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ART. I.—*The Bible not a Text Book on Natural Science.*

THAT the Bible was not intended by its author to discuss and explain the various topics of Natural Science, will be admitted by most, if not all, of the careful readers of its pages. Any elaborate discussion of the subject, briefly, though imperfectly, stated in the heading of this article, is therefore unnecessary. Yet, objections are urged against this book because its scientific allusions are not more technical and in detail. Now, if it can be shown that it does not, and can not, consistently with its professed character, enter into scientific details, the objection disappears. The principle which underlies this discussion is, that the Bible uses the facts of science, so far as they are pertinent to its main design, without any attempt to explain the laws of the facts. This principle will be found to have an application to other subjects than scientific ones. Any one, who chooses to pursue the investigation, will discover that it is adhered to in the Bible upon every subject with singular tenacity, and is a marked characteristic of the work. A fuller recognition of this principle would save much unreasonable clamor and needless disputes. The Bible teaches plainly and explicitly what it most concerns us to know, but it does even this with wonderful brevity.

This article may prepare the way for another, showing what rule of interpretation should be adopted in explaining those subjects in the word of God, which involve scientific questions.

It is obvious, if it be the design of Revelation to instruct men in the laws and phenomena of Science, that the investigation and

ART. VII.—*The Divine Origin and Supremacy of Civil Government.*

AMONG the premonitory symptoms of that decay that is now preying upon our country's vitals, and which will ultimately paralyze it in death, unless arrested, was, and is a constantly increasing disrespect for law, and legal forms, and a chafing under its restraints. Disrespect for law, whether it be physical, mental, moral, or civil, is the sure precursor of decline, in whatever phase it may appear. There is no true patriot, who has not been pained at the eruptions of this deep-seated disease in the body politic, in the form of mobs, that have been a burning stigma upon the land. The disease has not been located in any particular member or members of the body, but has permeated the entire system. In the rebellious States, negro Slavery has been the core around which the pus has gathered, which is now suppurating in the form of a terrible rebellion. The remark has often been made, and nowhere more frequently than at the South (for here its truth is most apparent), that the worst blight of Slavery falls upon the South herself. The wide chasm between the laborer and proprietor, destroys that happy adjustment of power, so essential to the preserving of society from despotism and monarchy on the one hand, and lawlessness, in the name of popular sovereignty, on the other. But when we turn to the other side, the loyal States, we find the disease there again gathering around that irritating core, Slavery, and suppurating, in many instances, in lawless attempts to get rid of it. And so Slavery has been as productive of disease in both parts, as a grain of sand in the eye of unceasing pain and irritation. It matters not whether it be lawless efforts to defend Slavery against those assailing it, or whether it be lawlessly attacking it; the demoralization is the same, for it is not right to use unjustifiable means for the attainment even of good.

We may as well open our eyes to the foreboding fact, that the whole body is diseased, that the whole heart is sick, and both are struggling to be relieved of their own corruptions. We discover its outworkings in the loyal States, in the resistance of constituted authority, as in the mob in New York, in dangerous secret combinations, dangerous symptoms of lawlessness, like smoking flax, only waiting a breeze to flame. And its tendency is as much

more dangerous than that in the South, as conspiracy is in crime above rebellion.

We will try to enumerate, briefly, what seems to us some of the causes leading to this state of affairs: and one of the most vicious is that infidel, superficial and degrading theory of the origin of civil government, that puts it on no higher ground than a mere convenient adjustment of communities for protection and profit. A theory essentially atheistic, and whose necessary consequence is anarchy, as is every arrangement that has no God in it.

We have imbibed the notion from our statesmen, that government is a sort of compact among men, instead of an eternal principle, and whatever its form may be it is a modification of the same principle, and it is the working of this principle that makes it even possible for them to be compacted together. Without it you could no more league men together, for any purpose, than you could confederate a heap of sand. The fable of the eleven oxen confederating themselves together to resist the attacks of a neighboring lion, is the history of the origin and end of civil government on this theory. Nay, we owe the beasts an apology for thus caricaturing them. Their instincts are not so superficial and senseless; even they obey a necessity of their nature, to be gregarious, which they never acquired by their own efforts, but is the impress of their Creator, even as matter, by a necessity of its nature, is attracted inversely as the square of its distances.

The sooner the world cracks the nut, and finds the kernel of civil government, the better it will be for mankind, civilization and religion. As it now is, infidelity gives them the husk, and bids them live, and be in health. What has the idea of civil government, being a compact, done for us? It has hatched in our own bosom the monstrous prodigy of secession and anarchy. Government is a compact, say they, and all the disaffected members have to do, is to withdraw from the body, until a limbless trunk will alone remain to die of sheer exhaustion, reproducing, on a splendid scale, the secession of the limbs from the stomach; and the nation, adopting the suggestion, would be left to write the moral in her own blood, that has oft been written of those systems that ignore God. Any system of government that can not point to a Divine progenitor is futile. The poet Coleridge, on hearing a friend descant on the probabilities of an infidel system of philanthropy regenerating the world, plucked a thistle down,

and flung it to the winds, saying: "The tendency of this down is to China, but I know, certainly, it will never get there; but after a few gyrations, it will fall near the place where it started. So government born outside of the Divine Mind, will perish upon the lap that gave it birth."

It must be a source of shame and wonder, that our Constitution, the embodiment of our system, has no mention of God in it. How in this its power is weakened, what bad morals it teaches the young offspring to be born and reared under its protecting ægis? And bitterly are we reaping the effects of its implied atheism, as well as presenting to the world the astounding fact of a Constitution ignoring the only source of its power, without which not a single wheel of its machinery would ever move upon its pinions.

A system ignoring God, and yet so dependent on him, that not a hand can touch this ark of our liberties without a solemn oath by him to insure fidelity in the exercise of its functions. If we would perpetuate civil government, we must educate the moral sense of its citizens; we must put the violations of its laws first in the domain of conscience, where this primary minister of justice will punish those infringements before they become overt, which, though they will ultimately lead to, as yet are not within its grasp. The resisting and overturning of it is not only a sin on account of its effects of derangement and ruin, but an absolute sin against God. When the Psalmist came to a review of his great sin in breaking the law, in violating its sanctity in the rights it secured to the citizen; when all this came up before him, we do not hear his confession hinging on the wrong he had inflicted on *Uriah*, his duplicity, his ingratitude to a faithful subject; but rising above these he bemoaned the fact that it, at last, was all against God: against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned and done this great evil in Thy sight. And while it is always incumbent upon us to correct the abuses of the government by its functionaries in bad legislation, or in the wresting of good laws to bad ends; for mal legislation, or administration, is no more a part of the Divine ordinance of civil government than sin, and it is as much our duty to uproot the one as to conserve the other; yet while this is true, its very abuses must be corrected according to appointed order; so that it shall not be paralyzed under the shock. For government, like the human body, is arranged to repair its own injuries and correct its own humors; and, as in the body, all act on the principle in

effecting cure, *to assist nature*; so in civil derangements, all that is required is to start and uphold its dormant, or impeded functions, and it will cure itself. Not a jot further than this can we go without being conspirators against God himself; for he who arrays himself against the laws of God, whether mental, moral, civil, or physical, seeks to destroy almost the only way by which God manifests himself to the world; that is, by His government of it. One part of the mission of the Saviour into the world was to vindicate and give supremacy to law and government. Not only moral government, but civil too; which is, in some sense, an offspring of God's moral government. The germs of its existence are here; there could be no such thing as criminal law for the defense of property, reputation, or life, without it; for those moral distinctions in which criminal law is grounded, would be wanting. The laws against theft and arson, suppose the fact that these are understood already and blamed as being wrongs against moral obligation. And there is no way of defining these crimes and bringing them to judgment, except by reference to those distinctions that lie in the domain of moral government. Take, for example, murder; we can not punish it, or define it, until we enter the territories of moral government; we define it as killing with malice aforethought, done with a consciously criminal intent. Civil society is a chimera when divorced from moral government. Without it, we are not above the race of pismires. We have no moral and religious ideas, and can not legislate. Civil society and government is impossible, and all that is genial and benign in the State is lost. If your house is burned, you only conceive of it as a loss, and not a crime. If your children are killed, you are in the condition of the bees, when their hive is rifled; only mad with a sense of loss, but no sense of the crime or wrong.

Or to illustrate further, take our civil provisions to protect virtue; unless you travel over into the moral domain, what value are they? Without our moral allegiance, licentiousness is no more harm than hunger. But this is enough to show that even the humiliation and sacrifice of Christ was to maintain honor, and magnify all law, at whatever point it was broken, or infringed. And hence we find Him just as careful to uphold and support the civil government while on earth, as the moral; nay, it was impossible to divorce them; He pays tribute; He enjoins obedience to the civil ruler, and yields Himself an example of submission to an illegal

arrest; and rebukes His disciple for drawing his sword against it, even in his own defense. We are told by theologians that there was something in the nature of things that made it necessary for God to sacrifice His son. But we confess it is not clear to us. We can not see that any could have called the Judge of all the earth to an account if He had pardoned every sinner that breathes, without any sacrifice. Who would have dared to say what doest thou? So, with becoming deference, the Lord Jesus humbled himself and died, to magnify the law and make it honorable; the whole law; no matter in what division, whether mental, moral, civil, or physical, in whatever phase it has been wrested by transgression from its original design, the control, development, and perfection of man, its subject.

In every being there are certain marks of life. If man lives physically he breathes, mentally he thinks; morally, conscience holds her blazing torch, discriminating between right and wrong, and mutters wrathfully in the soul, when her dictates are unheeded; so, if there is a God, there are certain characteristics of His being; and it seems to us most of those characteristics are comprehended in His government, at least so far as we know. Now, laws are the means by which government is attained as an end. God governs by laws. Law is the mode in which a cause acts; moral laws, mental laws, and civil laws, are the modes in which intelligent causes act. It seems, therefore, to us conclusive that moral, mental, civil, and physical laws are the modes by which God, the *great cause*, acts through and upon us to the attainment of the *great end*, the government of the world. If this be so, how inevitable and startling the conclusion: that they who violate or infringe any of these laws, the *modes in which God acts* in the attainment of the great end, the government of the world, conspire against God, aiming at His very existence. We know it becomes us to speak with great modesty on such a subject; but with us the conviction is irresistible. We will illustrate. It is a law of matter, "that every particle in the universe attracts every other by a power which diminishes as the square of the distances between the particles increase." Now, whoever would invert or subvert this order or mode of Divine action, whereby the physical universe is governed, and worlds are kept harmoniously in their places, is a conspirator against God, seeking to obliterate His image from the world, which is reflected in the order and adjustment of means to

ends, and would destroy the tracings of the Almighty in the work of His hands.

When God created man, it was in His own image. "In the image of God created He him." This word image seems to us to be the kernel of all government, at least as far as our knowledge extends. The image of God in man is not only reason, will, or the intellectual faculties, nor does it consist alone in the right use of these, but also impressing him with a capacity for government: God manifesting His own being in man by impressing His own eternal principles of order upon him, as the seal leaves its image on the wax. It is remarked by Bush on these words, and it is but the reiteration of the opinion of other commentators, "That while the image of God implies likeness to Him in moral attributes, as is intimated in Col. iii: 10, there can be as little doubt that the phrase in this connection denotes primarily the possession of dominion and authority. This is evinced by the words of the ensuing clause, 'let them have dominion,' which is to be regarded as explanatory of the term image in the first clause." Then the primary idea of the image of God in man is dominion, authority, not only over the animal creation, but in that ability to construct laws and execute them for his own government in the community and State. The image of God in man is seen in that tendency of his nature to society, and the devising of laws to regulate himself in this capacity. And hence man upon earth represents or bears the image of God nearly in the same sense in which the governor of a province is said to represent or bear the image of his sovereign. To illustrate: We believe there is a sense in which the physical man is made in the image of God. It reflects the Divine skill; it is a monument in its exquisite adaptation, in its wondrous functions, of the omniscience and omnipotence of God. The poet Ovid has drawn a true portraiture in these lines:

" While mute creation downward bend  
Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend,  
Man looks aloft, and with erected eyes  
Beholds his own hereditary skies!"

Now, let man violate any of these physical laws of his being, and he is guilty of conspiracy against God's government and his own happiness; he is arresting the progress of his being, and introducing anarchy into the government of God; seeking to

destroy God's image in him. And how soon a troop of ills, the avengers of his treason, come down upon him with frightful swoop! Or take his mental nature, where the image of God is not questioned, and they that violate these laws conspire against the government of a world. They rise in their rebellion to the very throne of God, shattering His image in His own temple, and as certain as thought rises out of the depths of the mind, specters will haunt them, reason will reel on its throne, and the functions of their bodies will run as wild as an engine unbelted from the friction and regulated motion of a thousand wheels.

But we go a step further, and here, if we have reasoned correctly, we have now attained the point we have desired to establish. There is a government resting on even stronger basis, which we call civil. It rests on all the others as its piers. They are the arches for its support. It commands to its aid all their accumulated authority. It is an eclectic, selecting out of all the rest the elements peculiar to its own nature, each chosen element bringing with it the sanctity and authority of the system from whence it was taken, and when civil government spreads over us its sheltering wings, it demands our loyalty by the authority of all the systems from whence its component elements were selected.

We speak of God's moral, physical and mental governments. These are the systems by which God governs mind, soul and matter. Their laws are the adjustment for the attainments of these ends, the means by which God manifests Himself to and in the world. Now, civil government is the aggregate of these same laws: so adjusted that they reach from the individual, and clasp communities and States in their embrace. They assume more general application, and are called civil. But they are the modes by which an intelligent and beneficent God deals with States, and have the awful sanctity of all the rest, and the violation of which is conspiracy against all the rest in one form or other, as well as an attack against the entire government of God in all its systems.

And how do we arrive at this conclusion? On this wise:

The moral law, written at first in the heart of man, no one will dare deny, is the image of God. Now, we have from Sinai a transcript of that law, and in this we have the entire elementary principles of civil law. Every feature of it may be found in one form or other in that decalogue. For example, we have there a bill of rights: One man shall not wrong another in his life, property, or

character; and were it necessary, the whole system might be evolved. Now, they who *attack* civil government, either with a view to its ultimate overthrow, or breaking any of its laws, can be viewed in no other light than conspirators against government, both civil and moral, lifting their puny arms to smite down the image of God.

And that this is true, is evident in the fact, that the murderer is charged with the destruction of God's image. Murder falls in the category of civil crime, but it runs directly over into the moral system, in the reason assigned for the execution of the murderer: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He him." He that mars or shivers that image, strikes through his victim at God, and true to this conception that the image of God in the world is his government, and the execution of its various laws, God orders in the Israelitish government to be set aside those four cities of refuge, into which the one charged with murder might flee for safety, to escape the avenger of blood. This in that system was a provision extraordinary for peculiar cases.

Now, what is most remarkable about this provision is, that there is no real need for it. The persons involved were not by the law guilty. They were not murderers, but those who by accident had taken the lives of others. They could, in our code, have been discharged by a court of inquiry; a justice's court. Then why this necessity? God had a government to sustain over that commonwealth, and while He would give protection to the innocent, He would make their very deliverance teach the supremacy of law, and proclaim its awful sacredness. He, though not guilty of murder, was, in his misfortune, made a teacher of a fearful lesson to others; his life for a time is in as much danger as if a criminal; that his fellow-citizens beholding it, might exclaim, how dreadful it is to violate the laws of man and God when one who is innocent is treated thus!

Here is one point in which the Jewish system of civil law is superior to all others. It had two ideas ever in distinct view in its execution: first, the protection of the public interests and punishment of crimes; and second, it was didactic in its *modus operandi*, conveying the highest moral impressions.

And here is a radical defect in our system. Take, for example, the administration of the oath, which is almost vital to our system,

nothing can be accomplished without it. Yet the oath is administered usually in so perfunctory and farcical a manner that it is no wonder it is treated so lightly, and practical infidelity and atheism will obstruct our very vitals unless this abuse is arrested. There is no solemnity or any moral impression made in the exercise of this most sacred function; so that public morals are undermined and vitiated on this subject, until it sometimes looks as if there is not soundness and veracity enough in the nation to perpetuate its existence. Perjury outright is a matter of every-day life; and communities have ceased even to scowl at it. Oaths are taken for every pretext, until the Government seems to be paying a bonus for perjury. Nay, perjury itself, if accomplished by mental reservations, perfidy, or that devilish smartness whereby an oath is shorn of its power, is now laughed at, as a smart jest. Men and women, unrebuked, talk of taking an oath; and ignoring its obligations, because disliking the power administering, to subserve some selfish interest, go and take the oath, and then declare it null, because they were compelled to take it. And why all this? Oh! it is the ruins of the temple of government falling upon us, because its pillars have been removed by wicked hands.

“When the foundations are removed, what shall the righteous do?” These are the death strides on a nation’s life, the death blossoms of her decay, until there remains no hope but in gaining the right, placing law on the throne, and crowning it in the name of the Most High, and then forever maintaining it there, by might and right, against all its foes. It were better for a nation that one-half its inhabitants should fall; nay, that its soil should glisten with the whitening bones of its slain—that the other half should be reduced to want—that the forest should reconquer its territory, and that the wild beast should again make his lair where once its fields were graced with the golden sheaves of abundant harvest; that Neptune should blockade Eolus in his cave, and not a breath should stir to rustle a sail, and its navies should rot in port, and all commerce should cease from ocean, land and river, than its government should be overthrown, or even totter; or that its laws should become impotent to control its citizens. An outraged people might, by the ballot, or even by the sword, hurl every executive from his throne of power. They might strangle tyranny with their own hands, and fill the sacred places with better men, and still the system and principles of government would remain intact.

This would be a great calamity—great in proportion to the violence or irregularity with which it was done. But after the system had recovered the shock, all would be harmony and health again.

When a nation is struggling for its existence, all the calamities of war may come, and hope remain. The father might fall in the struggle, cheered, even in death, with the thought that his children might enjoy peace and security under good government as the reward of his death. But if government, even though defective, perish from a nation (for, like our mortality, we possess it but once), human hopes lie buried in its ruin; civilization wraps itself as the shroud around its body; religion begs a burial in the same sepulcher. Tyrants may fetter government; they may restrain the free exercise of its members; they may infect it with disease; nay, array it in its death-robés, but if the spark of life is not extinct, it will, in time, arise, like a giant refreshed with wine, shaking itself out of its fetters, as the lion shakes the dew of morning from his mane. But if it is rent in fragments, or its cohesion destroyed, or even the fatal elements of dismemberment injected into its life, then we may come and weep over its grave. But it will not live again. We may, like those devoted virgins, who went up and down the world in quest of the dismembered limbs of Osiris, seek to join its remains, but we will be impotent to inspire these disjointed members with life again. The mirror, from which is reflected the image of God in the world, will be broken, and neither finite head nor hand shall conjoin its fragments. Let us not forget that when the civil government of a nation is destroyed, that the image of God in the world is gone; for mental, moral and civil government are so intimately connected, that they go down in the same crash. Who is so insane as to hope to subvert civil order, and conserve religion and civilization? What is the experience of this hour? As well crush the limbs of your body and expect the head not to feel the shock, or the heart not to swoon or grow sick.

Government, says a great writer, is the exponent of a nation's civilization, and, we might add, its religion too. It is not enacted for society, but the outworking of the instincts of society. If it is arbitrary, or if a tyrant sways its scepter with freedom's image under his feet, it is because he is the ruler of a people only fit for a tyrant to govern. If the laws are corrupt or unexecuted, it is

because corruption has first invaded the people. Law is the development of civilization. This is a great idea, dug from the ruins of dead empires, and when subverted, these two, like Saul and Jonathan, lovely in their lives, in death are not divided. Look at any dead empire, and we discover the grave of that nation's hopes, temporal and divine. How is it in Central America, with a climate that might almost rival Eden? But what do we behold? Superstition muttering her incantations over the grave of pure religion; her civilization only the straggling rays peering into the sepulcher upon a nation's corpse; her people dwarfed by the capriciousness and instability of government, until her only befitting epitaph is, Dead while she liveth. What do we see better in Mexico? Nothing but the same degraded humanity; unfitted by the same causes to govern themselves; unfit to be subjects; civilization gone; her religion a stupendous system of corruption and fraud, preying on the vices and abominations of a most degraded people. But why dwell longer on the sickening picture? We have seen enough to convince us that there are no efforts too great, nor price too dear, to pay for the security and perpetuity of civil government, and no bribe for its overthrow that can do aught but reflect our madness. Would that we, as a nation, might learn wisdom, even at this late day, in the lessons of the past, and return to our loyalty to established order, and if corruptions invade the sacred places of our nation's power, let us drive them out, as the Master did the temple swindlers, from its threshold; but never be guilty of the amazing folly of tearing down this beautiful temple, which our fathers built and cemented with their blood, which they consecrated to the honor of their God—this magnificent structure, the wonder, admiration and hope of the world, merely to rid ourselves of its supposed or real corruptions. No, no. We will labor both to elevate our government and our sense of loyalty and devotion with it. We will seek, by the blessing of our fathers' God, for that blessed time when all the people of this once great and happy country will regard obligation to it a privilege, a source of elevation and happiness, and when, with a religious loyalty, we can say: Her statutes shall be our songs in the house of our pilgrimage.