannot dismiss this part of our subject without adding that a right state of heart is indispensable to the successful study of Scripture. The Bible is not an abstract code of laws that can be examined with cool indifference, as one studies the laws of a foreign nation; nor is it a mere record of human transactions, like the histories of Greece and Rome. It is a code of laws indeed, but one which lays its broad claims upon the conscience of each individual who reads it, demanding of him instant and unreserved obedience: it is a history, but a history of God's proceedings with this apostate world, in which he has clearly developed the principles upon which he will deal with us through time and through eternity. It opposes itself directly to human pride and selfishness in every possible form; requiring

all to acknowledge their guilt and desert of eternal death, to submit themselves unreservedly to the authority of Christ, and to transfer their affections from earth to heaven. Is it not self-evident that the man who comes to the study of such a book, with a heart under the dominion of pride and earthly affections, will be constantly liable to err through the influence of passion and prejudice? How can he candidly examine and judge of a system of truth that comes into perpetual conflict with his daily habits and feelings? Men's hearts govern their heads, not their heads their hearts, as we may see every day illustrated in all the transactions of life. It was in view of this all-important truth that our Saviour uttered these memorable words, "If any man will do his" (God's) "will, he shall know of the doctrine," (which I preach) "whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. We find from experience that an obedient, humble, and devout state of mind, is an indispensable preparation for the successful investigation of truth. Let him who aspires to the office of the christian ministry bring to the study of the sacred oracles such a preparation; let him superadd all the subsidiary aids above enumerated; then, let him study the system of truth contained in the Holy Scriptures as one harmonious whole, endeavoring to see and understand the mutual connection and dependence of all its parts. Thus may he become "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

II. We come now to inquire, how a thorough knowledge of the holy Scriptures can be most effectually diffused throughout the ministry.

To this inquiry we reply, it is necessary, in the first place, that we should have some men in the church who shall press every department of biblical and theological learning to its utmost limits; and, in the second place, that the great body of the christian ministry should receive such an education as will enable them to avail themselves of the results of these investigations. This proposition divides itself into two parts, each of which will be separately considered.

1. We must have some men in the church who shall press every department of biblical and theological learning to its utmost limits. In no other way has any department of human knowledge ever been carried to a high degree of perfection. The splendid discoveries in the natural sciences which have so greatly enlarged the dominion of mind over matter, have, with scarce an exception, been made by men who were determined to

know all that could be known of that department of nature which they had selected as their field of investigation. The same remark holds true with respect to philology, history, geography, and archaeology in all its diversified forms. It is only narrow-minded ignorance that inquires, "Of what use is all this waste of precious time, of strength, and of intellect? this plunging into the arcana of nature? this squandering of years in poring over the musty records of antiquity? When there is so much to be done in the world, why not devote ourselves to pursuits of practical utility?" Aye, but how are we to ascertain beforehand the practical utility of knowledge? Did those who first began to inquire into the nature of steam know that their inquiries were to result in the production of the steam-engine? Some century and a half ago it might have been thought a very idle and unprofitable employment for a philosopher gravely to watch the effects of steam upon the lid of a tea-kettle, and to institute a series of laborious experiments for the purpose of ascertaining its properties. His neighbors might very naturally have rebuked him for wasting so much precious time in an investigation which could not possibly be of any advantage to the world; and that too at a period when the improvement of navigation, internal communication, and the mechanical arts presented such a wide field of profitable labor. But now, taught by experience, we have learned the folly of attempting to decide beforehand the practical value of knowledge. Were further illustrations needed, the history of modern science and literature would furnish them in great abundance. Nor is the history of biblical literature since the reformation less replete with instruction on this point. As its several departments have been, from time to time, advanced beyond their previous limits, new and unexpected light has been shed upon one portion after another of the sacred volume. Its great fundamental doctrines, written as with a sunbeam upon every page in characters so legible that "he who runs may read," have remained "without variableness or shadow of turning." But, while the doctrines themselves have continued immutable from generation to generation, many important illustrations of these doctrines, that needed the light of philology, or history, or geography, or archaeology, or which were involved in the mists of false philosophy and erroneous principles of interpretation, have been freed from the obscurity that rested upon them, and made to shine forth in the simplicity and beauty of truth, not indeed

establishing, but still greatly adorning, the fundamental doctrines of revelation. Even from those investigations that have been undertaken and prosecuted without immediate reference to divine truth, what unexpected light has sometimes been thrown upon some obscure passage, or some controverted point of scriptural history ! Of this the labors of the Champollions and their co-adjutors are an illustrious instance.

We trust enough has been said to show the importance of pushing every department of biblical knowledge to its utmost limits. But by whom shall this work be performed ? We answer, individuals must devote themselves to its several departments, according as their education, their native turn of mind, their station, and their means shall direct. It cannot be performed by the mass of the christian ministry, for they have not the requisite time and apparatus. Whoever hopes materially to enlarge the boundaries of any one of its branches, will need to devote to it many years of patient and laborious investigation. Take, for example, the department of Hebrew lexicography. The Hebrew has been for twenty-three centuries a dead language. In its words, in its grammatical inflections, and in its idioms it differs widely from the languages of Europe, ancient or modern. Moreover all the monuments of this language are comprised within the compass of one volume. Many words occur but once or twice, and then, oftentimes, in connections that throw little or no light upon their signification. The lexicographer who would contribute any thing valuable to this important department, must first carefully examine and collate the sacred text ; then, in difficult passages, he must consult the ancient versions and paraphrases ; where these fail to give satisfactory results, he must resort to a comparison of the cognate dialects, as the Aramaean, Arabic, and Ethiopic. How many years of study and research will this employment consume ! So the departments of ancient history, archaeology, etc., present immense fields of investigation, enough and more than enough to exhaust the energies of the man who aims at their permanent advancement. But though the prime of his strength be thus concentrated to a single point, let it not be supposed that it is either wasted or unprofitably spent. Those who are accustomed to estimate men's labors only by their immediate visible results, may speak lightly of him as a mere book-worm, a recluse that is of no service to mankind ; but the lovers of sacred learning will better appreciate his toils, and

he will have the satisfaction of knowing that while he has labored, other men will enter into his labors. There is no danger at the present day that any valuable discovery in sacred literature will be lost. Once registered on the printed page, it will become an advanced position from which others will push forward their investigations to a still further limit ; and their labors will become in turn the basis of future discoveries. Thus, each generation availing itself of the labors of its predecessors, and urging forward every department of sacred learning to its extreme limits, the most glorious results to the cause of truth, may be confidently anticipated.

2. The great body of the christian ministry must receive such an education as shall enable them to avail themselves of the results of the investigations of others. We shall here exclude the previous mental discipline which the academical course of study is designed to furnish, and speak only of that education which is strictly theological. With this limitation we would say that the education of which we speak must include a thorough introduction to the several departments of biblical and theological knowledge. This introduction will embrace an accurate acquaintance with the elementary principles, the modes of investigation, the sources of knowledge, and the means of deciding controverted points, that pertain to each. To these may be added more or less of its details, according as its nature, or the circumstances of the student may dictate. For an illustration of this position take the department of ancient history. Whoever would reap the benefit of the elaborate investigations of those who have devoted their lives to the study of this subject, must make himself familiar with all its great outlines, — the order and succession of the different monarchies with which the history of the Israelitish nation is connected, their relative position and political connections, and especially with the *synchronisms* of sacred and profane history ; with the sources of ancient history, and the principles upon which their comparative authority is to be determined ; and, finally, with various methods which learned men have proposed for reconciling contradictions either in chronology or in matters of fact. Then he will be prepared to avail himself of all the light which may from time to time be shed upon this department by the toils of others. Otherwise, his views will be so chaotic and confused that he can neither prosecute it himself to advantage

(unless indeed he is willing to commence anew) nor intelligently judge of the results of other men's labors.

For another illustration, take the department of language. The man who has made himself accurately acquainted with the original languages of Scripture is prepared intelligently to examine and judge of the results of the investigations of those who have devoted their lives to the subject. Otherwise these results can be of no service to him, except so far as he is willing to take the *ipse dixit* of the translator or commentator for truth. For the want of *three* years' training in the original languages of Scripture, he loses the fruit of *thirty* years of incessant toil and research; nay more, of the accumulated results of ages of investigation. Can any thing short of imperative necessity be admitted as an excuse for such negligence? Shall the candidate for the christian ministry be in such haste to do good that he cannot take time to qualify himself for the work? This looks to us very much like an army's leaving their artillery behind because of their haste to meet the enemy. Such a course, we admit, may in some extraordinary cases, be justifiable. There may be crises in which it is better to encounter the enemy with muskets and swords, than to lose time. So we have known cases in which it was our decided judgment that individuals should be commissioned to preach the gospel without any knowledge of the original languages of Scripture. But exceptions, be it remembered, do not constitute the rule. So far as our experience and observation go, those young men who make the most ado about losing time, most need to be kept back from the sacred office until they shall have had time to qualify themselves for its solemn responsibilities. Nor is it strange that it should be so, for it is an old adage that ignorance is the parent of self-confidence.

Here we wish to say a word respecting the Latin language as an aid to sacred literature. No part of the inspired volume is written in this language, and, for this reason, some have strenuously insisted upon banishing it, as a useless incumbrance from the circle of theological studies. To this we reply that the Latin tongue was for fifteen centuries identified with the history and literature of the church. It is the language of that people who, at the time of our Saviour's advent wielded the sceptre of the civilized world; the language of all the Western fathers; and, above all, the language of science, philosophy, and literature throughout Europe from the first introduction of

Christianity till the period of the reformation, and, to a great extent, throughout the whole of that mighty conflict of truth with error ; and that, as a necessary consequence, it embodies vast stores of theological learning of every kind, and is interwoven in ways innumerable, as well with the literature of the Bible, as with the history of Christianity. But it may be maintained in opposition to this argument, that all that is valuable in the Latin language for the purposes of theological learning has been transferred to the English language. To this we reply that the student who makes himself thoroughly acquainted with the Latin tongue and with the sacred learning which it embodies, will know that the assertion is grossly incorrect. While he is yet ignorant of the language, or only a superficial smatterer in it, he may be made to believe it, but not afterwards. Moreover, how is the student in theology to assure himself that the Latin tongue has thus been rifled of the accumulated treasures of ages, and left an empty shell ? When he sees year after year new and valuable translations from this into the English, it cannot be thought either strange or unreasonable that he should have some misgivings on the subject, and determine to examine and judge for himself.

It is freely conceded that many individuals, without a knowledge either of this or of any ancient language, have been eminently successful as preachers of the gospel, and that others, well versed in these languages, have been but feeble and inefficient ministers of the word. But the success of the former was attributable not to their ignorance, but to eminent ministerial qualifications in other respects, which were wanting in the latter. There is a tendency in some minds to draw unwarrantable general conclusions from two or three particular facts. They have known several instances of important enterprises commenced on Friday which terminated disastrously. They ascribe it to the day. Some of their neighbors who use alcohol have robust, others who use water, feeble constitutions. They are confident that the beverage makes all the difference.

Theological seminaries are not founded upon principles deduced from such narrow premises. The experience of eighteen centuries has shown that the efficiency of Christ's ambassadors, taken as a body, is proportioned to their piety and intelligence, and, furthermore, that nothing but intelligence can prevent even piety from degenerating into superstition and fanaticism. The demand for a thoroughly educated ministry has called these in-

stitutions into existence, and so long as this demand continues, they will be sustained. Experience will undoubtedly modify some of their provisions, but, if we rightly judge the signs of the times, these modifications will not consist either in abridging or excluding any of the departments of theological learning now taught in them, but rather in the introduction of more perfect methods of intellectual investigation and moral training. The question, how shall the spirit of active piety be maintained in vigorous exercise in the bosoms of theological students during the period of their education, so that the cultivation of their moral feelings may keep pace with the development of their intellectual faculties? — is one of vital importance, and is receiving, as it ought, the devout consideration of those who are called to preside over these schools of the prophets. In our Western seminaries the fields of activity which offer themselves to those who are in a course of training for the christian ministry are so many, and so accessible, that little difficulty is experienced, so far as external arrangements are concerned. Our young men can, if they will, find opportunities enough of doing good which do not interfere with the vigorous prosecution of their studies. If they suffer their christian affections to grow torpid for want of exercise, it is their own fault. What we have now said respecting the West will, we believe, upon careful inquiry, be found to hold true of all parts of the United States. If our theological students wish for *humble* opportunities of usefulness, they can be found every day in all places.

From these seminaries of the church, thus perfected by experience, the most cheering results may be anticipated. We may confidently hope that they will train up and send forth an army of young men thoroughly furnished to the work of the ministry, who shall know how successfully to wield the sword of the Spirit, for the demolition of Satan's empire. The present may be emphatically styled *the monumental era* of revelation. The record of the introduction of Christianity into this apostate world, of its mighty conflicts with the powers of darkness, and of the stupendous miracles which attested its divine origin, is now so incorporated into the history of mankind, that to efface it would be to blot out the annals of the world; so inseparably interwoven into the institutions of civilized nations, that to annihilate it would be to annihilate the whole fabric of society. It is spread out on the pages of antiquity, it is sculptured on monuments, it is impressed on coins and medals, it lifts up its

voice from the ruins of ancient cities and empires, it lives in the ordinances not only of the church, but of civil society, it speaks in tones of thunder from the progressive fulfilment of prophecy. The mountains and vallies of Palestine, its rivers, lakes and caves, its early and latter rain, its "snow and vapor and stormy wind," all bear witness to the oracles of God; and the seed of Abraham are appointed by him to be the unwilling instruments of attesting their truth in all the nations of their sojourning. It is the duty of the christian ministry to understand and fall in with the grand designs of God's providence. It has pleased him, in these "latter days," to make the evidences of our holy religion (we speak of the external evidences) monumental in their character, and we must prepare to defend and advocate it upon this basis. This species of evidence does not indeed strike the senses so forcibly as miracles, nor is it so readily apprehended by the mass of the community; but, to the candid inquirer it is not less satisfactory. At first it may appear dim and shadowy, but, in proportion as it is scrutinized, it gathers increasing brightness and force. It has nothing to fear from the light of truth; ignorance and prejudice are its only enemies.

The history of the assaults which have been made upon revelation since the reformation is replete both with instruction and consolation. It has proved itself invulnerable on every point. Have its adversaries attempted to show that its doctrines are repugnant to natural religion? God has raised up some one of his servants to demonstrate unanswerably the analogy between natural and revealed religion. Has philosophy, so called, held up to ridicule its peculiar doctrines as absurd and self contradictory? A deeper philosophy has convicted it of uttering that which it understood not, things too wonderful for it, which it knew not. Have the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred canon been assailed? The result has been to establish both upon an immovable basis. Has the future fulfilment of some one of the predictions of revelation been sneered at as a physical impossibility? Even infidels, upon considerations independent of Scripture, have been led to presage the same event. Who, for example, with the knowledge which we now possess of the structure and constitution of the earth, will venture to sneer at the idea of a literal conflagration which shall envelop her, as in the twinkling of an eye, from pole to pole, destroying every vestige of her present organization? Such has been the result of past efforts to shake the foundations of Christianity, and

such will be the result of future efforts. Meanwhile, as the process of investigation has been going on, one after another of the mists of error that had settled down upon her during the long night of the dark ages, has been dissipated, and she made to shine in a clearer and more resplendent light.

It has hitherto been Jehovah's plan to bring in at certain eras an overwhelming flood of light and truth to dazzle and confound his enemies. Such were the eras of the introduction of the Mosaic and of the christian dispensations; each of them bursting upon the world in all its brightness and glory at a period when the church was sunk into a state of the deepest depression. May we not hope that another such era began with the reformation and is steadily advancing towards the perfect day? an era not characterized, like the two former, by a series of stupendous interpositions of miraculous power, but by an irrepressible spirit of inquiry and research; a spirit which shall press every department of knowledge to its utmost boundaries; and which, when sanctified by the Spirit of God, and directed to the investigation of divine truth, shall under his guidance, separate from it the leaven of superstition and false philosophy, thus restoring it to its pristine sweetness and purity; and shall shed around the sacred volume such a lustre of evidence as shall sear the eye-balls of skepticism and infidelity, and drive them back to the bottomless pit whence they first ascended, leaving the everlasting gospel to the undisputed supremacy of the ransomed family of Adam.

ARTICLE V.

ON THE NATURE OF INSTINCT.

By Samuel Fish, M. D. Boston.

INSTINCT is a subject upon which a great deal has been said and written, and still we know so little what it is and upon what principles it operates, that we are scarcely wiser than we should be if it had never been discussed. While some have considered it a mere impulse exerted upon animals without their being conscious of it, others have exalted it to an equality with rea-