

THE
MORAL SYSTEM,

WITH AN

HISTORICAL AND CRITICAL INTRODUCTION.

HAVING SPECIAL REFERENCE TO Bp. BUTLER'S "ANALOGY."

Designed as a Text Book,

FOR

ACADEMIES AND COLLEGES.

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GOD IN HUMAN THOUGHT;

Or, Natural Theology Traced in Literature, Ancient and Modern, to the Time of Bishop Butler. With a Closing Chapter on the Moral System, and an English Bibliography from Spencer to Butler. By Prof. E. H. GILLETT, of the N. Y. University, author of "Life and Times of John Huss," etc. Two vols., 8vo, cloth. \$5.00.

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P R E F A C E .

My object in this work is to present a comprehensive but concise view of the Moral System. We have treatises in abundance on the order and laws of the different departments of the material system, nor have mental and moral philosophy failed to receive that degree and amount of attention which have resulted in the preparation of numerous and able text-books. But the order and laws of the providential government of the world, although of paramount and personal interest, have rarely been discussed, except in connection with revealed dogmas, and there are few works which ever pretend to set forth any thorough and connected view of what has been termed the moral *Kosmos*. The best known and most able in English literature, is undoubtedly Bp. Butler's "Analogy of Religion, Natural, and Revealed," and this has been extensively used as a text-book in the higher schools and colleges; but the very title indicates that his object was not to present anything like a complete or connected scheme of the moral constitution of the world, but only such features of it as were exposed to the same criticisms as the scheme set forth in the Christian Scriptures. On other grounds, also, which will be manifest as we proceed, his work is unsuited not only to the wants of students in a course of education, but to the prevalent type of modern thought, which finds the gravest difficulties where Butler found none, and often refuses to admit without proof what he was content to assume.

My own experience of the use of Butler as a text-book, in the university with which I am connected, has compelled me so far to modify his arrangement, and supplement or qualify his arguments—especially with a view to interest and instruct classes of young men, many of whom are repelled rather than attracted by Butler's style and method—that in my instructions I have really substituted for Butler lectures of my own, retaining what was essential in his thought, and remolding it, in connection with new matter, so as to constitute the present volume. The advantages of the method which I have pursued have been obvious in several respects. A class of minds has been reached and interested—such as are to be found in every large institution—who would have regarded the study

of the text of Butler with repugnance, but who have thus been attracted to a more systematic and comprehensive survey of the Moral System, with its constitution and laws, as an organic whole.

Indeed, grave objections, and by no means groundless, have been taken to the "Analogy" as a text-book, some of which will be noted in the Introduction to this work. But it is enough to say it is unwise to thrust upon the attention of students, in a repulsive form, such truths as Butler presents. Vastly important, they should not be divested of their attractiveness to thoughtful minds by the language or method in which they are set forth. Yet Sir James Mackintosh has remarked of Butler, "No thinker so great was ever so bad a writer. . . . How general must the reception have been of truths so certain and momentous as those contained in Butler's discourses—with how much more clearness must they have appeared to his own great understanding, if he had possessed the strength and distinctness with which Hobbes enforces odious falsehood, or the unspeakable charm of that transparent diction which clothed the unfruitful paradoxes of Berkeley!"

It is manifest to any one who has paid attention to the subject, that a liberal education should be, as far as possible, symmetrical and comprehensive, as well as thorough, within the limits necessarily assigned. No important department of knowledge should be altogether overlooked. Yet there has of late been a strong tendency to allow physical science to encroach upon the sphere of moral, even while under the broad and proper sense of *natural*, the physical and moral are both included. The study of the laws of mind is, to say the least, as important as the study of the laws of matter, and the distinction between right and wrong is as real, though impalpable to sense, as any that is drawn by the mathematician or chemist. It is paying but an equivocal compliment to any scheme of education to say that it unfolds to the student the operation of such laws as those of gravitation or chemical affinities, but is silent as to the constitution of his own moral being, and the relation which it sustains to the moral order of the world.

Niebuhr has remarked in his lectures (I. 146), that "as the consideration of nature shows an inherent Intelligence, which may also be conceived as coherent with nature, so does history, on a hundred occasions, show an intelligence which is distinct from nature, which conducts and determines those things which may seem to us accidental; and it is not true that the study of history weakens the belief in a divine providence. History is, of all kinds of knowledge, the one which tends most decidedly to that belief."

But history can be most profitably studied, only when, in connection with the unfolding and regulated order of its events, we are prepared by the previous study of the Moral System, to see that it is pervaded by a plan which gives unity to that scheme of things whose sequences history records.

In like manner the study of the Moral System, in connection with other branches of science, is commended by its utility; but apart from this consideration, its intrinsic claims to investigation are paramount. If the laws of health concern our physical well-being, and if they demand recognition in the science of physiology, there are also laws of moral as well as mental health, which should not be overlooked, and if the order of the planetary and stellar worlds invites our attention, the order which is seen to pervade the Moral System will especially demand our recognition. Very justly has William Archer Butler remarked (*Anc. Phil.*, II., 56): "With all our admiration for the energetic labors of the great naturalists of our day, and for the advances which the physical sciences are receiving through their combined exertions, we cannot refuse to see—and in all quarters the conviction is gaining strength among thoughtful men—that the spiritual world (except as far as *practically* presented by the preachers of religion) is in proportion eclipsed. It is, as it were, *unrepresented* in the Parliament of Philosophy. This huge material universe, with all its labyrinth of laws, seems to fetter and entangle us; and we are so overwhelmed by weight and motion, that matter and being become equivalent terms, and we cannot allow the existence of a world to which these material attributes are not attached."

Such a grave practical error as this needs to be corrected, and it should be corrected at the very source in which it originated. We are not unwarrantably intruding into the religious sphere, or introducing sectarian elements into education, when we simply call attention to facts as obvious and indisputable as any that physical science reveals, and put upon them an interpretation justified by the laws of scientific method. To a certain extent we follow a track of thought, neither exclusively Pagan or Christian, but common to both, a track which runs parallel, indeed, only to a certain extent with that of revealed truth, but which constitutes the line which any consistent theory of obligation, whether of ethics or religion, must recognize.

In all ages of intellectual activity, the most profound students have found themselves constrained to note, and to endeavor, at least, to interpret those great facts lying along the path of human experience, which indicate a superintending providence and human accountability. Indeed, a very

large portion of ancient literature has been shaped and colored by views of the relation of the human to divine, which, though conjoined with many errors, were yet expressive or suggestive of valuable truth; and if, instead of accepting its guidance, we subject its teachings to criticism, availing ourselves of the clearer light of reason which belongs to a Christian age, we may hope to attain results in advance of any goal which it was able to reach, and to discern how solid is the basis upon which the fundamental truths of theology, natural and revealed, repose.

It is proper to add, that the closing chapter of my work on "God in Human Thought; or, Natural Theology Traced in Literature," is included also in this volume, for which it was originally prepared.

At the close of the treatise, I have appended questions designed to facilitate its use as a text-book, and these questions cover the Historical Introduction as well as the main body of the work. As the Introduction is a very concise summary of the course of speculation anterior to the time of Butler, and as much of it has special reference to his "Analogy," the teacher can, at his discretion, use such portions of it only as he sees fitting, or omit it altogether. Many of its facts, however, should, in the latter case, be given by the teacher, by way of illustration, in connection with lessons on "The Moral System."

I had intended to include in the work a bibliography extending from the time of Butler to the present, but even the somewhat incomplete one which I had prepared, would have very materially increased the bulk and cost of the volume, and I have been compelled to content myself with giving a quite meagre list of the leading works belonging to this period, which have followed in the line of Butler's speculations. They will be found in a note at the close of the Historical Introduction.

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HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

I.

TESTIMONY OF CLASSIC LITERATURE.

THE System of Nature, in the proper sense of the phrase, includes not merely the matter, but the constitution and laws of the entire universe. The idea of system is the *placing together* of things in orderly or established relations. There may be system where we cannot discern the evidences of it, and manifold and extensive analogies compel us to assume its existence where these evidences are wanting. On this ground we feel warranted to employ the phrase—System of Nature—and to infer that there is system throughout nature; in other words, that it is universal.

But the universal system of nature includes moral as well as physical elements. The latter have often been termed natural as distinguished from moral, but the former as well as the latter, are natural. They belong to the great whole of being. Their existence does not admit of dispute or question, and they stand together in established relations, whether the fact be recognized or not. Experience and observation assure us of it, insomuch that we speak, and must speak, of moral as well as physical laws, of intellectual, social, emotional, as well as material forces.

As the Sidereal System is made up of subordinate systems, which yet in mutual connection constitute a grand unity, so the System of Nature is composed of minor constituent systems, articulated or interwoven together; yet in such a way that each may be considered by itself, as well as related to the others. We may investigate the system of vegetable or of animal life, or, with Cudworth, discuss the “Intellectual System” of the universe, but we do so by abstracting from the

whole a certain class of elements, possessed of distinct characters and relations, and considering these apart by themselves. If, in this way, we take up the constitution of man as a moral agent, and the laws which assert their authority over him as such, visiting him with reward or penalty, or plying him with motives appropriate to his nature, we have, under the System of Nature, and included as an essential part of it, what requires a distinctive term, and to this the name Moral System is appropriately applied.

This moral system is thus seen to be natural. It is a component part of the system of nature, interwoven with and an integral portion of it, and distinguished from it only in our thoughts for purposes of investigation. It is included under the phrase constitution and laws of nature, and, although we might suppose a material universe, exclusive of moral elements, yet the actual universe embraces them, and cannot properly be understood, explained, or appreciated without them. Indeed, it may be that in them we shall find—apart from revelation—the fittest key to the interpretation of nature; hints to explain the significance of material things and arrangements, which the things or arrangements, in themselves, do not afford. The Moral System, therefore, is in the highest sense natural, and the contrast is not between natural and moral, but between moral and physical.

But a moral system must be distinguished from moral government. The latter is more directly suggestive of the element of *personal* administration or supervision, not that the former excludes, or does not imply it, but it leaves it more in the background. With this exception, the term *moral system* is more comprehensive in its significance than moral government. It includes, or may include, much more than the mere administration of law, with a view of swaying men to obedience by means of reward and penalty. Reformatory discipline, remedial provisions for transgression, moral influences infinite in their variety, as well as trial and probation, including the temporary arrest of judicial processes, are all consistent with a perfect moral system, while they would imply an imperfect, or rather, incomplete and modified moral government. The evidence that would fail to prove a perfect moral

government, might be fully adequate to prove the existence of a moral system, and a moral system that included many elements of moral government. All that would be required would be to adduce facts indicative of the operation of laws plainly designed to produce certain moral results, or discourage from certain courses of action, objectionable on moral grounds, showing at the same time that these facts are of general significance, and that these laws, however tardily, are yet systematically applied and enforced.

It is not surprising, therefore, that from the earliest period of recorded human thought, we should find the existence of a moral system assumed. It may be grossly apprehended. Apparent incongruities or imperfections connected with it may even seem to imply an imperfect administration, or furnish some plausible ground for ascribing the phenomena of the moral order of the world to opposite principles, or a variety of divinities. In some cases there will naturally be a disposition to harmonize or solve these incongruities from a Theistic standpoint; in others, they will be accepted as inexplicable mysteries, or as proofs that the sphinx-like riddle of human existence is quite insoluble. But in most cases there will be some recognition of superhuman forces acting with design, concessions of a providence that exercises some kind of control, whether capriciously, or wisely and beneficently, over the affairs of men.

Throughout ancient classic literature, we trace an undercurrent of thought of this kind, and sometimes it comes distinctly to the surface. In Solon's counsel to Cræsus, to count no man happy till he is dead, we recognize, in connection with his repute for wisdom, his convictions of a providence that may make the splendors of wealth and power illustrate the supremacy of the great unseen power of justice, that determines finally all human allotments. No careful student of Herodotus has failed to notice as a leading characteristic of his work, its almost constant recognition of a providence that exults to abase the proud, and defeat the designs of the mightiest ruler, who, like the Persian monarch, could seek to crush a free and enterprising people. Anaxagoras breaks loose from the precedents of a materialistic philosophy, to declare that the

origin of creation, with its established order, is inexplicable, without an informing mind. Pythagoras, in his famous letter Y, draws the picture of the branching paths of virtue and vice, "the broad and narrow ways," one strait and difficult, but with its rich rewards; the other smooth and easy, but with its terrible sequel of retribution. The doctrine of the immortality of the soul he is said to have received from Pherecydes—said to have been indebted to the secret books of the Phœnicians—or to have derived it from Egypt, while, amid the vagaries of Polytheism, he attained, with his theory of numbers, to the conception of the ONE. Empedocles recognized the dependence on the Gods of "the creature of a day," and the stern law of retribution that would follow its blood-stained victim for "thrice ten thousand years." His idea of the Deity is that of "a holy infinite Spirit, not provided with limbs, that passes through the world with rapid thoughts," while the power of necessity seems by him identified with "the ancient decree of the Gods."

Democritus, although the Hobbes of his age, and making a prudent egoism the corner-stone of his ethics, called the common notion of chance a cover for human ignorance. Socrates, repelled by the scepticisms of the sophists and their ethics of selfishness, apprehended with unprecedented clearness the leading truths of the moral system; arguing the divine existence from design in nature; making virtue the highest interest of man; acknowledging an overruling providence; asserting the punishment of sin, in sin itself; and in his own example illustrating a sublime integrity that would accept the fatal hemlock sooner than seek to escape penalty by anything unworthy of himself; and on his trial before his judges, and with his friends around him in his prison, giving evidence of being supported by that hope of immortality which assured his spirit of a final home with good men and with the Gods.

In Plato we meet with the most remarkable thinker of the ancient heathen world. With much that is crudely theoretic or fanciful, there is much that excites our admiration and commands our assent. A supreme mind, an overruling providence, stern laws of duty, personal responsibility, the immortality of the soul, the depraved tendencies of human nature,

the high and inspiring prospects of virtue, the impartial severity of final judgment, stern and inevitable retribution—these are among the most important topics on which he lavishes the wealth of his genius, while he reveals his own lofty conception of the possibilities of human existence. Aristotle, more cool and cautious, is theoretically a pure Theist, and to him Cicero has ascribed an argument which anticipates, in a very impressive manner, modern arguments for a creating mind from the design evinced in creation. He speaks of the future destiny of the soul in conditional phraseology, but in his Nicomachean ethics, he brings forward clearly and emphatically the fact of moral distinctions, and displays those features of the moral system with which virtæ harmonizes, and vice is at issue. Later Greek philosophy was content to copy from its great masters of the Platonic age, refining upon their speculations only to give them a false development; although sometimes, as in the sublime hymn of Cleanthes, rising to apprehensions of the Divine being and providence, not unworthy of the finest conceptions of Plato himself. Notwithstanding the pictures he gives us of the disgraceful quarrels and vulgar human passions of the rulers of Olympus, Homer represents Zeus as the moral governor of the world. He is king of gods and men, the sovereign administrator over all human interests. The good or evil from the two urns before him, are dispensed by his hand. His providence is universal, and the retributive forces of the universe coöperate with his designs to maintain the moral order of the world. The fearful Erinnyes “represent Law in action.” Mure remarks, in his “Critical History of Greek Language and Literature” (I. 172), with reference both to the Iliad and the Odyssey, “The general scheme of divine management in both poems is consistent and well-imagined. The supreme first cause or efficient unity of the Deity, is Fate or Destiny. Zeus always steps in between contending powers as the Saviour God, and invariably turns the scale in favor of virtue.” Thus, the doctrine of a superintending and controlling providence is ever kept in view. Strength, wisdom, and courage are the gifts of the Gods. They hear the prayers of mortals and mete out their lot; Law is recognized as of universal obli-

gation. Invisible, but resistless forces execute it. Conceptions of them, evidently traditional, and accepted by Homer, are impersonated in Diké, Themis, Nomos, or Nemesis, sometimes the one and sometimes the other; but ever the same idea of justice or retribution—ever sitting at the right hand of Zeus, and acting as his judicial associates or consensors. It is especially in that dread word, *Nemesis*, which Homer transmitted to the later Greek literature, that we recognize the idea of inevitable justice, and to this Fate sets the seal.

In Hesiod, the Gods, "invisible, are ever nigh." Man has ten thousand unseen guardians, commissioned from on high, who rove the world. Eternal justice has her mansion in the sky, and her place at the feet of Zeus, where she presents her plaint, till retribution comes upon guilty nations. Wickedness wounds itself, and in the end its seeming prosperity is vain. The two paths of Hesiod are substantially identical with the two of Pythagoras.

Pindar exhibits a firm belief in a superintending providence. "The whole of his poetry is impregnated with a lively sense of the divine in the world." "No Greek writer expresses himself, in reference to the certainty of final and exact retribution, more confidently than Pindar." The Gods give victory, but "they enjoin duties, and humility, gratitude and moderation are obligatory."

Æschylus is the Milton of Greek poetry. Nearer than any of his rivals does he approach the terrible and impressive sublimity of the Hebrew prophets. Nemesis, the Fates and the Furies, are with him impersonated forces. Zeus is the chastiser of arrogance and overbearing thoughts. Crime can never escape final retribution. The invisible curse threads its way along the ages, and through generations, till the guilt is expiated. Nothing is accidental. The moral system stands as firm as the throne of its Eternal Ruler.

Sophocles, coming nearer to our human sympathies, and with more of harmony and sweetness, is by no means less lofty in his ethics. No one has drawn more exquisitely the beauty of virtue when subject to trial. No one has invested "the eternal unwritten laws" of God with a more impressive majesty. Over these a sleepless and resistless providence pre-

sides. To guilt, however hedged with power, there is no possibility of escape. Fate is resistless, and there is a "mighty Zeus" in heaven. Wilful wrong-doing challenges his wrath and its own doom. The soul is immortal, and retribution reaches beyond the grave. In Euripides, the influence of the age of the Sophists is distinctly to be traced. Instead of looking upward to the majestic heavenly harmonies, his eye is turned downward to the earth. He sees the world, if not a vale of tears, a moral labyrinth, and his tragedies reflect the puzzling mazes and confused scenes of a moral system in which inexplicable problems are involved.

It would delay us too long to trace the views of providence involved in such works as the "History of Thucydides," and the "Orations of Demosthenes." Yet the narrative of the one, and the appeals of the other, indicate a prevalent popular sentiment that the Gods favor justice, and that their providence superintends the affairs of men.

The two great sects of Epicureans and Stoics were rivals, and yet each bore testimony to fragmentary portions of the moral order of the world. The former, leaving the Gods to their eternal repose, still admitted that human happiness was subjected to certain fixed conditions, and that wisdom required the study of these. The Stoics, eulogizing and almost deifying virtue, made the good man who possessed it invincible by suffering or calamity. They vitalized the universe, and filled it with a providence, however crudely conceived. Their philosophy appealed strongly to the admiration and sympathies of those who had inherited a regard for the old Roman ideal of virtue. But a sceptical element had been transmitted by the Academics, and we see its operation in the mind of Cicero as he discusses "The Nature of the Gods." Epicurean, Stoic, and Academic are alike allowed a hearing, and in the Tusculan questions, we have the speculations of the most gifted of Roman orators and philosophers, on the immortality of the soul. Cicero accepts, with qualifications of doubt and uncertainty, most of the doctrines transmitted from Plato. He gives in his adhesion to the theory of a divine providence over human interests. He accepts and amplifies the conception of the eternal unwritten law. He magnifies the beauty

and claims of virtue, declining to conceal his abhorrence of mere utilitarian ethics. As to the immortality of the soul, his confidence wavers; while he reads Plato his doubts vanish, but only again to reappear when he has laid the book aside.

This is true also of Seneca, and yet in his writings we find the recognition of moral duties and relations, which are held up to view, as a check, if possible, upon the depravity of the age. Of human nature, his picture is far from flattering; but he manifests a high appreciation of the excellence and beauty of virtue, while few ancient writers go beyond him in the sublime conception of an universal providence. He may use, like his contemporaries, such terms as fate or fortune, but he harmonizes them with his theistic scheme, and leaves nothing to chance. The Stoic ideal of living "according to nature," commends itself to his approval, but this nature is to be consistent with the supremacy of reason.

Plutarch is more thoroughly human and genial, an Eclectic in his philosophy, but with strong stoical leanings. He believes that "the art of a great understanding produced the world;" that the condition of man, without a presiding Intelligence, would be pitiable; that Providence is wise and beneficent; that man, in whom we see the ripe fruit of the Creator's plans, has an immortal destiny before him, and is not to be blasted or extinguished in a moment and forever; that the hope of immortality is needed to sustain the soul; that virtue is ordained to be closely allied to blessedness, and vice to misery; that happiness does not consist in what is external, but the soul itself may become its own bitterest tormentor; that for guilt there is no escape, while wealth and power cannot afford it ease or security. It is true, as set forth in *De Sera Numinis Vindicta*, that deserved retribution is tardily inflicted, but this shows that God does not punish in haste and anger, while swift penalty might involve the innocent with the guilty, or cut off chosen instruments of Providence before their time, or deny merciful opportunities for repentance. The visitation of the iniquity of parents upon children makes a more lasting and salutary impression. Lingering justice allows also for moral discipline. Submission to unavoidable evils is a duty. We come into being, not to prescribe our

own lot, but to accept what is given, and obey the Gods that govern the world. Future retribution is accepted and held in Plato's sense. Moral distinctions are not conventional, but eternal. Self-examination and introspection are the part of every wise man. Nature is not void of reason, but full of God.

The "Meditations" of the imperial philosopher, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, set before us the highest Stoic ideal. He reverences the power of Gods who exist, although, like his own soul, unseen. A wise Providence has established and guards the moral order of the world. The "Universal Nature"—Pantheistic as the phrase may sound—is at once resistless, intelligent, and just. Fate is the necessary connection or consequence of causes, as related to events. There is no real evil in the world. Nothing happens; all is pre-ordained, yet the governing intelligence has no malice toward any. There is a moral order of the world, a mutual adjustment, as of squared stones in a wall or pyramid. Soul and body have different destinies. For the former, there may be a life hereafter, but if otherwise, it has reached its port; it is released from the body that enslaved it. It will be absorbed in the universal soul, for in its origin, it is an efflux from God. Man's duty here, is to live "according to nature," to follow reason, the great law of the universe; to keep the soul within unpolluted, and follow its dictates as those of a god. Stoic virtue will teach how to endure, and take their sting from the unequal allotments of life.

In Epictetus we meet with ethical teachings and conceptions, which, for loftiness and beauty, are unsurpassed among heathen writers. The Roman slave, subject, with his feeble frame, to more than ordinary hardships, is a more genuine philosopher than his imperial rival. The purity of his doctrine, and his own virtuous example, have warranted the epithet bestowed upon him, of "the great ornament" of the Stoic School. His recognition of the moral order of the world is habitual. He dwells impressively on the Omnipresence of God. The nature and reason of man indicate his duty. "A rational creature," he says, "I must sing hymns to God." To Him belongs the goodness of a father, and the

authority of a ruler. As His subject and child, man is to seek to know and please Him. To do this, constitutes the struggle and the duty of life. It is a task, a discipline, a warfare. If the trial is severe, it has its uses. If the soul shrinks from it, it is false to its trust, and must expect retribution. If faithful, it will be approved, for God's smile is on the good, whether living or dead. Unlike Seneca, Epictetus does not approve of suicide. One is to stand, like the soldier at the post assigned him, until discharged by his commander. Of the immortality of the soul, although frequently implied, Epictetus has little to say. Virtue and vice, however, must be attended by their proper results, reward or penalty.

In the Roman poets and historians we meet with numerous passages and expressions, sometimes setting forth their own, and sometimes reflecting the popular view of different and isolated features of the moral system. Singular as it may seem, they are frequent in Horace and in Ovid, and the tribute paid by the former to the power of conscience in the memorable lines,

"Hic murus aheneus esto,
Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa,"

for force and beauty, has rarely been surpassed. The depravity of the age, and the debasement to which human nature gravitates when left to itself, as well as the fearful retributions, even on earth, of unscrupulous vice, are impressively presented in the satires of Juvenal, and in the pages of Tacitus. The portrait which the latter gives us of the combined infamy and misery of Tiberius, is one of the most memorable things in ancient literature. Even in Cæsar, we find that when he deals with the Gallic tribes, and while such a sceptic himself, he labors to impress upon them the lesson, that the delay of divine retribution is only to the end that when the blow falls at last, it may come with the more crushing weight. Livy reflects a conviction, if not popular, at least widely prevalent, that the decadence of the Roman empire, or of its inherited glory and prestige, in his day, was due to the lack of that primitive piety in which the foundations of the nation were laid. He seems even to suggest that theory of the prospective dissolution of the vast empire, which Augustine, in his

De Civitate Dei, has so eloquently presented. It is significant that for generations after the founding of Rome, idolatry was unknown; and that Numa, the prophet-lawgiver and organizer of the nation, is so disposed to nurture and employ in the support of his institutions, that instinctive sense of a superhuman providence and justice, which is the attestation of the human conscience to the existence of the moral system.

II.

NEMESIS. THE ERINNYES. FATE.

CHRISTIANITY had already begun to exert its powerful modifying influence upon the world's thought, when Seneca, Plutarch, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius Antoninus flourished. It spoke with a tone of authority unlike that of all the schools of ancient philosophy. Its influence, long before the time of Constantine, had been deeply and widely felt. Accepted by thoughtful minds educated in the Platonic philosophy, it was received often by them as a philosophy as well as religion. The attempt was made in repeated instances, to harmonize Platonism with Christianity, and friends and foes alike were disposed to call in the pupil of Socrates as their ally.

But an Oriental element, distinct from both the others, was pressing for recognition. It is seen in Philo, and some of the leading members of the Alexandrian school. In connection with Christianity, it gave birth to the various forms of Gnosticism, which essayed to trace the creation of matter back to *Æons* or a *Demiurgos*, that no dishonor might be imputed to the transcendent Intelligence, who was supposed to exist independent of all relations that would implicate him in the evil or imperfection of the world.

It is impossible to trace minutely, and in its various directions, the influence of this element upon the speculation of the age. It was resisted at times by heathen philosophers and Christian teachers alike. As both called Plato to their aid, it was impossible that a new interest should not be awak-

ened in regard to the writings and speculations of the Greek philosopher. Neo-Platonism was the revival, not by any means in their identity or purity, of points that Plato had taught and held. Powerfully modified by the new religion which it opposed, it strove to interpret Greek philosophy in a sense which was defensible by reason, and acceptable to the age. We are not surprised, therefore, to find a semi-christian sense given to heathen dogma, or heathen terms vindicated from the objections of Christian critics.

Among the terms of great moral significance, which had found a place in Greek literature, were those of Themis, Diké, Nemesis, the Erinnyes, and Fate. At an early period justice ceases to be an abstract quality or attribute; and Themis, as we have seen, becomes the consessor or counsellor of Zeus.

Of Nemesis, we may say, that in studying the application and use of the term, we find it expressive of a most exalted conception, that of the pervading element of distributive and exact justice, in accordance with law. There is nothing too high for it to reach; nothing too low or mean for it to overlook, provided it has in it any moral element, any ground for praise or blame. Its impersonality is uniformly, if not always preserved, as if its purity or perfection would be soiled by contact with any element or attribute of personal character. "Nemesis is to Hesiod the key-stone of the universal order; if that be removed, all will be dissolved and go to wreck. . . . Neither in the Iliad, nor in the Odyssey, is Nemesis a deity, nor even a personified moral quality. . . . We are compelled to recognize beneath this garb a true consciousness of God, a sense of his actual presence in human affairs. . . . Nothing less than the sanctity of a moral energy which had the idea of Nemesis as the centre of men's inward religious feeling, could have revealed to the Greek his Epos and Drama, and conducted both in his hands to the summit of perfection." Yet this idea pervades the universe like an atmosphere. It encompasses thrones, and exists changeless and eternal through all the ages. The very apprehension of it, as a controlling element in the order of the world, makes that order moral. All material changes, and all operations of physical laws, and

all puttings forth of human will or energy, must be in voluntary or enforced submission to its behest.

Mure (iv. 368) remarks: "Every act of signal folly, especially when committed in the face of some sacred warning, is represented as the object of a special Nemesis; and as visited sooner or later on the guilty person himself, or his descendants, with its proper meed of retributive vengeance."

Of the Erinnyes, it may be said, that while their office is discharged in the interests of justice, that justice is so stern, so unrelenting, so disposed to extort the uttermost farthing, that they are consistently represented as clothed in personality. They are rather prosecutors than judges. They have nothing to do with tolerance or equity, but only press the sharp letter of the law, from which not one jot or tittle must ever pass away. Of mercy they know nothing. Of virtues commingled or associated with vices, they take no notice. The ounce of flesh nearest the heart—according to the strict terms, as of a contract—they must and will have; and in pursuit of it, unless restrained by superior authority, they would press into the very penetralia of the sacred temple. Mere human authority might relax its severity at the sight of suffering. Mere human justice might feel itself disarmed by the calamity of its destined victim, but the Erinnyes feel no compassion, and experience no compunction. The Orestes of Greek Tragedy illustrates this feature of their character, as well as the sphere they are supposed to fill. Their presence in the moral system represents its vindictive element. It sets forth its most terrible and impressive features. If we are tempted, in view of the human weaknesses of the Gods of Olympus, to despise their character or slight their authority, the Erinnyes come in to abate our confidence or rebuke our presumption. It matters not whether their personality was *believed* in; the conception of them gives a peculiar aspect to the moral order of the world.

It must be admitted that the word *fate*, had diverse significations as employed by classic writers of different ages. But it is equally plain that in some instances it was used in the sense of what we should denominate the established order of things. In his work on "Divination," Cicero represents his brother,

Quintus, as saying, "Reason compels us to admit that by fate all things take place;" and then adds, "By fate, I mean that which the Greeks called *εἰμαρμένη*, that is, a certain order and series of causes—for cause linked to cause produces all things; and in this connection of causes consists the constant truth which flows through all eternity." In some cases, especially among the earlier Greek writers, the idea of fate was, in some more or less definite way, associated with a presiding will. In others we may regard it as the necessary resultant from the aggregate of all natural laws and moral forces, as well as the accumulated influences of human action working out their inevitable issue.

Another distinction of the senses in which the term was employed, is noted by Cicero in his treatise on "Fate." "The ancient philosophers," he says, "are divided into two parties on the doctrine; some of whom maintain that fate works all in all, and that it exerts a necessary and compulsive force over all agents; of which opinion were Democritus, Heraclitus, Empedocles, and Aristotle; while others asserted that fate had no influence whatsoever over the voluntary acts of the soul. Between these two opinions, Chrysippus, as an honorary arbiter, held a middle course; but he seems to approach nearest to those who believe the acts of the soul to be free from necessity."

In Homer the precise relation of fate to the will of Zeus cannot consistently be defined. Sometimes it seems to stand for a power that may be considered apart from that will, and at others, for the solemn and irrevocable decree in which it finds expression. Bunsen remarks:* "The relation of Zeus to Destiny has been often falsely conceived. Zeus stands in an ordered universe; to this Kosmos it appertains before all, that all beings abide within the law of their own existence. Thus man, the noblest of them all, must die; this is his destiny; but it is part of the order established by Zeus: whose essence is at one with this thought. He who invokes the Gods against this order, sets himself up in opposition to the father of the Gods, and falls a prey to madness. Zeus is not bound to *Moirā* as to a blind destiny; he is, *per se*, the law

* Bunsen's "God in History," II. 103.

of the world and of all beings, and maintains that law inviolate."

The difficulty of rightly apprehending the relation of Zeus to fate, which we meet in Homer, occurs elsewhere, also, in Greek literature. Cicero represents one of the Greek poets as asserting, "that the Supreme Jupiter cannot prevent that which is decreed to come to pass." Herodotus says, "It is impossible for God himself to avoid the destined fate;" and again, "God himself is the servant of necessity." The explanation of this seeming subordination of the Deity to a power outside of himself, is given in the assertion that God governs himself by the same reason by which he governs the world. Consistent with this is the language of Pindar, quoted by Plato, that "the law (of Providence) rules over all, both mortal men and the immortal Gods," as well as that of Simonides, "the Gods themselves do not resist Necessity," that is, the uncontrollable laws of Divine Providence. God himself is determined invariably to sustain the eternal order, to act in accordance with it, and so may be said to be bound by and to obey his own laws, as being most wise and perfect.

That what the ancient philosophers meant by *Fate* is not inconsistent with the freedom of human actions, has been elaborately and learnedly argued by Jackson, the chronologist.* He cites the interpretation put by A. Gellius on the words of Homer:

"O! how do mortal men accuse us Gods!
They say their Evils all proceed from us;
But they, not *Fate*, bring mischief on themselves
Thro' their own voluntary wickedness."

The concurrence of the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy in this matter, notwithstanding the assertion of Cicero as to the latter, is said to be asserted by Hierocles, who speaks with contempt of those who pretended they disagreed, and to their common notion of fate, he professes himself to adhere, viz: "That it was not the senseless necessity of the fortune-tellers; nor the Stoical compulsion, but that it was the judicial operation of the divine power, effecting events accord-

* A Defence of Human Liberty, 1725. Second Edition, 1730.

ing to the laws of providence, and determining the order and series of our circumstances in the world according to the free purposes of our voluntary actions."

After remarking upon numerous citations on the subject from ancient authors, Jackson concludes: "From the preceding observations, we learn what was the true opinion in general, both of the Platonics and Stoics, concerning *Fate*; namely, that it was no other than the *Laws of Divine Providence*, whereby all things are governed according to their several natures; and, therefore, particularly in respect of men, it was understood to be the rules and decrees of Divine Providence, determining the events of human life, and dispensing rewards and punishments according to the nature of men's voluntary actions. They thought that God governed the world by His sovereign *will*, which they called Providence; by which he made fixed and unalterable laws for the administration of the whole universe, and that he determined men's conditions, and their happiness or misery, whether here or hereafter, according as their actions freely chosen, and done voluntarily, should be. So that Fate in reality was no other than Providence, or the immutable law and rule of God's government of the world; and which was called Necessity . . . because it was the necessary law of all nature; and the external effects of it, or the events produced by it, by a series of antecedent causes, in consequence of men's voluntary actions, were unavoidable and necessary."

That this was the very generally accepted notion of Fate, is evidenced by the language of numerous writers. Chrysippus says, "Fate is the Reason of the world, or the law of Providence by which all things in the world are governed." Cicero, in the person of Velleius, represents the stoical notion of Fate to be, "That all events proceed from the eternal truth and connection of causes." Diogenes Laertius defines their opinion—"That Fate is the connection of the causes of things, or that Reason by which the world is governed." Seneca says, "Fate is nothing else but the connection of causes." He identifies it with Nature, and, also, with Providence, as the working energy of the universe. Tacitus, speaking of the Stoics, says: "They attribute, indeed, a fatality unto things; but not as pro-

ceeding from the motion of the planets, but from the principles and connection of natural causes; and yet they leave the conduct of our life to our own choice, which being chosen, a certain order of events, they think, follows." Alcinous, in commenting on Plato's opinion of Fate, says: "He understands Fate to be this: that if any person chooseth such a sort of life, and will do such and such actions, such and such consequences will follow. But the consequence of its action will be effected by fate." Fate, Hierocles asserts, "is the judicial operation of the Deity, effecting events according to the laws of Providence, and directing human actions in the order and course that is suitable to their free purposes and voluntary actions."

The sense in which the term is used is defined by his reasoning. "If," says he, "bodily and external events fall out fortuitously and by chance, what becomes of the superintendency of God, to judge and recompense every one according to his deserts." He asserts that we ought not "to ascribe all things to the unintelligent and undirected circumvolution of the universe, there being a mind that presides over all things, and a God who is the author of the world." Evidently, by Fate is understood that fixed constitution of things, which excludes the idea of chance or fortune. Chalcidius asserts Fate to be "the decree of Providence, comprehending our voluntary actions, as the precedent grounds of it; comprehending, also, the recompense of our deserts. Punishment and approbation, which are by fatality, and all those things which happen fortuitously or by chance, are the consequents of it." Commenting on Plato, Chalcidius says, that Fate, "in his *Phædrus*, is an unavoidable decree; in his *Timæus*, the laws which God endited to celestial beings concerning the nature of the universe."

In their notion of Fate, the Stoics are asserted to be in substantial agreement with the New Platonists. Heraclitus styles the substance of Fate, that *reason* which pervades the substance of the universe. Chrysippus is said to have identified Fate with Jupiter, or "the power of that perpetual and eternal law which is, as it were, the guide of our life and director of our duty." According to Diogenes Laertius, God and mind, and Fate and Jupiter, were one and the same. According to

Alexander Aphrodisius, the Stoics held that Fate, and Nature, and Reason, by which the universe is governed, is God.

Admitting the strong temptation of the Neo-Platonists to put the least objectionable sense upon the terms of heathen philosophy and mythology, it is quite obvious that they had in numerous cases, not only plausible but satisfactory grounds on which to rest their interpretation of the word *Fate*. As impersonal, it must necessarily express some blind force without intelligence, of which the mind can form no distinct conception, or it must have a meaning nearly synonymous with the order of Providence. In all probability it was often used in an indeterminate sense; and yet, in many instances, as by Plato, Seneca, and many of the Stoics and New Platonists, the idea involved in it must have been equivalent to that of Providence, or the divine ordering of the world through the established relations of cause and effect. A candid view, therefore, of the terms in frequent use by the ancient writers, to which we have referred, will lead us to the conclusion, that however indefinite their apprehensions on many points, the more thoughtful of them did accept the leading doctrines of a moral system.

III.

TEACHINGS OF REVELATION. CHRISTIAN FATHERS. ALGAZEL.
HOOKER. HERBERT. GROTIUS.

So far as the leading truths of the Moral System are concerned, Christianity simply accepted them as an inheritance from the Jewish Scriptures. In these, the outlines of that system are clearly and conspicuously presented. We are never allowed to lose sight of God as the Creator, Sovereign, and Judge of the universe; controlling all things by an omniscient and omnipotent providence; administering law with a wisdom which man's short-sightedness may not impeach, and rewarding and punishing in accordance with his scheme of moral government, and the ends of human probation.

Man is exhibited as accountable and responsible; a moral

agent, subject to moral law ; tried by temptation, that he may have the opportunity to resist, and attest his fidelity ; with the assurance that on his present conduct, his future blessedness depends.

In the Book of Job, we have a dramatic expression of the Moral System, at once impressive and sublime. In the progress of the drama, the problems of suffering innocence and successful iniquity, necessarily invite solution. They are not allowed, however, to obscure the great truth of a Divine Providence, and human doubts and scepticisms are confronted with the infinite majesty, and the ineffable wisdom of Jehovah, while the sequel is a triumphant vindication of un murmuring faith in Him who sees the end from the beginning.

In the Book of Proverbs, we have, embodied in concise and antithetical maxims, the intuitions or experiences of Hebrew sages, with relation to the existence and administration of the Moral System. While of this, there is no connected or continuous exposition, there are constant flashes of striking and profound thought, which reveal its prominent, even though isolated features. As we pass from proverb to proverb, we witness what is revealed by a new turn of the kaleidoscope, and discover new features of the laws and constitution of the moral world. To some extent this is also true of some of the Apocryphal Scriptures—the Book of Wisdom and Ecclesiastius.

But it is in the writings of the Hebrew prophets that we meet with the clearest enunciation of God's providential moral government, and the immutable principles on which it is conducted. In their pages, we see empires and monarchs, dynasties and nations, priests, people, slaves, and prisoners, subject to an invisible control, and working out, often unconsciously, the vindication of an overruling justice, or incurring the inevitable doom of their guilt. Under their guidance, a pathway through the mysteries of the divine procedure is opened up, lighted sometimes to an intense and lurid glare by the blaze of sudden or lingering retribution. War, famine, pestilence, the fury of the invader, or the captivity of the vanquished, appear as the mysterious and almost incarnate

agents of a justice that may linger, but never slumbers, and can never be finally defeated.

Lessons so impressively taught became the fundamental assumptions of the Christian system, into which, by a divine adjustment, was fitted the scheme of redemption. Many of the parables of Christ himself, are simply graphic delineations of the nature of that "kingdom of heaven," which, in certain of its main features, is identical with what we denominate the Moral System. No teacher, before or since, has ever set forth so impressively and vividly, the conditions and laws of human duty, or the necessary connection between guilt and its penalty. If, for a moment, we could suppose them the utterance of uninspired wisdom, the majestice force and grandeur with which they are characterized, would compel assent to the truths they embody, as lucid and indisputable in their own self-evidencing light.

With the spread of Christianity, these truths went abroad, and were accepted as a part of the Christian faith. But the peculiar features and doctrines of revelation provoked an antagonism which concentrated upon them a somewhat exclusive attention, and led their champions to depreciate what claimed support from the light of nature, as a disparagement to the superior light and merits of revelation. Theologians, zealous to vindicate the vital truths of the gospel, or perhaps, more frequently, their ecclesiastical dogmas, which derived feeble countenance from the natural laws and order of the Moral System, neglected these, or abandoned them to the speculations of men who were disposed to pursue them in the interests of a Pagan or sceptical, rather than a Christian, philosophy. Each party was swayed more or less by prejudice, and, almost as a necessary result, the Moral System was regarded with an undue measure of indifference, if not of hostile prejudice.

This is manifest in the writings of some among the Christian Fathers, and their successors in later centuries. There were, however, marked exceptions. Among the early champions of Christianity, there were some who had been educated in Greek philosophy; and who, even after their conversion, retained their prejudices or predilections in its favor. Justin

Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, were among those who did not despise the suffrage of human reason in their attempt to vindicate revealed truth, and St. Augustine's admiration of Plato is freely avowed.

In collision with Gnosticism, Manicheism, and especially Mohammedanism, Christian writers were led to discuss successively some of the fundamental truths of natural theology. Among these were the relation of God to the material universe and to His intelligent creation, and the immateriality and immortality of the soul. Mohammedan writers took up the discussion of these topics, and among these Algazel deserves prominent mention. His "Alchemy of Happiness" repeatedly reminds us of Bp. Butler's "Analogy." The universality of Divine Providence; the imperfection of human knowledge; the delusive nature of the world; the relation of the present life to the future; the duties and hazards of present probation,—these are the leading points upon which he insists, sometimes with a lofty eloquence.

The Scholastics did not fail to pay attention to these same topics; some of them aiming to vindicate the truths of revelation by the testimonies of reason and experience; others wasting their ingenuity upon frivolous or curious questions, leading to no satisfactory results. The overthrow of Constantinople scattering the remains of Greek literature over Europe, was contemporary with that reviving zeal for classic studies, which it powerfully contributed to develop; and among its results was the revival, in Italy especially, of the study of the Platonic philosophy. In connection with this, various questions of natural theology attracted attention, and were elaborately discussed. But in England no great or memorable work preceded the production of Richard Hooker on "Ecclesiastical Law." The first book of this treatise, dealing with the Law of Nature, was enriched with the spoils of classic learning. The author, familiar with Cicero and other ancient writers, copiously adduces their testimony in confirmation of the positions which he maintains. Homer, with his concession to the supremacy of Jupiter's counsel; Sophocles, with his tribute to "the eternal unwritten laws;" Lactantius, Augustine, Boethius, and Aquinas, together with the Stoics, are cited to testify to

the Law of Nature, and the moral order of the world involved in it.

A little more than a quarter of a century passed by when (1624) the celebrated work, *De Veritate*, of Lord Herbert, the Father of the English Deists, appeared, almost contemporary with the publication of the famous work of Grotius (1625) on the "Rights of Peace and War." The two men were on intimate terms, and Herbert assures us that his work was published with the approval of Grotius. It laid down five principles: among them the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and a future life, as indisputably attested by the light of nature. These were established on the grounds of reason, and by the universal consent of all ages, and it was left to be inferred that, as they supplied a sufficient basis for natural religion, revelation was superfluous, or was to be accepted only so far as it rested upon them.

The work of Grotius, designed to establish the rights of humanity and justice, grossly trampled under foot by the unscrupulous warfare of the age, appealed not exclusively to Scripture authority, which might be rejected by one-half of Christendom, nor to Papal decrees, which might be rejected by the other, but to the testimony of reason in all ages; to historians, philosophers, and poets; to the principles of equity embodied in the Roman law, or whatever else could be supposed to illustrate and enforce the obligations of the Law of Nature.

IV.

HOBBS, CUMBERLAND, PARKER, AND OTHERS.

OPPOSED to the theory of a Law of Nature, as set forth alike by Hooker and Grotius, stood that celebrated writer who belongs to the generation that succeeded them, Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury. Before the civil wars of England had commenced (1641), he gave evidence of what was regarded by many, as his dangerous speculative tendencies. A few years

later, his "Leviathan" followed, and created such alarm that hosts of writers came forward to defend the principles which he was therein supposed to assail. With him may be said to have originated the two-fold controversy, political and theological, which, in some of its phases, continued down to the time of Bishop Butler, and is traceable in some of the discussions of his "Analogy." Hobbes denied a Law of Nature, in the Grotian sense. He made the natural state of man one of mutual hostility, with a right to everything, or rather, with no rights but those of the stronger. From this state of war he saw no way of escape, except after wearisome and fruitless struggle, when the exhausted combatants were prepared to concede to the stronger, or some one possessed of power confirmed by their adhesion, authority to regulate and control the social body thus organized as a state. To him belonged the right to legislate and to enforce legislation. He was supreme, and from his decision there was no appeal. To him it belonged to establish a national religious creed and worship, and to tolerate no dissent or divergence from it. Here only the law of nature, or of right reason, found its place, an essential element of which was the despotism of "Leviathan," the embodied organization ruled and guided by the single supreme will.

Thus was a blow struck at the basis of natural and civil rights, and at the same time at the foundation of natural theology and a moral system. Statesmen like Lord Clarendon, and theologians like Cudworth, came forward to confute the obnoxious errorist. They came, almost in crowds, and the more promptly when Hobbes proceeded to put forth more distinctly his views in advocacy of Materialism and Necessity. Foremost among his assailants were the leading members of the "Platonic School" of Cambridge, who were prepared to draw their weapons from the stores of ancient classic literature. Their predilection for Plato gave them the name by which they were known, and their aggregate productions, enriched with recondite learning and original thought, would make a respectable library. There were Culverwell's "Light of Nature," Glanvill's "Scepsis," and other writings; Henry More's "Dialogues," "Mystery of Godliness," "Vindication

of the Immateriality and Immortality of the Soul," etc.; Cudworth's "Intellectual System," a store-house of recondite learning; John Smith's eloquent and ingenious "Discourses;" Bp. Wilkins' "Natural Theology;" Whichcote's "Apothegms;" "The Living Temple" of the "Seraphic" John Howe, and publications by Bishops Rusk, Cumberland, Fowler, and Patrick. Fighting the same battle with them was Richard Baxter, who conceded that the proper method of meeting the infidelity of the age, was to press home upon it those principles of reason and natural law which had been vindicated by ancient classic writers whom he does not hesitate to quote; and though associated with Oxford rather than Cambridge, Bp. Seth Ward, Dr. Wallis, the Hon. Robert Boyle, and Bp. Jeremy Taylor, must not pass without mention in this connection. With some of these, especially with Taylor, the Law of Nature was a favorite topic, and upon it he lavished the treasures of his learning and the wealth of his genius. Sir Matthew Hale came forward to participate in the discussion, and vindicate the reasonableness of his own Christian faith by considerations which involved a careful study of the constitution and frame of the Moral System.

Not the least prominent amid this group of writers was Bp. Cumberland, whose noted work, "*De Legibus Naturæ Disquisitio Philosophica*," appeared in 1672. In this he traced obligation to its basis in the very nature of man and the constitution of human society, which indicated plainly the intention and will of their divine author, publishing in fact that law of duty to which moral agents are subject. Successive editions of the original work (Maxwell's, with additions, 1727; Towers', 1750), and of Tyrrell's abridgement of it (1692 and 1701), gave its views a wide currency, and in these some of the arguments of Bishop Butler are anticipated.

Confessing his indebtedness to Cumberland, the scope of whose argument he endorsed, Dr. Samuel Parker, in 1681, published his "Demonstration of the Law of Nature and of the Christian Religion." The object he had in view was much the same with that of the "Analogy" of Butler, and he pursues a method not dissimilar. In establishing the Law of Nature, he really expounds the moral constitution of na-

ture, tracing it to its divine original, and showing that its laws are invested with a divine authority. His professed object is "to discover that model of government" which God has established, "and those laws that He has prescribed to us, and those sanctions by which He has recommended them to our practice." He holds that "if the nature of things were made and contrived by a wise and intelligent cause, that proposed to Himself some design in the contrivance of every part, then whatever effects result from the nature of things, as they stand contrived and constituted by Him, are to be ultimately resolved into His providence;" and again, that "if it can be proved that the Author of nature has signified any certain rules of life to mankind by the very order and frame of nature, and that He has further made them obligatory to all the world by making the same necessary connection between the duty and the reward, as there is between every natural cause and effect, their obligation will be established on no weaker grounds or proofs than of certain demonstration, and we shall have the same assurance that they are designed for the rules of our actions, as we can have that any natural cause was ordained to produce its natural effect, and it will be as manifest from the whole constitution of nature, when it is considered and reflected upon, that God intended mankind should govern themselves by such certain principles, as it is the office of the sun to give light to the world."

The author, in carrying out his design, essays to prove, first, the publication, and secondly, the sanction of the Laws of Nature. These laws, he contends, are "drawn forth into use and bound upon the conscience, not by any express voice or immediate impression of the legislator, but by virtue of the workings of our own minds and the unavoidable results of our own consciences." Yet "it matters not whether the natural law be written upon the mind of man, or the nature of things." "The best and easiest way to find out the rules and methods of God's government, is to reflect upon the natural order and tendency of things, for that being altogether contrived and designed by Himself, it manifestly discovers to all that are able to observe the connection between causes and effects, what He principally intends and aims at."

The way is thus prepared to show, from the nature and tendency of human actions, the plan of God's natural government over men, and that the rewards of duty and virtue, and the penalties of wrong-doing and vice, making themselves manifest and palpable to human observation, are a real and most impressive publication of the moral law of nature.

There are sentences and paragraphs in Bishop Parker's work that, read by themselves, might be mistaken for extracts from Butler's "Analogy." He even goes so far as to say—following Grotius' line of thought—that "though we should remove the Divine Providence out of the world," still the necessities of men, in their social relations, in the matter of property, for instance, will, through "the natural constitution of things," "direct every man to confine his desires," etc. So that, though men should deny a Providence, or even the being of a God, they would yet find themselves under a constitution of things that was moral, and which of necessity imposed moral obligation on voluntary intelligent agents.

Somewhat similar in scope with the work of Bishop Parker, were some of the Discourses of Dr. Isaac Barrow, Dr. Robert South, Archbishop Tillotson (1671, 1678, 1686, 1691), and a work of some note by Bishop Wilkins, published in 1675 (new editions, 1678, 1683, 1693, 1704, etc.), entitled, "The Principles and Duties of Natural Religion," with a Preface by Archbishop Tillotson. It contained professedly a formal statement of the principles of reason, or natural law, applicable to the sphere of religion, while it vindicated the doctrines in regard to the being and attributes of God, and the providential sanctions of duty, common alike to natural and revealed religion. The foundation of these doctrines is shown to be in the nature and reason of mankind, while moral duties are seen to be based upon "*natural* and indispensable obligation."

In his Preface, Archbishop Tillotson remarks: "Certainly it is a thing of very considerable use, rightly to understand the natural obligation of moral duties, and how necessarily they flow from the consideration of God and of ourselves. For it is a great mistake to think that the obligation of them doth solely depend upon the Revelation of God's will made to us

in the Holy Scriptures. It is plain that mankind was always under a law, even before God had made any external and extraordinary revelation; else, how shall God judge the world? . . . It is nevertheless very useful for us to consider the primary and natural obligation to piety and virtue, which we commonly call the Law of Nature; this being every whit as much the Law of God as the Revelation of His will in His Word."

V.

LOCKE. TOLAND. COLLINS. TINDAL.

QUITE a number of writers on Natural Religion had been less guarded than Bishop Parker, or even Richard Baxter, going so far, indeed, as to assume that the Law of Nature was innate, or written upon the heart. The existence of a God was supposed to be one of the truths which might be traced among the ideas which the soul possessed by original intuition. To this view, Locke, in his work on the "Human Understanding" (1689), declared his opposition, and in his rejection of the theory of innate ideas, he was very generally followed, though sometimes with evident reluctance, by subsequent writers. He did not on this-ground, however, reject the Law of Nature, but found it where Bishop Parker had done, in the constitution of things manifesting authoritatively the will of its Author.

A few years later, Locke brought out his work, entitled "Reasonableness of Christianity" (Second Edition, 1696). More guarded than some other writers, he was not disposed to consider the Law of Nature sufficient for the necessities of men without a Divine Revelation. He was doubtless led to write his treatise by what he regarded as the dangerous tendency of the "Oracles of Reason," and other writings of the noted deist, Charles Blount († 1693). Blount adopted the principles of Lord Herbert, as to the sufficiency of the Law of Nature, and he was able to render his position plausible, by the rash

or unguarded utterances of quite a list of Christian writers, not the least noted of whom was Dr. Thomas Burnet, who subsequently sought to recall what he had uttered, when he saw the use that was made of it.

Indeed, some of the champions of revelation against atheism and infidelity, had gone so far in asserting that the Law of Nature could be "demonstrated," and had so exalted the power of Reason to establish principles which had been called in question by the disciples of Hobbes, as to prepare the way for a reaction, and excite a jealousy of the champions of Revelation, who had called Platonism and ancient philosophy to their aid. When Archbishop Tillotson, fully justified from his own point of view, could declare that "nothing contained in the Word of God, or in any pretended revelation from Him, can be interpreted to dissolve the obligation of moral duties plainly required by the law of nature;" when Prideaux, in his Letter to Deists, appended to his "Life of Mahomet," at this same date, could throw out the challenge, "Let what is written in all the books of the New Testament be tried by that which is the touch-stone of all religions—I mean, that religion of nature and reason which God has written in the hearts of every one of us from the first creation; and if it varies from it in any one particular; if it prescribes any one thing which may in the minutest circumstances thereof be contrary to its righteousness, I will then acknowledge this to be an argument against us, strong enough to overthrow the whole cause;" when Bishop Sherlock could assert that "the gospel was the republication of the Law of Nature," that "the religion of the gospel is the true religion of reason and nature"—it is evident that, however guarded or qualified by the context such expressions might be, they seemed even to invite the sceptical feeling of the age to avail itself of the challenge.

Two books, which reflect quite significantly different aspects of the controversy, appeared at almost the same time; one by Locke, already mentioned, the other by John Toland, who claimed to be his friend and to adopt his principles, while in the title of his book he parodied that of Locke. The latter vindicated "The Reasonableness of Christianity." The

former put forth the proposition, "Christianity not Mysterious."

Locke asserted a Law of Nature, but did not admit its sufficiency, at least, to the extent maintained by some who favored the theory of innate ideas. "Such a body of ethics," he said, of the extreme assertions of some writers, "such a body of ethics, proved to be the Law of Nature from principles of reason, and reaching all the duties of life, I think nobody will say the world had before our Saviour's time." And as to the Law of Nature itself, he contends that it would scarcely have been expanded and set forth as it had been, but for a light which human reason alone never would have afforded. "Many are beholden to Revelation who do not acknowledge it. 'Tis no diminishing to Revelation that reason gives its suffrage, too, to the truths Revelation has discovered. But 'tis our mistake to think, that because reason confirms them to us, we had the first certain knowledge of them from thence, and in that clear evidence we now possess them. The contrary is manifest in the defective morality of the Gentiles before our Saviour's time. . . . Philosophy seemed to have spent its strength, and done its utmost. . . . He that travels the roads now, applauds his own strength and legs, that have carried him so far in such a scantling of time, and ascribes all to his own vigor, little considering how much he owes to their pains who cleared the woods, drained the bogs, built the bridges, and made the ways passable; without which he might have toiled much with little progress."

Toland, claiming a friendship with Locke, which the latter repudiated, proposed to push the theory of the Reasonableness of Christianity to an extreme, and strip it of everything mysterious. Indeed, he left it only a modified Deism. So he was understood to do, at least by his contemporaries. The Irish Parliament—he had proceeded to Ireland after the publication of his book—devoted it to the flames, and the odium he had incurred was reflected back upon Locke. The replies to him were numerous. Before 1760, they had amounted to more than fifty. Some of these, however, were directed against his subsequent publications, among which was his *Pantheisticon*, with his "Pantheist Liturgy," in which

Cicero's definition of the Law of Nature had a conspicuous place.

In 1707, another writer, in sympathy with Toland, and who had really enjoyed the friendship and confidence of Locke, appeared on the scene. This was Anthony Collins. His book was entitled, an "Essay concerning the use of Reason in Propositions, the Evidence whereof depends upon Human Testimony." It was followed in 1713, by his "Discourse on Free Thinking, occasioned by the rise and growth of a sect called Free Thinkers." Assuming Reason to be the standard by which Revelation is to be tried, he indulges in a large latitude of charges and insinuations against the sacred writings, and, although answered by Bishop Hoadly, and convicted of gross misrepresentations and mistakes by Dr. Bentley, under the character of *Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*, he returned to the attack in 1724, in his "Discourse on the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion." He was answered in 1725, by Dr. and also by Bishop Chandler, as well as Sykes, Whiston, Sherlock, Lowman, Jeffrey, and others. The controversy was still fresh when (1727-1729) Mr. Woolston brought out successively his six discourses on the "Miracles of our Saviour," in which he casts discredit on the narratives of the Evangelists, as full of "improbabilities, incredibilities, and great absurdities." He was answered by Bishops Gibson and Pearce, by Ray, Smallbook, Stevenson, Atkinson, Browne, and others; but the most memorable works that grew out of this phase of the controversy, were (1729) Dr. Sherlock's "Trial of the Witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus," and Dr. Lardner's "Vindication of those of our blessed Saviour's Miracles, in answer to the Objections of Mr. Woolston's Fifth Discourse," etc., both published in 1729.

The controversy had tended to cover a broader field than had been occupied by Toland and Collins in their first publications. But a new assailant of Christianity now appeared, who endeavored to revive the old claim of the superiority of the Law of Nature to any "external" revelation. This was Matthew Tindal, who, adopting the tactics of Toland, gave to the world (1730) his noted work, "Christianity as Old as the Creation." In a more decorous style than Woolston or Col-

lins, and with great skill in argument, he assumed to prove that, as the Law of Nature was coeval with the Creation, and that, as the law of God, it is perfect and immutable, it cannot be superseded by Christianity, and that Christianity, coming as a revelation from the same source, cannot modify or repeal that perfect and immutable law. The inference which the author would evidently keep prominent is, that whatever in the Christian System does not accord with reason or the Law of Nature, is to be rejected.

The plausibility of his argument is seen, when he asks, "When men, in defending their own, or attacking other traditional religions, have recourse to the nature or reason of things, does not that show they believe the truth of all traditional religions is to be tried by it, as being that which must tell them what is true or false in religion? And were there not some truths relating to religion of themselves so evident, as that all must agree in them, nothing relating to religion could be proved; everything would want a further proof; and if there are such evident truths, must not all others be tried by their agreement with them? And are not these the tests by which we are to distinguish the only true religion from the many false ones? And do not all parties alike own that there are such tests drawn from the nature of things, each crying their religion contains everything worthy, and nothing unworthy, of having God for its author; thereby confessing that reason enables them to tell what is worthy of having God for its author? And if reason tells them this, does it not tell them everything that God can be supposed to require?"

Tindal was answered by Bishop Gibson in a pastoral letter, by Dr. Thomas Burnet, Dr. Waterland, Law, Jackson, Stebbins, Balguy (Second Letter to a Deist), Atkey, Foster, Conybeare, Simon Browne, Leland, and others. Some of these, while leaving the Law of Nature unquestioned, emphasized the fact, that although that law might answer the necessities of a sinless race, the new condition of things introduced by the apostacy, demanded the revelation of provisions for human recovery, of which the Law of Nature gave no hint or suggestion.

Scarcely any work in English literature has been greeted

by a larger number of refutations than Tindal's. The antagonists of Hobbes and Toland may possibly rival those provoked by "Christianity as Old as Creation." But its popularity, or rather the large measure of public attention which it commanded, was due doubtless less to its ability, or the plausible insidiousness of its attack upon revelation, than to the circumstances in which it appeared. It was an able summing up of what had been said in a controversy that had originated in the writings of Lord Herbert and Hobbes, and had now continued at intervals for half a century, in which the Law of Nature had been alternately glorified and depreciated, but in which much that Tindal advanced, seemed justified by such writers as Tillotson, Parker, and Clarke.

But, as if to afford Tindal a new vantage ground for his argument, and indeed, to prepare the way for his work, there had been published in 1724, the very year of the author's death, a treatise which, in the class of writings to which it belonged, commanded an almost unprecedented degree of popularity. This was "The Religion of Nature Delineated," published anonymously, but which was soon known to be by Wm. Wollaston, somewhat eminent as a scholar, and at one time a clergyman of the English Church. In the course of a few years, ten thousand copies of it had been circulated, the fifth edition of it appearing in 1731, and the seventh in 1750. This work emphasized the precepts of the Law of Nature, and the obligations of truth, reason, and virtue, while it made no mention of revealed religion. It might even by a partial judgment be considered as an expanded system of that Theism, of which Lord Herbert, and Blount after him, had laid down the fundamental articles. Lord Bolingbroke, however, called it a "strange theism, as dogmatical and absurd as artificial theology," and spared no pains to make his assertion good. Unquestionably, it was the most elaborate exposition of the "Religion of Nature" that had yet appeared.

VI.

POPE'S "ESSAY ON MAN."

It can excite no surprise that Wollaston's "Religion of Nature Delineated" proved far from acceptable to a man like Lord Bolingbroke, whose theory of a Providence was scarcely up to the level of Aristotle's, and who found in it a very close approximation to the teachings of revelation. Not yet prepared to give the world his views over his own name, he instilled them into the mind of Alexander Pope, who apostrophized him as

"My guide, philosopher and friend;"

and in his "Essay on Man," lent the charm of his mellifluous couplets to a philosophy which was far from being original with himself.

We can well believe that for some of the better portions of the Essay, Pope was indebted in some measure to the influence of Bishop Berkeley, whose "Alciphron; or, The Minute Philosopher," was published in the same year with the Essay, and in which some of the same topics were discussed in a style worthy of one who has sometimes been called the modern Plato. Berkeley had recently returned from America, and for several months resided in London, previous to the publication of Pope's Essay. During this period he was on intimate terms with Pope. The two authors must have conferred together on the topics common to their two books, both of which indicate in an almost equal degree the tastes and topics of discussion which then prevailed.

The Essay, indeed, reflects the author's familiarity with the controversy of the day, and, while forfeiting credit for any great originality, is enriched with sentiments gleaned from a wide range of reading. The thoughts, and even the language of Wollaston, appear in it, and Mandeville's "Fable of the Bees; or, Private Vices made Public Benefits" (Second Part, 1728), supplies it illustrations. Its professed object is "to vindicate the ways of God to man." In common with many champions of revelation, Pope insisted that man's

limited knowledge rendered him an incompetent judge of the methods of a universal providence ; that,

" Respecting man, whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right, as relative to all ;"

that it is man's duty to "hope humbly," to repress his "reasoning pride ;" that general laws, which sometimes involve indiscriminate calamities, are a necessity ; that the "dread order" of the universe requires man to submit to the lot of weakness and imperfection that has been assigned him ; that it becomes him to study rather his own condition and powers, than to scan with presumptuous criticism the secret plans of God ; that in the balanced nature of man, where passion impels and reason guides, we find a wisdom analogous to that which in nature gives us calm and tempest, sunshine and storm ; that every state has its satisfactions, and that Heaven makes human vanity and vices—often akin to virtues—contribute to the general welfare ; in fact,

" Building on wants and on defects of mind
The joy, the peace and glory of mankind." *

In his third and fourth Epistles, the poet is quite discursive, discussing the origin of society, and the relation of reason, instinct and self-love to it, and exhibiting also the relations of happiness to virtue on the one hand, and to general laws on the other ; the result of which is, that man's wisdom and well-being are found in his conformity to the order which Providence has established.

The Essay, so far as it is connected with the controversy then going on, may be regarded as a vindication of the system of things in which man finds himself placed by an infinite and all-wise Providence. There is much, of course, which is somewhat remotely connected with what may be considered the direct argument, but there is also much which the Theist—of whatever school—would accept as a plausible, if not

* It is in this connection that the poet shows that Bernard Mandeville's "Fable of the Bees ; or, Private Vices made Public Benefits"—the second part published in 1723—had tended to shape his views. He speaks of "one man's weakness" becoming "the strength of all," and then adds,

" Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally
The common interest, or endear the tie."

fully satisfactory, justification of those dispensations of Providence by which man is subject to weakness, limited knowledge, accidental calamity, and apparent injustice.

The importance of the "Essay on Man," in this connection, is not in any originality or profundity of its views, but in the fact that it reflects on so many points the current opinions of a certain class then most deeply interested in the general theistic discussion. Familiar with the publications of the day, and especially of those men, who, like Tindal, called themselves Christian Deists, Pope scarcely needed the suggestions or teachings of Bolingbroke, to furnish him the materials of an Essay which simply embodied, in elegant rhythm, the most striking thoughts which had been elaborately and repeatedly presented by the most popular writers on natural law and religion. He met the objections of the Atheist against the *course of nature*, sometimes in a most effective and conclusive manner; and as some of these objections—those especially which respected the calamities of human life, and the seeming inequality of the dispensations of Providence—were analogous to objections urged against certain doctrines of revelation, it was natural that the champions of the latter, assuming the vindication of the *course of nature* to be complete, should be led to maintain that the divine authority of revelation could not be shaken by objections already shattered by such vindication.

It is unnecessary to cite extensively the passages in which Pope concentrates the force of his argument. His reference to "The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day," prepares the way for the exclamation,

"O blindness to the future kindly given,
That each may fill the circle marked by heaven."

The adaptation of man's faculties to his sphere, and the futility of the objection that they are not more perfect, are set forth thus:

"Why has not man a microscopic eye?
For this plain reason, man's not a fly."

The necessary subordination of individual interest to the common welfare, is illustrated by a passage not the less pertinent

that it may have been suggested by the language of the Apostle Paul, or borrowed from Roman history :

“What if the foot, ordained the dust to tread,
Or hand, to toil, aspired to be the head ?
What if the head, the eye or ear repined
To serve, mere engines to the ruling mind ?
Just as absurd for any part to claim
To be another in this general frame ;
Just as absurd to mourn the tasks or pains
The great directing Mind of all ordains.”

It is thus that Pope reaches the conclusion summed up in the couplet,

“In spite of pride, in erring Reason's spite,
One truth is clear, *whatever is, is right.*”

A mind less acute than Bishop Butler's, might discover in this conclusion—applicable to the course of nature, as it respects man—a vantage-ground on which to base an argument that revealed religion could not be assailed by objections which were already shown to be invalid when urged against the course of nature. The very attempt made by Tindal and other successors of Lord Herbert, to exalt natural religion to a level with Christianity, as well as to establish it on unassailable grounds, had really furnished a basis of assumption upon which the champion of revealed religion might rest his argument. He had only to turn the admissions of Deists, at certain vital points, against themselves, and this was the task so triumphantly executed by Bishop Butler. But during the four years which intervened between the publication of the “Essay on Man” and Butler's “Analogy” (1736), there appeared a large number of controversial publications, several of which deserve mention in this connection. Among those who replied to Tindal, one of the most prominent was the Rev. Dr. James Foster, to whom Pope no doubt was considerably indebted, and to whom he pays the high tribute,

“Let modest Foster, if he will, excel
Ten metropolitans in preaching well.”

Among Foster's discourses, delivered at this period from his pulpit, we meet such as “The Wisdom of God in the Various

Ranks and Subordinations of Human Life," "The Distinct Offices and Uses of Reason and Revelation," "The True Ground of the Argument from Reason for a Future State," not to mention his volumes of "Discourses on all the Principal Branches of Natural Religion and Social Virtue."

Other replies to Tindal of special note were published by Conybeare, afterward Bishop of Bristol, where he succeeded Butler; by Bishop Peter Browne, whose "Things Divine and Supernatural Conceived by Analogy with Things Natural and Human" (1733), must have furnished Butler some suggestions for his work; and by Dr. John Leland, who had carefully studied the progress of the controversy. Beside these, there were numerous other publications of the day bearing upon the same subject, as Law's annotated edition of Archbishop King on the "Origin of Evil" (1732), treatises by Chubb, Jackson, Colliber, Conyers Place, and Duncan Forbes. It is only by the study of the controversy, as illustrated by this class of publications, that we can be prepared to appreciate the task undertaken by Butler in his "Analogy." But incidental to the main controversy, discussions arose on questions which claimed some recognition in Butler's speculations. To these we must now attend.

VII.

BUTLER'S IMMEDIATE PREDECESSORS AND CONTEMPORARIES.

THE "Lecture," established by the Hon. Robert Boyle, and designed to provide for an annual course of sermons in vindication of the fundamental truths of the Christian religion, dates from 1691. It gave occasion, during subsequent years, for the publication of a large number of volumes, some of them of very marked ability, in which the leading religious questions of the time are elaborately discussed. They take up—beside the topics more directly connected with the Deistic controversy—such subjects as the Being of God, the immortality of the soul, the wise order of the world, the divine

attributes, including the vindication of Goodness against the cavils of objectors.

These subjects were not arbitrarily chosen. The speculations of Descartes, Spinoza, Bayle, Malebranche, and Leibnitz on the continent, had excited the attention of English philosophers and divines, originating new lines of thought, tending at length to overshadow the importance of Hobbes' peculiar speculations. The Pantheism of Spinoza was adverted upon among others, by John Howe, in the Second Part of his "Living Temple," and by Dr. Samuel Clarke in his "Boyle Lecture Sermons" (1704, 1705). Bayle, in his writings, had seemed disposed to revive the Manichean theory of the Origin of Evil, and was met by Leibnitz in his "Theodicy," and by Archbishop King in his "Origin of Evil" (1702). Some fifteen years later, the discussion was resumed by Dr. John Clarke, in his "Sermons" at the Boyle Lectures.

John Locke, distrusting the assumptions of the too zealous champions of natural religion, disputed the existence of innate ideas, and, under the influence of Newton's discovery of the law of gravitation, asserted that it could not be disproved that God might make matter cogitative, or add to it the faculty of cogitation, as he had added the power of gravitation. Bishop Stillingfleet's chaplains, Humphrey Hody (1694), and the learned Richard Bentley (1691)—the first in a work on the "Resurrection of the Body," and the last in his "Boyle Lecture Sermons"—were disposed to contest the principles of Locke, the latter elaborately refuting them, and at length the Bishop himself (1698, 1699) took the field, and several controversial letters were exchanged between him and Locke. The latter lost no credit in this conflict with his able and titled opponent, and to his last letter the Bishop made no reply.

Much attention was drawn to the subject. The result was soon witnessed in the publications of Dr. Coward, who pushed Locke's positions to an extreme, inconsistent with the philosopher's admission, that the soul was *probably* immaterial. He was answered by Turner, Broughton, Assheton, and others, and his books were burned by the common hangman, by order of Parliament. But in 1706, Dr. Henry Dodwell published his "Epistolatory Discourse, proving that the Soul is naturally

Mortal," and that its immortality is secured only by the baptismal spirit. Dodwell was answered by E. Chishull, Dr. Samuel Clarke, Turner, Whitby, Parker, Miller, Norris, and others. Clarke was the most famous of these, and Collins the Deist, volunteered to meet him on the side of Dodwell. Several letters were interchanged, and in the issue, Clarke's superiority in the argument was manifest. In the course of the discussion, Clarke laid great stress on that *indiscernibility* of consciousness, which Butler has so prominently introduced into his "Analogy." From this time on, the immateriality, or the immortality of the soul, on the grounds of natural religion, was no longer openly called in question. Such was the state of things when Butler prepared his "Analogy."

Of other lines of discussion converging to the issue met in the "Analogy," may be mentioned those which took up the relation of reason to faith; those which dwelt upon the evidences of divine design in the frame-work of nature and the order of the world, and those which directed attention to the foundation of moral obligation, including the relative claims of moral and positive duties. The first of these were involved, to a large extent, in the Deistic controversy, and need not here specifically be retraced. The second originated in the Royal Society, and the labors of Robert Boyle, the discoveries of Newton, the studies of naturalists like Grew, Ray, and Durham, and at times seemed to present rival claims to the speculations of the Cambridge Platonists. We find their results in the writings of men who devoted their attention, to some considerable extent, to natural theology—Barrow, Bates, Howe, Tillotson, and many others, including some of the "Boyle lecturers." It was in sympathy with these, rather than with the Cambridge Platonists, that Theophilus Gale, Dr. Daniel Whitby, and Thomas Halyburton depreciated the sufficiency and achievements of human reason, and set forth the incongruities and inconsistencies of ancient philosophy.

Locke's rejection of the long-accepted theory of innate ideas, logically overthrew the foundation upon which a large class of writers had been disposed to rest the Law of Nature and moral obligation. It remained to find a substitute. Two tendencies were soon manifest, the one represented by Lord

Shaftesbury, who, though an admirer and pupil of Locke, was not disposed blindly to follow his lead; and the other by Dr. Samuel Clarke, who presented his views in his discourses at the Boyle Lecture. Shaftesbury, who had constructed a system of optimism (1699) somewhat resembling Leibnitz's *Theodicy* (1710), wished to find a sanction for virtue, independent of the rewards or penalties of a future state. These, he maintained, appealed to the selfish principle, and in the obedience which they were instrumental to secure, there was no merit. He sought, therefore, and imagined that he found, in the human constitution a *moral sense*, which was to give the law to human action. By this, proposed courses of action were to be put to the test, and approved or condemned. Francis Hutcheson, in successive publications (1725, 1728), adopting substantially the same view, secured for it wide publicity and acceptance. Hutcheson's "Enquiry" was published in 1725 (Second Edition, 1726), and immediately excited attention. It came in collision with the positions taken by Dr. Samuel Clarke in his "Discourse concerning the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion," published in 1706, and reaching its eighth edition in 1732. In this discourse, Clarke maintained that "the eternal and necessary different relations which different things have to each other, lay the foundation for the fitness or unfitness of certain actions to these relations. The congruity of an action to the circumstances or relations of the agent is virtue; its incongruity is vice." He remarks that those who found all moral obligation ultimately in the will of God, must recur at length to the same thing; only "they do not clearly explain how the nature and will of God Himself must be necessarily good and just." *

In 1731, a posthumous treatise of Cudworth, "Concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality," was published by Chandler, Butler's predecessor, as Bishop of Durham, and was found

* Sir James Mackintosh has remarked that we owe the Dissertation on the Nature of Virtue which Butler annexed to his "Analogy" to the assertion of Hutcheson—"contradicted by every man's feelings"—that prudence, so long as it regards *ourselves*, cannot be morally approved. He adds also: "He is chargeable, like Butler, with a vicious circle, in describing virtuous acts as those which are approved by the moral sense, while he at the same time describes the moral sense as the faculty which perceives and feels the morality of actions."

to be in substantial agreement with the positions taken by Clarke. Both were open to a criticism which Puffendorf had made on Grotius, that he alleged "for a proof of the independency of some of the laws of nature, the necessary agreement or disagreement of things to rational and social nature." In this, however, Grotius had but copied Cicero, while he was in agreement with Lord Herbert.

In 1729, on the publication of Dr. Clarke's "Exposition of the Church Catechism," he came into collision with Dr. Daniel Waterland. His position here was that "the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and other positive institutions had the nature only of means to an end, and that, therefore, they were never to be compared with moral virtues, nor can ever be of any use or benefit without them," etc.

The death of Dr. Clarke left the task of defending these positions to devolve on others. Dr. A. A. Sykes replied to Waterland, and there were rejoinders on each side. Thomas Chubb, and Thomas Jackson (editor of Stephen's *Thesaurus*), joined in the discussion, the former on Dr. Clarke's side; the latter on Dr. Waterland's. Like several other writers of the time, Jackson (1731) represented man's chief concern to be "to study the means of his own happiness." The happiness of His creatures is God's object in calling them into being, and to this end a determinate method was adopted, dependent upon His will. The author then proceeds to refute "the notion of Dr. Clarke and his followers," with whom he classes Bishop Butler, quoting from one of his sermons.

Clarke's view was substantially adopted, not only by deistical writers like Chubb and Tindal, but by many others. Wollaston modified it (1724) by substituting "the truth" in place of "the reason" of things, and thus constructed his ingenious theory of the foundation of morals. Dr. John Balguy, Clarke's ablest successor, shortly after the appearance of Hutcheson's "Enquiry" (1725), published his first "Letter to a Deist," in which he criticised the views of Lord Shaftesbury, and indicated his dissent from Hutcheson, who had largely adopted them. Agreeing on some points with Shaftesbury, he strongly dissented from him on others. He would not allow that rewards and penalties were not serviceable to the cause of vir-

tue, although he conceded that the merit of an act was proportioned to its disinterestedness. At the same time—and this was a year previous to the publication of Butler's sermons—he said, "I can by no means approve of that doctrine which resolves all morality into self-interest. . . . Are there no propensities, no inclinations in our nature, drawing us, as it were, out of ourselves, in behalf of our fellow-creatures, even to the neglect of what we call self-advantage?" Here he accorded with Shaftesbury and Hutcheson. For virtue, also, apart from its rewards, he claimed "an intrinsic goodness" that should determine our preference. The "taste" scheme of Shaftesbury, he utterly rejected, and along with it the "moral sense" of Hutcheson, as making morality dependent on the accidental presence, or absence, vigor or weakness, of a somewhat questionable instinct. In 1728, he presented his views more fully in "The Foundation of Moral Goodness," in which he aimed to show that virtue could find no proper basis in instincts or affections, however these might sometimes enforce virtuous motives. He claimed, also, that moral good might be an end in itself, as well as the natural good, or happiness, which Hutcheson favored. In 1730, another pamphlet of his appeared, entitled "Divine Rectitude," etc. In this, he resolved all the divine perfections into a single moral quality; namely, "God's determining Himself by *moral fitness*, or, acting perpetually according to the *truth, nature, and reason of things*." He accepted the view taken by Butler in his sermons, then recently printed (1726), of the divine goodness, not as an indiscriminate benevolence, but "a wise regard for what is required by the reason of things, or the ends of government." With such a view of the divine goodness, probation harmonizes. He holds it probable, "not only that all men, but all moral agents whatever, are obliged to undergo some kind of probation." It was *fitting* that the prize to be finally bestowed, should be striven for, nor should the untried be rewarded like those who had been found faithful. The very idea of probation removes the objection to the apparently unequal allotments of the present state.

Balguy's treatise called out a reply from the Rev. Thomas Bayes, F.R.S., in "Divine Benevolence; or, an Attempt to

prove that the principal end of the Divine Providence and Government is the Happiness of his Creatures" (1731). To this happiness, all other objects, as those of order and beauty, must be subordinate. Balguy replied in "The Law of Truth; or, The Obligations of Reason essential to all Religion," adding remarks supplementary to his previous treatise. He contended that those who ascribed perfection to the divine will, must mean that will as "directed, or undirected." If undirected, how could a will be said to be perfect; if directed, by what, except reason and truth? Benevolence, moreover, must be rational, as founded on reason and produced by it, or a natural perfection, distinct from and independent of reason. In the latter case, it could be nothing more than good nature; but, if guided by reason, it must have respect to the nature and relations of things. "The obligations of religion depend, and are entirely founded, on the obligations of reason," and the relation of positive to moral duties is instrumental, subsidiary and subordinate. The rule of truth or reason is to be observed for its own sake. Will, considered simply as will, does not and cannot impose obligation. "God's will obliges us only in virtue of truth." This may be acceptable to some unbelievers, but because they reject revelation, we need not reject reason. If they forsake the gospel rule, we need not abandon the Law of Rectitude.

Dr. John Conybeare, Butler's successor in his bishopric, put forth in 1732 a reply to Tindal, which Warburton pronounced "the best reasoned book in the world." In this, he took extended notice of the controverted question of moral obligation. He could not accept Balguy's views without grave qualification. He would admit the fitnesses of things, and that these fitnesses might be, "in order of conception," anterior to the will of God. To deny this involved difficulties he knew not how to meet. Yet "things are fit because God has constituted their nature in such a way as to make them so," while, in dealing with His creatures, God wills things "because they are fit and proper." But obligation does not arise merely from the fitness of things, nor will inward satisfaction or the good tendency of an act constitute obligation. The Law of Nature is the will and command of a

Being to whom we are subject. It is a law to us, because it is the will of One on whom we are absolutely dependent, and we must conform to it on some prospect we have of a suitable reward or punishment.

Here we approximate to the definition of virtue given by Edmund Law, subsequently Bishop of Carlisle, in a dissertation prefixed to his edition of Archbishop King on "The Origin of Evil" (1732). This dissertation, attributed to a Mr. Gay, aims to harmonize the views of divergent theorists and writers, suggesting that if they were interpreted with due candor, their seeming disagreements would almost disappear, and it would be found that acting agreeably to nature and reason coincides with fitness of things; fitness of things with truth (Wollaston's phrase); truth with the common good, and the common good with the will of God.

Law, therefore, or Gay, speaking in his name, holds that "our approbation of morality and all affections, etc., are ultimately resolvable into reason pointing out private happiness, and are conversant only about things apprehended to be means tending to this end." So "virtue is the conformity to a rule of life directing the actions of all rational creatures with respect to each other's happiness, to which conformity every one is in all cases obliged," which "obligation is the necessity of doing or omitting any action in order to be happy," and is founded on "the prospect of happiness." It need only be added that Paley, whose utilitarian definition of virtue is so well-known, was the chaplain of Law after the latter became a bishop.

The Dissertation could not bring together extremes like Clark and Warburton, Balguy and Bayes. Before the close of the year, an anonymous pamphlet, "occasioned by some late writings," presumed to review the "Discourse concerning Virtue and Religion." It defined obligation as "a reason for acting, necessarily arising in the mind of all rational and moral agents, according to their capacities, upon consideration of the true nature and circumstances of it." Rewards and penalties do not constitute obligation, but only its encouragement. "The will of God is the only foundation and source of happiness and misery, but the will of God cannot possibly

be the foundation of morality, or the rule of right reason, but truth only, for truth and reason necessarily oblige the will of God himself." "Virtue is the practice of reason in all our conduct, merely upon account of its being reasonable."

In 1734, Rev. Henry Grove, a contributor to Addison's "Spectator," sent forth a small treatise entitled, "Wisdom the First Spring of Action in the Deity." In substantial agreement with Balguy, he dissented from him at some points, and, in animadverting upon Bayes' Essay, sets forth the difficulties which those who reject the idea and law of moral fitness, will find themselves compelled to encounter. The use made of it by Tindal and others does not move him. The fundamental duties of natural religion are founded in reason, and sanctioned by it. Grove does not fail to rebuke the presumption implied in the human ignorance and weakness that venture to sit in judgment on the works or commands of God.

Another writer, following, in the main, the line of thought of Balguy and Grove, was Rev. Thomas Mole, supposed to have been educated at the same academy where Butler and Secker were trained. In 1732, he preached a sermon on "The Foundation of Moral Virtue," which he defended against a critical assailant in "The Foundation of Moral Virtue Reconsidered and Defended."

He states three theories—one which "derives the nature of moral good and evil from the mere will and arbitrary pleasure of the First Cause"—a second, which deduces it "from His nature or moral perfections, or from His will, as necessarily determined by them"—a third, which makes moral good and evil originally and eternally different in themselves; naturally and necessarily what they are, independent of all will or positive appointment whatever.

Rejecting the first, he examines the second, to find that it must be resolved into the third, which he accepts; in this adding his suffrage to that of Cudworth, Clarke, Balguy, and Grove. "The nature and reason of things," he contends, "is the *foundation*, and the will of God the *rule*, of moral virtue;" and these may be distinguished, though not separated. With those who, like Bayle, attempt to separate them, Mole

has no sympathy. Their error in this is no warrant for us to "feed our ignorance in order to nourish devotion."

Wollaston, in his "Religion of Nature Delineated" (1724), had made truth, or conformableness to it, the test of good and evil. He had ingeniously defended his theory, in which, if he had written ten years later, he might have not inappropriately accepted justice, or Balguy's "Rectitude," in place of "Truth." His theory was assailed (1725) by John Clarke (not a brother of Dr. S. Clarke, as sometimes stated), an eminent scholar, and master of the public grammar school in Hull. He was not disposed to allow, that to assert things as they are, or to conform to them as they are, was virtuous, when sometimes it might be quite the reverse. Moreover, Wollaston's assumption—held in common with many others—that nothing is or can be the object of hatred or aversion in itself, or upon its own account, but pain and misery, and that happiness is the ultimate end of all our aims and designs, our wishes and desires, is set against his primary assumption in regard to truth; for if happiness is the great end, then truth must be subservient to it. Nor does his theory throw any light on the distinction between deeds of greater or less merit, so long as they are simply and equally violations of truth.

This last position is taken also by Francis Hutcheson, in his general reply to Clarke, Balguy, Grove, and Wollaston. In 1728, he published his "Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections," and in his third edition of this work (1742) he introduced his "Illustrations of the Moral Sense." In this, he endeavors to show that writers who oppose his views, really assume their truth. The very terms they employ imply that Sense of the nature of actions for which he contends. Grove, in his "Moral Philosophy" (1749), gives that broad meaning to the term reason, which ascribes to it, not merely the power of discerning good and evil, truth and error, but satisfaction in the exercise of its power to detect truth, in propositions or actions, which makes it include the moral sense of Hutcheson. Butler's use of the term conscience is similarly comprehensive.*

* It may not be amiss to add here, that what has been called "the intellectual theory of moral obligation," was again revived by Dr. John Taylor, in "An Ex-

The chapter in the "Analogy" "On the Opinion of Necessity," has special reference to the discussion begun by Collins in his "Philosophical Inquiry Concerning Human Liberty" (1715), in which he availed himself of Dr. Samuel Clarke's assertion in his second course of Boyle Lecture Sermons, to the effect that God was necessarily just, and all His volitions and actions were morally necessary. Defeated as the champion of Dodwell in his dispute with Clarke on the materiality of the human soul, or its natural mortality, he ventured upon this new issue, but only to provoke a rejoinder from his old antagonist which, for the time, put the matter at rest. It was revived, however, in 1730, by the publication of "A Vindication of Human Liberty, in Answer to a Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, by A. C., Esq.," from the pen of the learned chronologist, John Jackson. The latter had already (1725) discussed the subject in a treatise in reply to "Cato's Letters," and in the line of his argument presented substantially the views of Dr. Clarke, for whom Butler manifests great deference, and whose positions he has in the main adopted.

It is in Butler's "Analogy" that all these various lines of discussion which we have noticed meet. This work had necessarily, from the very scope of it, to take most of them into consideration, and it is memorable especially, that it so ably and satisfactorily harmonizes and disposes of them. The history of literature scarcely presents a parallel to it in this respect. It is the appropriate terminus of several specific tracks of controversy, all more or less kindred or associated; all springing from the same origin, and nearly all terminating at the same point.

amination of the Scheme of Morality advanced by Dr. Hutcheson" (1759), and by Dr. Richard Price in "A Review of the Principal Questions and Difficulties in Morals" (1758). The reassertion, by Taylor especially, of the existence of disinterested affections, in which he followed Shaftesbury, Hutcheson and Butler, seems to have been with especial reference to the views of Lord Bolingbroke, then recently published, in which he reduced all human action to the level of selfish impulse. According to him, there can be no innate moral principle. He argues that all compassion for the distressed, and even the affection of parents for their children, proceed from the love of self, which he affirms to be the only great motive principle of human nature, implanted by Providence in the breasts of all men. This he maintains to be a kind of instinct, concerning which he is not very clear.—*MacKnight's Life of Bolingbroke*, page 699.

The political phase of the Hobbesian controversy disappeared with the Revolution of 1688. Locke's social contract theory was embodied in the action of the Convention Parliament that called William III. to the throne. Writers like Hoadly and Atterbury contended over new issues raised by the patriarchal theory of Filmer and his sympathizers, but Tories like Harley and Bolingbroke had as little regard for that theory as for the speculations of the Scholastics. But the theological phase of the controversy was more lasting, and embraced a wider range of topics.

Retracing the course of discussion which has been pursued, we find the controversy, which substantially reaches its conclusion in Butler's "Analogy," separating itself as it proceeds, from the time of Hobbes, into several branches, and these—or nearly all of them—reunited in Butler's work. The speculations of Hobbes, together with a reaction among liberally-minded English divines against certain extremes of the doctrinal Puritans, on the one hand, and High Church intolerance on the other, gave special impulse to the tendency developed in Cambridge Platonism. The extent to which the Platonists pushed their speculations provoked a double reaction, in part by the sanction which they seemed to give to the positions taken by Blount and Herbert, the former of whom reproduced the arguments of Dr. Thomas Burnet, while Toland cited the authority of Dr. Whichcote and others. The Royal Society, with which Oxford was in special sympathy, depreciated Aristotle, and, to some extent, Plato also, in their zeal for the new experimental philosophy represented by Boyle and Newton, while Gale, Whitby, and Halyburton especially, were jealous of the disposition which elevated heathen philosophy almost into rivalry with the claims of revelation. Hence ensued that development of the Deistic Controversy, in which the relative merits of reason and faith were elaborately and ably discussed.

Meanwhile, Locke's denial of the widely-accepted doctrine of innate ideas demanded a new foundation of the Law of Nature. Hence an investigation of the foundations of moral obligation was necessary. Was it individual happiness, the general good, the eternal fitness and reason of things, the

arbitrary will of God, the simple excellence of moral goodness itself, or reward and penalty; or was it to be sought under the new and more restricted definition of the "Reason" of the Platonists; or in some taste, or instinct, or moral sense? All these positions were severally maintained, and, when Butler wrote, had been freshly presented in the writings of Shaftesbury, Clarke, Fiddes, Hutcheson, Balguy, Bayes, Grove, Law, Jackson, and many others.

Contemporary with the early period of this branch of the controversy, was that which originated in Locke's assertion that God might make matter cogitative. Bentley and Hody, Stillingfleet's chaplains, as well as Stillingfleet himself, came forward as his antagonists, while Dodwell availed himself of the occasion to modify and refine Coward's Speculations, and to assert the natural mortality of the soul. Numerous writers now appeared on both sides, Anthony Collins taking the place of Dodwell, and having for his too powerful antagonist Dr. Samuel Clarke.

Meanwhile, the influence of Spinoza, and the Speculations of Bayle on the Continent, gave occasion for the Optimist Speculations of Shaftesbury, and "The Origin of Evil" of Archbishop King. Connected with this branch of the controversy were Leibnitz's "Theodicy," Toland's "Pantheisticon," and Dr. John Clarke's Boyle Lecture Sermons, as well as publications which proposed to settle whether Benevolence, Wisdom, or Rectitude, was "the first spring of action in the Deity," and what was properly understood or required by Divine Benevolence.

In establishing his scheme of the foundation of morality, Dr. Samuel Clarke had asserted, as we have seen, that God was *necessarily* just. His old antagonist Collins was too shrewd not to avail himself of this assertion, and to put forth, as a new challenge to discussion, his work on "Liberty and Necessity." Clarke replied briefly, but "Cato's Letters," Jackson's treatise, and the productions of other writers, continued the controversy.

Butler surveyed the broad field, and embodied in a treatise, which never names a champion or antagonist, all the important results that had been reached by his predecessors, or by

his own acute and profound reflections. The result is a work that stands unique in our literature, and which is memorable as the summing-up of a discussion which had gone forward for three-fourths of a century, and had led to the publication of hundreds, if not thousands, of books and pamphlets.

Later works on the same class of topics have been issued, some of them of marked ability, but scarcely one which does not confess its indebtedness to Butler. This is due in part to the breadth and comprehensiveness of the field of controversy which opened before him, and in part to the ability and effectiveness with which he performed his work. He sketched the course of argument which has since very generally been followed, with more or less originality. But the new age, with its new questions, demands some modification of his method, and a more minute examination of some points which he was content to assume.

VIII.

BISHOP BUTLER'S "ANALOGY."

THE lapse of more than a century has only confirmed the estimate of Bishop Butler's work, formed by those of his own contemporaries who were best qualified to weigh it in critical scales. Sir James Mackintosh pronounced the "Analogy" "the most original and profound work extant in any language on the philosophy of religion." Bishop Wilson, one of Butler's editors, declares it has "fixed the admiration of all competent judges for nearly a century, and will continue to be studied so long as the language in which he wrote endures. The mind of a master pervades it. . . He takes his place with Bacon, and Pascal, and Newton—those mighty geniuses who opened new sources of information on the most important subjects, and commanded the love and gratitude of mankind."

Among more recent witnesses we may cite Dr. Chalmers, who, when asked to write something on the leaf of a Greek Testament which had once belonged to Butler, traced these words: "Butler is in theology what Bacon is in science. The

reigning principle of the latter is, that it is not for man to *theorize* on the works of God; and of the former, that it is not for man to theorize on the ways of God. Both deferred alike to the certainty of experience, as being paramount to all the plausibilities of hypothesis; and he who attentively studies the writings of these great men, will find a marvellous concurrence of principle between a sound philosophy and a sound faith."

Prof. Farrar has appropriately referred to the controversy with which Butler's work was connected. Of the "Analogy," he says: It "bears marks, if we view it as a work of art, of the most careful elaboration in every part. It gives few references to authorities; and none but those who are well acquainted with the works of that time, are aware what internal marks it bears of extensive study of other writers, both infidel and Christian; yet of such a kind as not justly to lead to the depreciation of Butler's originality. His work, wrought out thoughtfully in many years of study, and written leisurely in his retirement at Stanhope, was the summing up of the whole controversy, the final utterance on the side of the church concerning the philosophy of religion, when viewed in reference to the Deistic controversy. The style is obscure, for Butler never possessed a lucid style, in spite of the help which Secker used to afford him in simplifying his sentences; but the obscurity of the work, in a great degree, arises from its fullness. It is packed full of thought. Its tone and manner of handling are also characteristic of the age."*

It is only with the first part of the "Analogy" that we have here to deal. The second part is devoted largely to the subject of Christian evidences, while the first discusses exclusively those features of the moral system with which we are here concerned. Butler's aim is not merely to show that the same difficulties, or difficulties of the same kind, pertain alike to the several schemes of natural and revealed religion, but that the objections urged on the ground of these difficulties to discredit the revealed scheme, are equally valid when urged against the other. If this is the case, our choice must lie—not between revelation on one side, and the Deistic

* Farrar's "Bishop Butler," in Lect. to Young Men, 1863, p. 353.

scheme, which Herbert, Blount, Toland, Collins, and Tindal had advocated, on the other; but between utter disbelief or atheism, and the acceptance of the Christian faith.

After his introduction—in which Butler considers the indispensableness, and in certain cases, the conclusiveness of probable evidence—states the nature of the argument from analogy, and lays down the plan and scope of his work, he proceeds to discuss the evidence afforded by the light of nature in support of a future life. By selecting this as the first topic of his work, he secured one advantage, but lost another. He availed himself of the concessions of the Deists of his time, who admitted generally, to secure larger credit for their scheme, that the immortality of the soul might be evinced by human reason. To have this point established was an important step toward the subsequent positions which Butler was prepared to take. But in discussing the future life, before an examination of the moral system, he was necessitated to dispense with the proofs of immortality to be derived from this source. He was at liberty only to adduce what may be called the *negative* argument, viz., that what now exists will continue to exist, or we are warranted by the course of nature to presume that it will, unless some sufficient reason can be given why it should cease to be. This argument would imply—as the positive argument from the intention of God manifest in the moral system would not—the continued existence of brutes after death, and to this implication, Butler is prepared, if necessary, to yield. He makes, however, the most effective use of analogy, to show the probability of continued existence under all changes. The different states of the same being, the transformation of the worm to the butterfly, the change from the embryo in the egg to the bird, all show that identity of being may continue under very diverse forms. As to death, we know it only from its visible effects, but we cannot assume to know on what the exercise of the powers of the soul may depend. Conscious activity may be entirely suspended, as in sleep or in a swoon, without affecting the integrity of the conscious being. We can trace the possession of living powers up to death, but there we simply

cease to trace them. Wonderful changes we have already survived. Diverse states of being we have already experienced. The assumption that death annihilates the soul, is the assumption that the soul is material, and as material corruptible. But here Butler falls back on Clarke's argument of the *indiscernibility* of consciousness, and while he does not assert it absolutely conclusive, he asserts consciousness to be a single indivisible power. The decay of the body, the loss of its members, a complete change, and even successive changes of all the particles of which it is composed, do not affect the consciousness of our identity. There is no material atom that can be identified with our living selves. What we have already lost was not ourselves. What we may gain hereafter will not be. All the senses of the body are but organs or instruments. The body itself is but a complex organ. The eye does not explain vision any more than the glass which we use to aid its powers. In dreams, we perceive without organs. In losing a limb, we do not lose the directing power. An artificial limb may take its place and answer its purpose. We may infer, therefore, that when the soul loses its organs, it does not necessarily lose anything of its own proper powers.

It is true that death, in depriving the soul of the body as its instrument, robs it of sensation. Yet when, through sensation, the soul has been furnished with ideas, it is independent of sensation. Its powers of reason, memory and reflection may remain, and sometimes actually do, when the senses are greatly impaired, if not destroyed. Even fatal diseases do not necessarily impair, much less destroy, the intellect. Why may it not continue still?

There is nothing unnatural in the change implied in a future life. To go to new scenes and conditions is no more strange than to have entered upon the present. Our knowledge, however, of what is natural is limited. If it were extended, our objections might vanish. The probabilities, therefore, are on the side of a future life, and, in the absence of counter-probabilities, should be decisive.

The Author of Nature has established in the world a system of administration by rewards and penalties. It is a matter not of deduction, but of experience, that we are under government. To some actions pleasure is annexed; to others, pain. The design of this, in very many instances, is plainly discoverable. We can foresee the consequences of our actions, and by all the risks incurred by our mistakes, are impelled to exercise foresight, or prudence, which is a kind of natural virtue. Even rashness or negligence is punished by evils which are beyond remedy. Yet our well-being is largely in our own power. With more or less clearness we are forewarned what course to choose, or what to shun.

If this be ascribed to the general course of Nature, this is only saying that the Author of Nature exercises a uniform government. Our foresight of consequences is the warning which He gives us how to act. When those consequences result from the observance or violation of natural laws, they are of the nature of reward or punishment. That we are under government is, therefore, not so much a deduction of reason as a matter of experience. That this government acts by laws which execute themselves, without formal interposition, only proves its perfection. The present course of things, therefore, is an instance of government by reward and penalty, analogous to the general doctrine of religion.

Pains and penalties here are brought upon men by their imprudence and willfulness. A great deal of their misery might have been foreseen and avoided. It often follows what at first was pleasurable, and sometimes is long deferred. Apprehension of it dies away, and at last it comes, perhaps suddenly, and with crushing force. Youth may be heedless, but that fact does not arrest the consequences of its mistake. Early habits may in the end prove utter ruin. Opportunities once afforded, pass away and can never be recovered. Seed-time neglected incurs the forfeit of the harvest. Folly and extravagance up to a certain point may admit of remedy, but beyond that point there is no place for repentance. Inconsiderateness is punished, as well as willful vice. Civil government also is a natural institution, and its penalties must be taken into account. All this is the result of general laws,

and a matter of experience, and is so analogous to what religion teaches us of the future punishment of the wicked, that the penalty and the method of it may in either case be expressed in the same words.

Thus the observation of the present state of things is calculated to excite apprehensions of future penalty. When checks, admonitions and warnings have been long disregarded; when the sad example of others' ruin has been overlooked; when the long delayed catastrophe suddenly overtakes the transgressor; when repentance has become vain and can only aggravate distress;—the result, witnessed in suffering, want, shame, remorse or death, attests the fixed constitution of things, according to which, evil, though it may long enjoy immunity, is at last overtaken by retribution.

But the government of the Author of nature is also moral. We see not only prudence or imprudence visited with reward or penalty, but consequences are often proportioned to personal merit or demerit. If it be asserted that God is a being of simple absolute benevolence, the assertion should be proved. But benevolence itself is not incompatible with veracity and justice, or with what we see indicating the administration of a righteous governor. The present state may be allowed to be imperfect as it respects an exact distribution of rewards and penalties, yet it may be plainly seen to be carried on to such an extent as to warrant the confidence that it will finally be completed.

We see, for instance, that virtue has its own rewards, its peculiar satisfactions, of which vice knows nothing. If vicious courses have been pursued, unqualified pleasure may not attend upon reform. Struggles and restlessness, and habits of old appetites and passions, may make the effort to break from evil more painful than pleasant. So indulgence in evil may at length stifle self-reproof and the sense of shame; but all this is manifestly exceptional, and is not to be urged against the fact that God's moral government does actually render men happy or miserable by rule. We are warranted by experience to expect that good and evil will continue to be distinguished by favorable or deleterious effects. Tranquillity, satisfaction and external advantages are the natural consequences

of a prudent management of ourselves and our affairs ; virtuous actions, in the natural course of things, procure peace and favor, while vicious are actually punished, oftentimes as mischievous to society. Even the apprehension they excite in the transgressor is a sort of punishment. It is nature's declaration against them. If good actions are sometimes punished, or attended with persecution, this is not necessary in the sense in which it is necessary that ill actions be punished. But, naturally, virtue *as such* is rewarded, and vice *as such* is punished. Actions, distinguished from their moral quality, may gratify a taste or passion, and afford pleasure. But if vicious, this element of evil in them is not thereby rewarded or approved. Virtue and vice have immediate and lasting effects upon the mind and temper. Where ill effects follow certain actions that are reflected upon as wrong, they are attended with uneasiness and self-reproach. On the other hand, the exercise of gratitude, friendship and benevolence are attended with inward peace and joy of heart. Nor can a long indulgence in vice fully drive away the fear or apprehension of penalty.

Good men also befriend one another. Let a man be known to be virtuous, and he will be favored often for his character simply. Public honor will be done him. But vice will incur infamy. It will provoke resentments. It will impel even to revolutions. It will ever be exposed to that which flows from a public opinion against injustice, fraud and unfair advantages.

Domestic and civil governments are both natural institutions. Yet in the first, falsehood, injustice and ill-behavior are punished, and the opposite qualities commended, while civil government is constrained to repress what would be prejudicial or fatal to itself, as vice must necessarily be. That God has given us a moral nature shows that we are under moral government, but that He has placed us where this nature does and must operate is an additional proof of the fact.

Indeed, the rewards of virtue and the punishments of vice are so uniform as we find them to be, in part from the fact of our moral nature, and in part also from the fact that each has so great power over others' happiness and misery. We are so

made that well-doing brings peace, and ill-doing restlessness and apprehension. We cannot approve vice except when the moral judgment is perverted by evil habits or self-interest. Vice is necessarily odious, infamous and contemptible. It is true that happiness and misery may seem to be inexplicably distributed. But this may be in the way of discipline. There may be good reasons why our happiness or misery may be, to a certain extent, in another's power. But this does not drown the voice of nature. The passions which nature bestowed, are perverted when this result is brought about.

Evidently virtue is on the side of the divine administration, and vice is opposed to it. The first has reasons for hope, which the latter has not. The confidence of vice rests on the prospect of eluding the natural processes of retribution. Accidental causes may operate to protect evil, for a time, at least. But the tendencies of virtue and vice, so manifest in respect to individuals, are discernable in society. Here virtue, in the long run—like reason when, in a conflict with brute force, it has time for precaution and defence—will win the day. Virtue will tend to bind together the elements of the state; to promote industry, harmony and a regard for the public good; to increase all the elements through which the state prospers. For this, it must have time to operate, but with time, the advantages which it tends to secure, will become manifest. Difficulties, indeed, must be overcome, for virtue is militant here. Sometimes it is neglected and unknown, despised and oppressed, and all this may be for wise ends, and to secure a broader and more generous recognition at last. But the hindrances are presumably only temporary. On a larger sphere they may vanish. Certainly they are not necessary, and we may conceive a state of things in which full scope shall be given to virtue. The vastness of the material universe suggests the boundlessness of the moral, and a scheme of Providence proportionably extended.

But supposing a state thoroughly virtuous and just, the very picture of it is an argument of the natural advantages of virtue as related to society. Such a state would be devoid of faction. It would be directed by the highest wisdom. Each member, in security, would discharge his assigned duty. In-

justice and distrust would be unknown. The character of the state would command confidence and respect abroad. It would have a relative superiority to all others less virtuous than itself. It would conciliate those who might desire to become its subjects and enjoy its advantages. It would tend ever to grow stronger and expand, till all nations should flow to it, and the world become subject to its sway.

Evidently, the Author of nature is not indifferent to virtue and vice. His constitution of things is equivalent to a declaration in favor of one and against the other. If, in the issue, it should be found that all are punished according to their deserts, this would exhibit a distributive justice, different in *degree*, but not in *kind*, from what prevails now. Add to this, the consideration of the tendencies of virtue and vice, founded in the nature of things, and hindered at present by artificial and not necessary causes, and then suppose these causes removed in a future state, and the result will be a perfection of moral government not witnessed, but yet suggested here. So that the notion of a moral scheme of government is natural and not fictitious, and there is reason to believe that, however imperfect now, the obstacles to its perfection will be finally removed.

That the present is a state of probation, may be inferred from the fact of a future life, taken in connection with what we experience, viz., that our future welfare depends on our present prudence. The natural government of God in this world puts us on trial now, and this trial, in which the conduct of youth determines the character of manhood, is analogous to probation for a future life. Men are tempted to what is contrary to their worldly interest, and may in like manner be tempted to what is opposed to their future interest. In both cases, their neglect of the nature of their actions, when they might see what courses lead to good and what to evil, forces them to blame themselves. The result that comes upon them is due, not so much to ignorance as to passion, or a heedlessness that is culpable. In both cases there is probation, arising out of our nature or our condition. The temptation may be extraordinary, or it may be weak in itself, and

yet prevail through the weakness of the will or the eagerness for indulgence. Some persons never look beyond present gratification. Some act even against their present judgment. Some are open and bold in vice. Vivid apprehensions of future ill fail to arrest them. External influences may also work to their prejudice. Bad example may lend a sanction to their vice. An imperfect education may dispose them to yield where they should resist. Prevalent false opinions may be shared by them, and help to mislead them; so that negligence and folly, as well as vice, may bring on disastrous results.

Of this, however, we cannot complain. We are not so necessitated to evil or folly, but that we feel that we might and ought to resist. In a more exalted condition, we might have just as good reason to complain that we are not higher and happier, as we have now.

Thus the present actual state of things is one of trial. We are never allowed to feel for a moment that we are absolutely secure. If an infinitely good being allows this, we cannot argue from his nature that he will not expose us to misery. The misery is no more unavoidable than our deportment, which occasions it. There is constant danger to our present interests, and so there may be to our future. If present enjoyments and honors are not forced upon us, when we misconduct ourselves, we cannot imagine that future good will be.

Why we are placed in such a state of probation, is a problem which we cannot fully solve. If we knew, it might injure rather than help us. In any case, our state is consistent with God's righteous government; and, if it is in order to our being qualified for a better state, it accords with His wisdom and goodness.

Every creature has its proper sphere of existence. In order to happiness, its nature must be congruous to its circumstances. Hence, a future blissful condition demands specific qualifications for it. These qualifications are attainable, with due foresight and attention. We are so constituted as to become fit for new and different conditions. We can acquire ideas, and store them up, and make use of them. We can become more and more expert in any specific kind of action. A settled

alteration in our tempers is possible to a persistent self-control and discipline. Repeated efforts and actions result in habits, bodily and mental, by which difficult things become easy, and repulsive things acceptable. Passive impressions, indeed, grow weaker with repetition; and it is well that it is so, or the sight of distress would always repel the effort to relieve it. The surgeon could not attain the impassive calmness necessary for his humane task. But active exertion facilitates future effort. That effort even becomes pleasurable, though arduous. The inclinations opposed to it grow weaker, and the difficulties in its way diminish. Thus a new character, in some respects, is formed. Probation is possible as to the end it contemplates. In our present state, we are not at first qualified for the duties of mature life. We approach our full use of understanding and powers by an imperfect preparatory use. It would be even dangerous to have them all in perfection at first. We should not know what to do with them. Therefore, as children, we must learn, with powers proportioned to our state and frame. We must observe the nature and use of objects. We must conform to the subordinations of domestic and civil government, and the common rules of health and life. Our knowledge may be much of it insensibly acquired, but in the aggregate it costs care and labor, and the conquest of our inclinations.

Of precisely the same kind of discipline for a life to come are we made capable. Even if we could not discern the relation between present discipline and future perfection of service or happiness, this would not be any objection to the fact. We cannot tell how exercise and food develop the child's powers and frame. The child is not even aware that they do. We may, therefore, in spite of our ignorance on many points, infer that man is here and now on probation for a life to come.

But we are able to discern the connection between virtue perfected into habit, and future happiness. Analogy indicates that our state hereafter will be social. It will need, to its blessedness, the exercise of those virtues, truth, justice, etc., to the exercise of which we are disciplined now. If the universe is under moral government, virtuous character must be a necessary condition of blessedness.

But here we find ourselves deficient and liable to go astray. Outward objects allure us to evil. Even when indulgence in them is lawful, it may be limited to times, degrees, etc., and these must be observed, if the moral principle within us is to be regarded. This principle is to be maintained in its integrity. It is our only security. When strengthened, it lessens our danger. By discipline it is strengthened and made, as it were, invincible. Observing that which is right, instead of yielding to our preferences, we pursue our true interest. We are saved from the danger attendant upon our propensities and passions. Virtue, made habitual by discipline under probation, becomes victorious. It is improved and strengthened, and leads to happiness.

It is not enough to account for the fall of an upright being to say he is free. That only makes his fall possible. He must have propensities, and, in order to his perfection, these must be proportioned to his surroundings, his understanding, and his moral sense. As occasions for the indulgence of the propensities multiplied, the tendency to yield to them might be increased, and at length become effectual. Transgression of the moral principle might disorder the moral constitution, and render future transgressions more probable. By the repetition of these, evil habits would be formed, and the character become depraved. On the other hand, by resisting temptation, the moral principle would be strengthened, the propensities would be restrained, and virtue would be secured a triumph. The danger of sinning might ultimately be reduced almost to nothing, and probation might result in confirmed holiness and blessedness. This is especially true of fallen beings striving against evil. They would find in a world like this much to help them—many warnings, new strength from each preceding effort, warnings from others, lessons of experience and discipline.

Indeed, the evils which surround us teach us the odious nature and ill consequences of vice. Our own experience is constantly admonishing us what to seek and what to shun. Every act of self-government strengthens the virtuous principle within us. Resolute persistence against violent temptations confirms our integrity in an eminent degree, and is

advantageous to us in proportion to the severity of our trial. Perfection, through discipline and improvement, implies the exercise of self-denial. If virtue were not arduous, weak inclinations might suffice for it, but danger and difficulty rapidly confirm it into a habit.

It is objected that our moral as well as our physical and intellectual powers may be overtaken. This is possible in exceptional cases, but it is not inconsistent with this world being intended and fitted to be a state of improvement. There are sciences, highly improving to the mind, in which some, on account of their difficulty, will not engage. So some, instead of struggling to virtue, yield to vice, but even this makes the world fitted to be a place of discipline for the good. Many ends of the moral system may be unknown, or above our comprehension, but its tendency to exercise and improve virtue, beyond what would be possible in a perfectly virtuous community, is manifest.

Shaftesbury's objection, though his name is not mentioned, is next met, viz., that there can be no merit in an obedience enforced by hope or fear. But obedience is obedience in any case, and when observed grows into a habit, and habits repress opposite inclinations, while moreover, veracity, justice, etc., are really coincident with self-interest, and each separately is a just principle. A good life begun at the instance of either, and persisted in, leads to the same result.

Nor can it be said that the present discipline of affliction is not needed for a future state of happiness. Although we may not need the patience, we may need the temper that results from it. We may be capable of more happiness by having our inclinations crossed, or our wills subdued, or habits of resignation formed.

Nor, again, can it be said that God might have made us at once what we were finally designed to be. What we are to be, is to be the effect of what we do. God's natural government is not designed to save us labor and trouble or danger, but to fit us to encounter or endure them. Whether we will improve our powers and opportunities, and be the better for it, or neglect them, and be the worse, is left to our own choice. If this is so under God's natural, why not under His moral government?

But this state of probation may be even necessary for the display of character. Not to God, for He is omniscient, but to created beings, that they may know one another, and discern the justice of their final award. Such a result would accord with the scheme of things that has been considered.

The objection of the fatalist that all things are determined by necessity, does not destroy the proof of an intelligent author and governor of the world. If the theory of necessity be admitted, it applies to the present life. And yet, however applicable, it does not exclude deliberation, choice, preference, and all the conditions of temporal probation. Necessity does not determine whether the world was created by an intelligent author or not, but whether it was created by Him necessarily. His Being must be admitted to be necessary, but it does not follow that everything exists by the same kind of necessity, that is, antecedent to design. Necessity accounts for the structure of the world, as it does for that of a house, but no otherwise. There must be an agent, only He is a necessary agent.

But the practical application of the theory of necessity, in the education of a child, for instance, will illustrate its absurdity. His fancied release from obligation—however inculcated—would soon lead to a practical *reductio ad absurdum*. The assumption that events to come are fixed, and that the harvest will be reaped—if it is so fated—is never pushed so far that men neglect to sow the seed. Obviously, the harvest of a future life may be similarly conditioned. We are treated as if we were free. We are subjected to probation as if we were responsible. This is so in all practical matters, and how can it be shown that religion is not a practical matter?

Here we are conscious of will. We possess character. The constitution of nature implies that its author has the same. This is consistent with whatever necessity can be predicated either of God or man. This necessity does not relieve an act from the charge of being just or unjust. It does not relieve from just punishment. The punishment is inflicted as if deserved, that is, as if men were free. They are conscious

of right and wrong, of self-approval or self-rebuke. Thus they are made aware of a rule of action to which they are obligated to conform. This rule is forced upon our attention, and it must be ascribed to the Author of nature, so that—necessity or no necessity—He puts us under obligation to conform to rules which He has given. If, on the other hand, necessity applies as a true theory to human actions, it must apply to all as well as a part, and the result would be that it would set aside, along with freedom, praise and blame, merit and demerit, overthrowing at once all human and divine justice. Here, then, is the direct and practical issue. The Theory of Necessity is not a working theory for human experience, or for the world as it is constituted.

The doctrine of human freedom is beset with no such absurdities. Experience justifies our assumption of it. Things are actually constituted as if we were free. Even if the doctrine of necessity were true, it would be utterly inapplicable, and could only mislead. But the proofs of religion remain the same, and just as conclusive, when necessity is supposed. God has still a will and character, as we know that we have. There would still be crime on the part of men, and if criminal, they would be punishable. To assert injustice in punishing crime, is admitting that we cannot rid ourselves of the notion of justice.

But the fact abides that God rewards and punishes. He has bestowed upon us the moral faculty by which we approve or disapprove. This implies a rule, and a rule of a peculiar kind, by which we are self-approved, or self-condemned. The dictates of the moral faculty are God's laws with sanctions. We have a feeling of security when we comply with them, and of danger in disobeying them. To this constitution of our being God's government must conform. Hence religious worship, if only the acknowledgment of that government, becomes a duty.

But natural religion is conformable to the general sense of mankind. It has been essentially professed in all countries, and may be traced through all ages. These facts show that it was either originally revealed, or forced itself upon the convictions of men. The rude state of man in early ages

presumes the former, and it is confirmed by the pretended revelations of ancient times, which imply either that a real one existed, or that men were prepared to expect one. Facts like these must stand firm against all the objections derived from necessity. Even on the admission of necessity, *necessary* agents are accountable, and—all prejudices, customs, perversions of reason to the contrary—the theory which makes them necessary, is practically false.

On the supposition of a moral government, the analogy of nature teaches that it must be a scheme, and one infinitely vast and comprehensive. Its parts curiously correspond to each other, and this correspondence embraces all the past as well as future, all actions and events, as well as creatures. No event can be isolated, and yet no finite mind can trace all its causes, connections, and relations, however insignificant in itself. This is true of God's natural, and, it is to be presumed, true of His moral government. Indeed, the two are blended into a single scheme, the natural subservient to the moral and adjusted to it. This adjustment is previously designed, and applies to the periods of trial, the instruments of justice, the forms of retribution. To object to one feature of this system, we ought to know its relations to all the others. In any other sphere but religion, the invalidity of a kindred objection would be confessed.

To assert that all evils might have been prevented by repeated interpositions, or that more good might have been effected by a different constitution of things, is asserting what we cannot prove, and what in some instances we can discern to be false. Apparent disorders in the world may be such simply because of our ignorance. Some changes might be suggested, which, on trial, would be found palpably impossible. To object against the actual ordering of Providence is a task to which our knowledge and powers are inadequate. Some unknown relation, or unknown impossibility, might determine what was criticised to be not only good, but good in the highest degree.

In God's moral government, means are necessary to ends, and most desirable ends may depend on very disagreeable means. Our experience shows us often results contrary to

what we anticipated. We are thus admonished to be cautious in our objections. It is not enough that we cannot see *how* the means are to work out good, or think we can see that they must work out the opposite. They may in fact be not only fitting, but actually best, or the only means.

But sin has entered the world; and would not the world be better without sin? Yet pain is in the world; and health is better than pain, while pains may be curative. General laws are shown by nature to be best, and for all the good we have, or the confidence we feel, we are dependent upon them. Yet by general laws, irregularities cannot be prevented or remedied, while direct interpositions would have bad effects, encouraging improvidence, leaving us no rule of life or basis of calculation, and leading perhaps to distant results working incalculable injury.

But if so ignorant of a scheme practically infinite, how are we competent to understand the proofs of religion? Our ignorance is not absolute, but partial. We may have evidence of God's being and character, without comprehending His plans. Moral obligations, however, remain unaffected by our ignorance of the consequences of complying with or rejecting them. Our incompetence to raise objections in certain cases is manifest, and we know it; but to credit religion is trusting to experience.

The present state, then, is a fragment of an immense scheme. We are connected, if not with *all* its parts, at least with many—with the present, past and future. This scheme, moreover, is progressive: it is steadily unfolding. It contains what is wonderful, and not less wonderful, though a Creator be denied, or it be asserted that He governs without rule, or by a bad one. But our own nature compels us to believe Him just and good. The world, as it is, was made by Him. He rules it, and has assigned us our lot in it. As reasonable beings, capable of reflection, we can hardly avoid reflecting upon our end and our place in the scheme of things to which we belong.

In the second part of his "Analogy"—with which we are less concerned—Butler treats of the importance of Christianity, and the objections against it, as divinely re-

vealed. Its importance is seen in the fact that it is a republication of Natural Religion, that it is authoritative, that God saw reasons for making it, that it teaches religion in its purity, and that it brings life and immortality to light. It moreover is attested by miracles, while it makes known what reason could never discover—not only the fact of our fallen state, but the means of recovery. It lays down moral duties as well as positive precepts, which are equally binding when once admitted to be from God.

The manner in which Butler deals with the vexed question of the relative obligation of moral and positive precepts must be noted. “Moral *duties* arise out of the nature of the case itself, prior to external command. Positive *duties* do not, but from external command,” nor would they be duties but for the Divine command. Yet they (positive institutions) rest either on natural or revealed religion, and the reason of them in general is very obvious, although why the particular form of them should be enjoined, may be obscure. So far as a reason can be seen for them, they are not in contrast with what is moral. But when two precepts—one moral and one positive—enjoined by the same authority, are supposed to come in conflict, so that only one can be obeyed, “it is indisputable that our obligations are to obey the former, because there are apparent reasons for this preference, and none against it.” If, as in Christianity, positive institutions are means to a moral end, “the end must be acknowledged more excellent than the means.” Butler, however, does not consider the determination of the question so necessary as it appears to many, although he contends that it has been determined in his own sense, by revelation.

The presumptions against a miraculous revelation are next considered. Against such a revelation we cannot reason from analogy, so long as we lack the knowledge of facts in regard to worlds similar to ours, on which an analogy may be based. Nor can we object to the mode in which it is communicated, so long as the same objections might be urged against the modes in which we obtain the knowledge that we need for daily life and practice. The objections against different parts or features of revelation, are in like manner disposed of by

arguments from analogy. The want of universality in its promulgation, is shown to be paralleled by the various degrees of knowledge enjoyed by the light of nature, in different lands and in different ages. The seemingly incomplete evidence on which it is given, may be considered as an element of probation, while the passions and prejudices of men may be presumed to blind them often to the force of the evidence which actually exists. Miracles, which are in part evidence of the divine origin of revelation, must be accepted on sufficient testimony, and that testimony is summarily presented. The subject of prophecy is taken up, and the objections against it are disposed of. The collateral evidences of Christianity are then passed in review, and finally, as a conclusion to the whole work, objections against the argument from analogy are considered.

One of these objections is, that what is wanted is to clear natural as well as revealed religion of difficulties, and this want is not met by showing that the same difficulties lie against both. Butler answers that this objection assumes on our part the right to have God's entire scheme of providence explained to us, but this right we cannot claim. In daily life we have to act, not from a full knowledge of *all* facts or circumstances, but in the light of inference from such as we do know. Probability is our guide. The physician, for instance, must be guided by it, even when life is at stake.

It is objected, again, that "it is a strange way, indeed, of convincing men of the obligations of religion, to show them that they have as little reason for their worldly pursuits." But the rules of prudence are regarded as obligatory, notwithstanding all difficulties and uncertainties in the latter case; and why should they not be regarded when religion is a practical matter, and has to do with man's highest happiness?

It may be said that objections against the Divine goodness and justice are not removed by showing that they are just as valid in the case of natural as revealed religion. Butler replies, that all that is required is to show that the things objected to are not necessarily inconsistent with the Divine attributes, while the object of the argument from analogy is not designed to solve all difficulties.

That the argument from analogy may leave the mind in an unsettled state, Butler in part admits. But he contends that the question is not whether the evidence of revelation is fully satisfactory in itself, but whether it is sufficient to prove and discipline that virtue which it presupposes to exist.

To assert that, after all, men will not forego present interest and pleasure out of regard to religion on doubtful evidence, is little to the purpose. The question is not how men *will* act, but how they ought to act. The weight of the argument from analogy will be felt by the believer as a confirmation of his faith, while those who do not believe will be led to perceive the absurdity of attempting to prove religion false.

Butler appended to his "Analogy" two Dissertations, one on Personal Identity, the other on the Nature of Virtue. While criticising Locke's views of identity, he inclines to accept his definition, "the sameness of a rational being," and for proof of identity appeals to consciousness. The second Dissertation indicates how carefully Butler had considered and digested the views of his predecessors.

IX.

MERITS AND DEFECTS OF BUTLER'S METHOD CONSIDERED.

THE "Analogy" of Bishop Butler was adapted to the age in which it was written. It was designed to meet objections to revelation that were then current, and its author availed himself of the advantages afforded him by the concessions of his opponents. An acquaintance with the literature of the time shows how extensively it must have moulded and modified the plan of his work. Although it betrays little of the aspect of controversy, and seems to move in a sphere above it, yet every reader familiar with the publications that preceded it, can discern its scope as it respects them, and recognize the opponents with whom its author is brought into conflict. Its calmly earnest, almost judicious tone—the perfect silence which it preserves as to the works it is designed to refute

—the utter absence of all personal allusions and all reference to contemporary events—might lead one to suppose that it embodied the speculations of a recluse thinker, little concerned or involved in the intellectual or religious agitations of his time. All these things add to its permanent value, or at least relieve it of what might otherwise mar the unity of its impression; but they must not be so interpreted as to withdraw the work from all relation to a great controversy, which, in its varying aspects, had been going forward for more than half a century, and with which it was indeed directly and closely connected.

The real value of the "Analogy" to us, however, is not to be sought in its effectiveness—great as it was—in bringing the questions in controversy to a direct and final issue. It consists rather in the fact that it embodies an instructive and able exposition of the moral system—in some of its most important aspects. It presents the leading facts of God's natural government of the world, and traces, with great justness as well as sagacity, their religious bearings. Without unduly depreciating it, we may yet say that, if in some respects it has gained, in others it has lost, by its relation to the controversies of the age. Its argument is characterized by adaptations and applications affecting its structure, growing out of the circumstances in which it was produced.

With the object that Butler had in view, it was a great thing gained, if, before entering upon the body of his work, he could have the doctrine of a future life conceded or established. He would thus be enabled to present what follows in a more convincing light. But the future life was, by most of the party to which he stood opposed, freely admitted. Lord Herbert has classed it among the five leading doctrines of his faith, which, he contended, might be established by the light of nature. Blount, Toland, Collins and Tindal, followed generally, on this point, his line of thought. Butler naturally felt that he had little more to do than to accept their admissions, and hence contents himself with presenting merely what may be termed the negative argument for the future life, viz., the presumption that the soul will continue to exist, unless it can be shown that death terminates its conscious being.

He thus throws the burden of proof on his opponents, omitting, of course, the positive argument for immortality derived from the consideration of the moral system.

His method thus had its advantages, considered simply with reference to the circumstances of the time. But it had its disadvantages also. His negative argument was as conclusive for the immortality of brutes as of men, and this he freely conceded. But, in the changes which have taken place since his day, the doctrine of a future life has been called in question full as much as any other of the important points which he sought to establish. His argument, lacking the positive element, which could not fitly be introduced, till the basis of it in the moral system was established, tends to weaken the impression of the work, while it fails to do justice to the proof of immortality afforded by the light of nature.

The true method for constructing a scheme of the moral system is to begin with the positions not merely least disputed, as in Butler's case, but most easily and conclusively established. Evidently the future life is not one of these. The fact of a moral order of the world lies open to observation, and is constantly affirmed by human experience. This fact, therefore, may be most easily verified by evidence, and, when established, becomes a basis of argument to which we may thenceforth confidently appeal.

Again, Butler assumes the existence of God. One of his postulates, legitimately such with most minds, and freely conceded by his opponents, is that of an Author of Nature, to whose will and ordering the entire constitution of nature may be referred. But here again modern scepticism calls in question Butler's data. The existence of an intelligent Author of Nature thus becomes one of the points to be proved. The place for its introduction and proof is obviously after the verification of the fact that a moral order of the world exists—an order which goes beyond the material creation, because furnishing evidence, not only of the wisdom and power, but of the goodness and justice of God.

Another feature of the "Analogy," viewed as containing an exposition of the moral system, must be regarded as a defect. It was not such to Butler or his contemporaries, but it

is to us. He culls out from human experience just the facts that were needed to establish certain specific conclusions which he sought to establish, and, for the end he had in view, these facts are sufficient and decisive. But when we examine his work, apart from all controversial aspects and relations, that were merely local or temporary, we find its value and significance to be, in the fact, that it unfolds the scheme of God's natural government over men. But there is a vast mass of very material and important evidence bearing upon this, of which Butler has made little use. He did not attempt—and perhaps he was wise in not attempting—to take any general survey of the broad sphere of man's relations to moral law and retribution, as illustrated by actual experience. He has not mapped out, or classified, the different departments of evidence in proof or elucidation of a moral system, but has contented himself with selecting from each what suited his purpose. And yet it is obvious that if we are to apprehend or appreciate the moral system as it is, we need to examine it on all sides, and in all its relations, so far as human observation or scrutiny can extend. We must not content ourselves with a small, or even a large, number of isolated facts, gathered from a limited sphere, however significant or important these facts may be, in themselves considered. We must overlook nothing material, which is necessary to a large and satisfactory induction. Our method should be as comprehensive and scientific as that by which we assume to become masters of the order and laws of the physical universe. Only thus can we secure the most solid and reliable basis for our conclusions, and be sure that we have not at some point misinterpreted the isolated facts that have come before us, or that these assumed facts do not clash with other unnoticed facts.

It is no discredit to Butler that he did not attempt this difficult task. It might—for the ends he had in view—have encumbered rather than helped his argument. Yet he has gone so far, that we can only regret that he did not go farther. Prof. Farrar, in speaking of the "Analogy," recognizes its merit in this respect. "The real secret of its power, however, lies not merely in its force as an argument to refute objections against revelation, but in its positive effect as a

philosophy, opening up a grand view of the divine government, and giving an explanation of revealed doctrines, by using analogy as the instrument for adjusting them into the scheme of the universe. He seems himself to have taken a broad view of God's dealings in the moral world, analagous to that which the recent physical discoveries of his time had exhibited in the natural. In the same manner as Newton in his '*Principia*' had, by an extension of terrestrial mechanics, explained the movements of the celestial orbs, and united under one grand generalization the facts of terrestrial and celestial motion, so Butler aimed at exhibiting as instances of one and the same set of moral laws, the moral government of God, which is visible to natural reason, and the spiritual government, which is unveiled by revelation."

It is Butler's merit that he thus led the way in suggesting, and largely in developing, the scheme of the system of moral government established on earth. It is what no one before him—Wollaston, perhaps, excepted—had done, or undertaken to do so fully. Many had obtained glimpses of it. Many had noted isolated features of it. Heathen philosophers, like Seneca and Plutarch, may have even been awed by its grandeur. But their presentation of it is fragmentary. In their most vivid intuitions—and the testimony of these is valuable and weighty—they fail to obtain a comprehensive view of the bearings and relations of the most familiar facts. To some points they bear concurrent testimony. On others, they hesitate or are silent. Even when they harmonize fully, the fact that their views are so limited and circumscribed, deprives them of that support which they might have received from the presentation of collateral and kindred truths.

Indeed, to the proper presentation of any single feature of the moral system, it is essential that it should be seen in its connections. It is like one of many pillars of an edifice that support one another. We may compare the established fact of the existence of a moral system to the abutment of a bridge, and each advanced truth growing out of it to successive piers connected by arches, and so connected that each and all are strengthened by the connection. The fact that virtue has some peculiar and manifest advantages, and vice

some peculiar disadvantages, harmonizes with the theory of human probation, and supports it. Probation fits into a scheme of partial earthly retribution, and at once explains and confirms it. The immortality of the soul takes its fitting place in a scheme which reconciles divine justice with a scheme of things manifestly imperfect, if considered only in its bearings and relations to the present life. But the moral nature of man, by which he is held accountable for his actions, and sits in judgment upon himself—while an indisputable fact—tends to confirm all those features of the moral system to which it is exactly adjusted, thus contributing new evidence and support to conclusions already established by presumptive proof.

This is, indeed, a most important point. It is a matter in which the proper and orderly statement of separate facts, each probable in itself and harmonizing with all the others, becomes a chain of evidence, that draws after it a conclusion far more probable than any single fact taken by itself alone. The facts are like points supposed to be located in the circumference of an undescribed circle, the mutual relation of which, as well as their relation to a common centre, is seen the moment that the circle is described. That common centre is the moral system, itself a comprehensive fact, and when its radius reaches a mass of concentric facts, all alike related to it as well as to each other, we feel that that centre is posited in a probability, the force of which approaches to demonstration. Then, as we gather up the testimony of consecutive ages, and of different or distant nations, we seem to listen to the voice of concurrent witnesses; only these witnesses are probable truths, mutually supporting each other, and cumulating their testimony, till it becomes well-nigh irresistible.

Here, then, is at once the excellence and the defect of Butler's "Analogy," considered not as a work of controversy, but as an exposition of the moral system—excellence, in that it went so far; defect, in that it did not go farther—in that it did not marshal and classify facts over a field so broad and rich as that it traversed; that it did not exhibit them more distinctly in their mutual relations; that it did not make each point established more directly and effectively

tributary to the support of other points; and, incidental to all this, that an arrangement of topics was adopted which, however legitimate and fitting, or even necessary at the time, can be no longer followed, if we would advance from the simpler to the more complex, from the most easily established, to that which requires for its proof the elucidation and eviction of antecedent propositions.

Butler is not to be criticised, or rather blamed, for not having constructed an argument adapted more precisely to our times. He is rather to be praised and appreciated for having met the necessities of his own time so well, and none can rob him of the merit of having embodied in his analogy the grand conception and the leading outlines of that moral system, of which many before him had obtained inspiring glimpses, but the comprehensive features of which none had ever so clearly grasped, or so distinctly and powerfully portrayed.

But what Butler, from the very circumstances of his position, failed to do, remains to be done. It is a task for which another Butler is needed. But far less than the task of attempting it, is that of indicating what must be its method, and what is necessary to its successful achievement. One prerequisite, which is all-essential, is so to map out the field of investigation, that we can be sure of going over it with something like an exhaustive thoroughness, and may thus be enabled both to see how the several portions of it harmonize in the testimony they afford, and know how to dispose of and classify new facts as they come under our observation.

NOTE.—A brief concluding note will allow no more than the mention of a few leading writers who, subsequent to Butler, have discussed the same class of topics which he handled. Dugald Stuart, in his *Dissertation on the Progress of Metaphysical, Ethical and Political Philosophy*; Sir James Mackintosh, in his *Dissertation on the Progress of Ethical Philosophy*, and Whewell in his *History of Moral Philosophy*, have gone over portions of the field. Leland's "Deistical Writers" may also be profitably consulted. The works most worthy of note are, Ellis' *Knowledge of Divine Things* (1743); Warburton's *Divine Legation*; Hume's *Essays*; Tillard's *Future Rewards and Punishments believed by the Ancients*; Abernethy's *Discourses* (1743); Benson's *Reasonableness of the Christian Religion*; Baxter's *Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul*; Ramsay's *Philosophical Principles* (1748); Grove's *Moral Philosophy*; Lord Kames' *Essay on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*; Bolingbroke's *Works*; Bishop Law's *Works*; Lucas' *Enquiry*; Price's *Review*, etc. (1758); Adam Smith's *Theory of the Moral Sentiments*; Dr. G. Campbell's *Dissertation* (1762); Tucker's *Light of Nature*; Dr. Thomas Reid's *Inquiry*; Price's *Dissertations*; Dr. Beattie's *Essay*; Riccaltoun's *Works*; Priestley and Price on *Materialism*, etc.; Paley's *Moral Philosophy* (1785); President Edwards on the *Nature of Virtue*, etc.; Belsham's *Philoso-*

phy (1801); Stuart's Outlines of Moral Philosophy (1801, etc.); Samuel Drew on the Immortality of the Soul, etc.; Dr. Thomas Brown's Writings; Grinfield's Connection of Natural and Revealed Theology (1818); Hey's Lectures (1822); Bentham's Utilitarian Writings; Bishop Hampden's Philosophical Evidences, etc. (1827), and Lectures on the Study of Moral Philosophy (1835); Dr. Chalmers' Natural Theology, etc.; The Natural Theology of Paley, as also that of Ferguson, and also of Burnett; the Bridgewater Treatises, on the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of God, by Chalmers, Kidd, Prout, Bell, Kirby, Whewell, Buckland, and Roget; Blakey's History of Moral Science (1833); Dick's Christian Philosopher; Mirabaud's Nature and her Laws; Rosse's Christian Revelation and its Truths; Parkinson's Rationalism and Revelation; Gilderdale's Essay on Natural Religion and Revelation (1837); Dewey's Moral View of Commerce; also his Lowell Lectures and Discourses on Human Nature; Brougham's Discourse of Natural Theology, etc. (1835); Notes on Paley's Theology, by Brougham and Sir Charles Bell; also Brougham's Dissertations on Subjects of Science connected with Natural Theology (1839); Wayland's Moral Science; Cardinal Wiseman's Lectures (1836); some of the Writings of Isaac Taylor; Babbage's Ninth Bridgewater Treatise; Gillespie's *a priori* Argument (1843); Theodore Parker's Writings; Allin's Discourses on Atheism; Godwin on Atheism; some of the Writings of Robert Owen, James Mill, John Stuart Mill, and Herbert Spencer; Morell's Philosophy of Religion; Whewell's Elements of Morals; Dr. McCosh on the Divine Government (1850); also his Typical Forms and Special Ends in Creation (1856), of which it is remarked by Allibone, that it should be perused after reading Butler's Analogy, and with the works of Currier and Owen; Chalmers' Prelections on Butler's Analogy (1849); Burnett's Philosophy of Spirit in Relation to Matter; Humphry's Hulsean Lectures on the Doctrine of a Future State; Henry Rogers' Essays, etc. (1850); Kerns' Moral Government of God Elucidated and Enforced; Fourier's Passions of the Human Soul; George Taylor's Indications of a Creator (1851); Miall's Bases of Belief (1853); Sir William Hamilton's Works, Mansel's Lectures, etc.; Calderwood's Philosophy of the Infinite, and his work on Moral Philosophy; Tulloch's Theism (1855); Ferrier's Institutes; Tagart on Locke's Philosophy, etc.; Walker's Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation; also his Philosophy of Scepticism; Farrar's History of Free Thought; W. A. Butler's Ancient Philosophy; J. Young's Province of Reason; Evil not of God, etc.; Lewes' Biographical History of Philosophy; Bledsoe's Theodicy; Lecky's History of Rationalism; Maurice's History of Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy; Hagenbach's History of Rationalism; Bain's Mental and Moral Science; The Duke of Argyll's Reign of Law; Gladstone's *Juventus Mundi*; Gould's Origin of Religious Belief; Lecky's History of European Morals; President Porter's Supplement to Ueberweg's History of Philosophy; and numerous others of recent date.

A work well worthy of special notice is Gabell's "Accordance of Religion with Nature," in which he confesses his indebtedness to Berkeley, Tucker, Reid, Stewart, Brown, and others, and presents very clearly and forcibly some points passed over by Butler. Napier's Lectures on Butler reproduce the substance of Butler's argument, with appropriate comments, and were prepared in view of Gabell's suggestions. In a great variety of theological works will be found comments on Butler, and among the Quarterly Reviews which contain articles on the Analogy, may be mentioned the *Am. Bib. Repository*, X. 317; *Quar. Rev.*, LXIV. 183; *Chris. Spec.*, II. 604 (reproduced by the author, Albert Barnes, in his Introduction to Butler's Analogy); *Meth. Quar. Rev.*, I. 556; III. 128; XI. 247; *Christian Review*, IX. 199; and recently the *Contemporary Review*.

Of writers on the continent of Europe, after the leading German philosophers, since Kant, who need not be mentioned, we have space only to specify Helvetius, Cordillac, Diderot, Burigny, d'Holbach, Voltaire, Vico, Lessing (Wolfen-Büttel Fragments, 1774-'7); Spalding, Bahrtdt, Reinhard, Herder, Bouterweck, Oken, Schleiermacher, Jacobi, Fichte, Eberhard, Ritter, Bunsen, Wuttke, Rothe, Comte, Jouffray, Constant, Cousin, Feuerbach, Naville, Vinet, Buchner, and Strauss. This list might be almost indefinitely extended. Indeed, the works which have appeared from the pens of French and German, as well as English writers, during the last twenty years, on topics identical or kindred with those handled by Butler, would constitute of themselves an extended bibliography. They indicate a deeper as well as more general interest than has heretofore prevailed on questions pertaining to the Moral System, and its connection with Revealed Religion.

THE MORAL SYSTEM.

I.

ITS SCIENTIFIC CLAIMS AND RELATIVE IMPORTANCE.

SCIENCE is the orderly classification of ascertained facts in the distinct department of knowledge with which it is concerned. Of that department it aims to set forth the nature, constitution, principles, or laws by which it is characterized or governed. There are, therefore, as many possible sciences as there are distinct departments of knowledge, the facts of which can be classified, or the laws of which can be ascertained.

1. Among these sciences, that of the Moral System—which treats of the constitution and laws of that moral order of the universe to which man is subject—holds in some respects the highest position. Its vast extent is seen in the fact that all other sciences, through their relation to man, are tributary to it. Its paramount importance is manifest when we consider that man, his obligations, the conditions of his highest well-being, the rewards or penalties of his conduct, and, in a word, all that he has most reason to hope or fear, are among the subjects of which it treats.

If, in the sphere of universal knowledge, the several sciences may be compared to the radii of a circle, the Moral System is the centre in which they all meet. To this alone do they all sustain a common relation, and in this alone do they find their true unity. Each science is important in proportion as it relates to man and to human interests, and that is most important which has to do most directly with man highest—that is, his moral and spiritual interests.

2. All the sciences testify to the supreme place which man holds among all the objects with which they deal. By him, and for him, they may be said to exist. They lay all their

treasures at his feet. They attract his attention; they invite his study; they expand his powers; they develop his capacity; they increase, and even multiply his resources, and they minister to his comforts. Without him, if they could exist, they would exist in vain, while they enable him to apprehend that infinite art which has so constituted his being and surroundings, that universal nature acknowledges his superiority, and waits for him to become its interpreter. The science, therefore, which expounds the laws and constitution of the moral order of things to which man is subject, justly takes precedence in its claims upon our attention above all that deal directly only with fragmentary portions of the universe, and indirectly with man.

3. But there is a manifest subordination established in nature which asserts the natural supremacy of reason; by means of which human energy is ever, more and more, extending its dominion over material objects. Inorganic ministers to organic; vegetable to animal; animal to intellectual and moral. All point upward to man, and they do so from original constitution, and with evident design. Man alone can appreciate Nature's beauties, grandeurs, harmonies. He alone is able to press her forces into his service. For his eye, the universe is pictured over with emblems, rife in analogies, rich in suggestions. For him, its objects, with their hints, lessons, impulses to thought and action, render a manifold service. The flower has its beauty and its fragrance, but the botanist, the poet, and the moralist, find each their uses for it. Nature is full of types and symbols, and forms for expressing and illustrating human thought. Material things give forth—their richest tribute—spiritual meanings, till language itself, in which they are gathered up, becomes the almost exhaustless store-house which thought and feeling lay under contribution, thus exercising that natural sovereignty with which they are invested.

4. In the constitution of man's own being, there is a kindred subordination. His physical structure is marvelous as a material organism. Treatises have been written on separate portions or organs of it, and have left its wonders still unexhausted. But what is it without "the ruling mind?" And

yet the mind—mere intellect—may leave its possessor despicable. Man's greatness culminates in his moral nature. Without this, or with it perverted, he forfeits all respect, and gravitates ever downward to deeper debasement. Only when his moral nature is properly and symmetrically developed, and he conforms to that moral standard which is consistent with social purity and justice, are the gifts of nature, the conquests of science, or the attainments of art of any avail, except to illustrate his degradation and his misery.

The great question, therefore, for him is—to what moral conditions is he subject? It becomes him above all to inquire whether there is a moral system; whether, in the established order of the universe, there are fixed and ascertainable laws of conduct, upon which his well-being depends; and if there are such laws, what are the rewards and penalties that are affixed to them, and what light do all these throw upon the design of the Great Author of the constitution of nature, with respect to man's duty and destiny.

5. That there is a moral sphere, in which man lives, and moves, and has his being, is as obvious as that there is a material sphere. The man that professes to believe that he is nothing more than animated or reasoning matter, is moved and controlled, attracted or repelled, blessed or cursed, by the abstractions of his own thought. He lives to a great extent in an ideal world. The great practical questions of life, ever meeting him, concern his emotional and moral nature. He cannot confront them without considering moral truths and moral obligation. He cannot make physical comfort and real enjoyment always synonymous. Something more is wanted than the indulgence of physical appetites and intellectual tastes. It is the moral element of character.

6. Moreover, the miseries of the world do not spring mainly from material incongruities or physical defects. They originate in the violation of moral obligation. The conditions of human well-being, even for the present state, are mainly moral; and so long as the possibility of a future existence cannot be denied, the sins and crimes of the present must cast dark shadows of foreboding over all that may be yet to come. Of all sciences, therefore, moral science occupies the

most commanding position, and the moral constitution of the world is of infinitely vaster and deeper interest than its physical.

7. But, apart from revelation, what resources for the investigation of the laws and constitution of this system, are within our reach? We have the facts of human experience, as well as those of the constitution of human nature. The relation between thoughts, emotions, actions and courses of action, and their consequences, opens to us a broad and almost exhaustless field. The conditions of human existence which necessitate trial, discipline, and the development of character, may be studied. The social nature of man, as illustrated by domestic and civil government operating to check willfulness and passion; indeed, the entire constitution of human nature, physical, mental and moral, will reward a diligent search. We have thus ample materials within our reach, and in the broad sphere of analogy, we have suggestions as to their interpretation. The moral, throughout the human sphere, is inseparably connected with the physical. Their mutual adjustments and harmonies, or correspondencies, show that they have the same author. The analogies between them are numberless, and it is by the use of reason in the sphere of analogy, that we must endeavor to apprehend and interpret the laws and constitution of the Moral System.

II.

THE COMPLEX ELEMENTS OF MAN'S NATURE IN THEIR MUTUAL RELATIONS.

The facts, known or accessible, which serve to illustrate the laws and constitution of the moral system, are so numerous and varied, that, to obtain anything like a comprehensive view of them, we must adopt some method of classification. Without this, their very multitude may sometimes serve to

confuse rather than convince, while we are in danger also of omitting some of the most important.

Perhaps the simplest and yet broadest classification may be found in considering man's complex nature in its relations, 1. to its own elements; 2. to the material universe and its laws; 3. to society in its various forms and organizations; while, 4. the moral constitution of man may be reserved for separate consideration. We shall thus, at least, have the broad field of our investigation mapped out before us, while the facts that come under our notice will take their proper place in the comprehensive scheme to which they belong. We commence, then, with an examination of the relations of man's complex nature to the elements which constitute it.

Man has a physical, mental or intellectual, and emotional or moral nature. These are combined to constitute the individual. Excess or defect of any one part or element, with respect to the others, disturbs the order and mars the symmetry of the whole. This fact is significantly intimated in the familiar phrase—"a sound mind in a sound body." In any case, excess or defect brings a kind of retribution with it.

1. Whatever limits the normal control of the mind over the body; whatever renders the latter an ineffective or imperfect instrument of the former; whatever detracts from its healthful activity, or makes it act with a spasmodic and intermittent energy—disturbs that equilibrium of the entire composite nature on which healthful enjoyment or happiness depends. Yet we know that the ultimate, and sometimes direct effect of vicious indulgence, is to disturb that equilibrium, sometimes transiently, but sometimes permanently. Excess of passion or passionate emotion produces deleterious effects upon the frame, ranging from temporary disability to permanent paralysis. Such excess results from the violation of the laws which virtue prescribes, and morality sanctions. It rarely, if ever, takes place except when there is a manifest moral transgression, or sin that challenges its penalty.

This penalty, in some cases, is so manifestly such, that its retributive character admits of no dispute. Men have been rendered speechless, or even powerless, by the violence of their passion. The limbs, trembling or paralyzed, have re-

fused to perform their office. Death even, has sometimes been the effect of frenzy. The body could no longer bear the intense strain to which it was subjected, and it may be said to have fallen a victim to the intemperate passions of the soul.

There are cases, also, where the retribution comes in the form of physical disease. A morbid state of the physical system is induced by the intensity of the desires, by the restlessness of passions that rebel against reason; and in nervous prostration or exhaustion, in feverish excitement, in restlessness or depression, the foundation is laid for diseases that may inflict months or years of torture, and, in the end, prove fatal.

2. The action of the passions or of the emotional nature upon the intellect, or even the entire mental constitution, is next to be considered. A grievance, real, or imaginary, is brooded over; an object of desire absorbs the thoughts; a secret grief is indulged beyond the bounds of reason, or there is some other violation of the normal limits of the affections. It may be that avarice, ambition, anger, love or jealousy, is allowed to gain almost exclusive possession of the soul. Hereby, the intellect, or the entire mental constitution, is variously affected. Sometimes its normal action is disturbed; or its powers are dwarfed, or act only with an intermittent energy. This may prepare the way for still more disastrous results. Insanity, in some of its countless phases and degrees, may be one of these. The lunatic—criminal by no civil statute—has violated a law of his mental constitution, and, in his pitiable condition, is a victim of the retribution which he has himself challenged. The rule of reason has been violated, and the penalty of sin comes in the shape of the dethronement of reason itself. It is an awful penalty, the more impressive that it comes without the interposition of any visible or palpable instrumentality.

But it is only in extreme and exceptional cases that such a result is witnessed. An excess of anger—though termed a short insanity—may disturb the intellect only temporarily. And yet, during the brief period that it prevails, it may blind the reason; it may suppress the voice of prudence and reflec-

tion, and thus allow a man to be pushed on to acts of folly, or, perhaps, of crime. For the time being, the man is brutalized. He is intellectually and morally degraded. During this period of suspended reason, he is left free to commit those acts which will become the torture of his future years, or which may possibly throw their dark shadow over all his prospects.

And what is true of the effects of anger may be true, to a modified extent, in the case of other passions. As they gain the ascendancy, they rule the whole man, degrading, if not deposing, reason, and violating that sense of right—hereafter to be noted—which is one of the most sacred trusts of the human soul. The retribution which they invite is swift and sure. There is no escape from it. The sin is, in fact, its own punishment; it becomes habitual, and dominates the whole nature; it transforms that nature, and makes of it an intellectual and moral deformity.

3. If we turn now to consider the action of the body and its appetites upon the intellectual and emotional nature, we shall find that physical indulgence, or excess, beyond the bounds assigned by reason and conscience, has its legitimate and inevitable penalty. The physical appetites demand satisfaction, yet there is a limit which must not be transgressed. It is fixed by the constitution of the body, and must be discovered by reason. To pass it, as in the case of gluttony, intemperance, lust, or any sensual appetite, tends to stupefy the intellect, and blunt the moral sense. Its brutalizing effect is sometimes seen in forms so odious as to excite disgust, indignant rebuke, or contempt. Manhood is perverted, or even temporarily extinguished. A debased nature emits mere sparks of intelligence, loses all sense of propriety, disregards consequences, is lost to all sense of its own shame, and becomes a satire on humanity itself. Every better hope is crushed; every higher aspiration is quenched; and the victim of appetite acquiesces in a degradation, which, once contemplated, would have filled him with shuddering horror.

4. But the moral nature is even a more pitiable victim than the intellect. Sensibility to moral distinctions is sadly weakened, if not quite destroyed. What remains of intellect

is sharpened into activity to prolong an indulgence that has become habitual. The victim may even glory in his own shame. He may exult in his triumph over self-respect. He recognizes no law but his own appetites and lusts. The exhibition that he makes of himself is but a shameless parade of what all others must regard as a terrible retribution.

5. But the reward of virtue is seen in the effect upon the intellect and the moral nature, when appetite is kept in check, and the lusts of sense are regulated by sound discretion and subjected to moral restraint. Then the intellect is clear and unclouded. It can put forth its unimpaired and entire energies. It is best prepared to grapple with every problem and every difficulty that comes in its way. The moral nature also asserts its vigor. It is unbiased by sensualism. It discerns clearly what duty is, and is prepared to embrace it. As appetite grows weaker by habitual subjection, virtuous habits grow stronger. The very aspect of a soul, unswerving in its allegiance to its moral convictions, is equivalent to a demonstration of the superior nature and the rewards of virtue.

6. It remains, under this branch of our subject, only to consider the relation of the intellect to the physical constitution and the emotional nature. The cultivation of the intellect may not be equivalent to a virtue, but the neglect of it, at least, is immoral. We feel instinctively that its demand for knowledge and culture should be gratified, and to deny this demand is a kind of homicide; it is quenching the very life of reason itself. Looked upon in this light, it is nothing short of a crime, and a crime that invites and insures its retribution. This retribution is seen, not only in the degradation and dwarfing of the intellect, but in the legitimate or natural result of this; the denying the body that care and provision which only the thoughtful and well-furnished intellect will make. There is a criminal ignorance, and with ignorance, indifference as to what actually constitutes physical well-being. There is an ignorance of the laws of health and the means of proper physical development. There is, consequently, a constant exposure to conditions that produce discomfort, disease, feebleness, and premature decay. Tens of thousands in our large cities suffer as the victims of

ignorance and the lack of intellectual culture; and that suffering cramps their energies, affects their health, and permanently injures their physical development. They are the victims of violated law. They are enduring a penalty whose infliction proclaims the certainty and severity of the retribution they have provoked.

7. That the moral or emotional nature should sympathize in such suffering, is inevitable. It is dragged downward, and degraded by its physical surroundings. But, apart from these, it suffers by evil that is done the intellect in denying it due culture. Those relations, from the study of which the sense of duty is quickened, are feebly and inadequately represented. Superior intellectual discernment may not, indeed, be essential to high moral excellence, but moral excellence is prejudiced by the feebleness of intellectual perception. All other things being equal, increased intellectual culture will help forward moral development, and this development may thus become, in a measure, the reward of a virtuous regard for the claims of intellectual culture.

III.

MAN'S RELATIONS, PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, AND MORAL, TO THE EXTERNAL WORLD.

Having noted briefly those facts which are brought out in the study of the mutual relation of the elements of man's complex nature, our next step is to consider the relations of this nature to its physical conditions. Here a threefold classification may be made, and we may inquire how man stands related, physically, intellectually, and morally, to the material universe. Taking first into view man's physical nature, its most prominent relations to the external world are those of adaptation and antagonism. The latter is the first to be apprehended, and that through which individuality is defined and developed.

1. Matter uniformly offers resistance to physical effort. It

sets limits to human strength as well as will. The child strikes his foot against a stone, and finding how futile it is to discharge his resentment against it, is forced to submit to the conditions of prudence and precaution. His powers are limited, and he must confess it to himself. He cannot grasp the stars, though he may cry for them. His turbulent will, unchecked by domestic discipline, finds a barrier in the material creation that it cannot break over. It cannot snatch and appropriate at its caprice. It is subjected to a relentless and rigid discipline that limits its will, and sternly demands submission. There is no room for teasing or importunity here. Nature's solemn silence gives back no echo to the petulant cry. Here, therefore, at the outset, in the collision of will with physical obstacles, we have a moral discipline that no one can escape.

2. But we must go a step further. If nature blocks our way with countless absolute impossibilities, there are points where she yields to sagacity, labor, and art. On certain conditions she will surrender her treasures, but these conditions must be complied with. Here, the intellect—instead of the body conjoined with the will—comes into collision with the external world. We find ourselves subjected to the necessity of solving the problem—how may we extort from nature the materials and provisions necessary to our comfortable subsistence? The problem must be solved. The intellect must grapple with it. Thus it is forced to study nature and her laws. It is put under an involuntary and inevitable tuition. Under the penalty of starvation and suffering, it must explore and discover, and store up facts, and deduce laws, and then consider how, with skill and toil, advantage may be taken of those laws. Here, therefore, the broad field of natural science is thrown open as a book to be studied. In the study, an order and system are discovered, so surprising, that even the undevout are sometimes constrained to admire it as divine. There is a regularity and uniformity, a breadth and vastness, a "reign of law," so magnificent that the mind contemplates it with awe, and is familiarized with the great idea of an universal dominion, that embraces in its immense sweep, worlds and atoms, worms and men. The apprehension

may be simply intellectual, but the impression is moral, and the grand practical lesson is emphasized by the entire order of nature—that man cannot be exempt from subjection to universal law. He cannot be an anomaly in the universal system.

3. Meanwhile the intellect is expanded and developed by the task imposed upon it. Forced to grapple with difficulties, to toil for the knowledge that more than repays the toil, it is disciplined to thought; it is educated to enlarge the grasp of its comprehension; it is better prepared to study profounder problems—if such there be—than it has been confronted with hitherto. Nor is this all. Taste is educated and refined. Nature—with its beauties, its grandeurs, its sublime order, its silent eloquence of universal law, its varied music, swelling from the insect's hum to the thunder's peal—is making impressions, or putting forth efforts, as it were, at impression, which tend to elevate the soul and emancipate it from abject serfdom to sense and passion. In all this, there is something, if not directly moral, at least kindred to moral training, and harmonizing grandly with a scheme that makes man the subject of moral training and discipline.

4. But while the intellect has performed a portion of its task in mastering certain obvious facts, the structure and laws of the physical universe—not the least important matter in studying the relation of our complex nature to that universe—still remains to be considered. We must use our knowledge. We must avail ourselves of our acquaintance with the laws that have been discovered. We have found that the seed will produce a harvest “after its kind,” under certain conditions. We must master those conditions and sow the seed. We have found out the veins of metal in the rock or the mine, and that art is necessary to extract them. We must apply the art. We have discovered the nature of materials, and the uses to which they can be put to construct a ship or a dwelling, and it remains for us to procure and shape and apply the materials.

5. Here is a call to industry, a summons to break away from idleness and idle habits and the vices they engender, and apply our energies in spheres of utility and public beneficence. It is in industry, in honest toil, honest workmanship, mutual

help, grappling in a hand-to-hand conflict to make nature pliant to our will, that character is formed, energy is developed, and the soul, rich in the exercise of disciplined powers, is fitted to become the seed-plot for all moral excellence. We should not need to search far in history to find that it has not been under the most genial skies, or on the most luxuriant and fertile soil, but oftentimes where climate was bleak and soil rugged, that the noblest specimens of manhood have been produced. Not in the lap of ease has the highest virtue been nurtured. Oftenest has it been found in the frame of those kindred qualities that have been schooled in hardship and perfected by endurance. Thus the physical world, meeting men with the sharp admonition—*toil or starve*—has become a stern but beneficent teacher of excellences of character, that, if not virtue itself, are yet akin to it—its natural allies and supports.

6. The fixed order of the material universe, also, disciplines man to the habitual recognition of law, and in that recognition there is a moral element. The sun rises and sets with such uniform regularity as to measure out and allot to man his seasons of toil and rest. The regular revolution of the seasons, bringing about spring and autumn, seed-time and harvest, imposes upon man the necessity of acting seasonably, and with forethought; teaching him to observe times and seasons, and avail himself of fit opportunities of effort. Thus he is, as it were, compelled to something like regularity in his habits; his activities must conform to the conditions imposed by fixed laws, and he must take into account such revolutions of the seasons, of day and night, summer and winter, as his experience soon teaches him to expect. The importance of all this, as an element of moral training, will be seen, if we consider what the effect would be of a suspension of this established order of the material world. Virtue would scarcely subsist in a state of things where all regular activity, all uniformity of life, all necessity or even possibility of wise and calculating forethought, was suspended.

II.—1. But in the relations of man to the external world, those of mutual adaptation must not be overlooked. Some of these have been glanced at already in considering those

aspects of the apparent antagonism into which man is brought with nature. There are others, however, in which an element of moral discipline is involved.

2. The physical world addresses itself to the senses, the tastes, the susceptibilities of men, inviting them, as it were, to enjoyment and activity. It calls forth and stimulates the powers both of mind and body, and ministers to their satisfaction. There is beauty for the eye, music for the ear, fragrance for the smell; there are prizes for invention, rewards for industry, premiums on forethought. Here are countless incentives to healthful activity, the activity that best consists with virtue, and only unnaturally can be made to consist with vice. There are problems of art and mysteries of science, awaiting a solution, and calculated to elevate the thoughts and aims of men from every low, groveling, or sensual sphere. The withdrawal of all these would indisputably be morally disastrous. Social energy would stagnate or prey upon itself. Vice would have an almost undisputed and vacant field, abandoned to it without a rival.

3. But the relation of the body specifically to the external world, needs to be noted. That relation, through mutual adaptation, is such that physical comfort, or health and vigor, are made to depend on conformity to physical laws. A vitiated atmosphere is poisonous, and must be avoided. Extremes of cold and heat, through sudden exposure, generate disease. There is an almost infinite variety of substances, from the simplest fruits of the earth to the most elaborate mixtures of art, which address themselves to the bodily appetite, but which must be partaken of seasonably and in moderation. There are fixed laws, limiting indulgence, and although physical rather than moral laws, the heedless transgression of them is a moral offense, and incurs inevitable penalty. Here, therefore, man is subjected to a moral tuition. He is placed under restraint. He is put under bonds, as it were, thoughtfully to maintain the correspondence between the exercise of his appetites and the laws and nature of material things. His whole life must of necessity become a continuous adjustment, an habitual recognition of the relations in which he stands to the material

world and its laws. He must respect the laws of gravitation, at the risk of fractured limbs. He must respect the laws of healthful respiration and activity, under the penalty of severe suffering, or perhaps fatal disease. He must put limits on the exercise of his powers, on the indulgence of his appetites, on the sequence or intensity of effort with which he pursues chosen objects; continually bridling his impulses, continually providing for emergencies, studiously taking advantage of the forces of nature, and by forethought converting them into his allies; and in all this he is subjected to what—if not moral discipline—is so analogous to it, so in harmony with it, that his relations to the external world constitute a very important part of that moral order of the world to which he is subject. His physical well-being is conditioned on the self-control, the forethought, the industry, and the energy which he may exhibit. For these, there are rewards; for the lack or disregard of them, there are penalties; and these rewards and penalties are so sure and inevitable, that they are obvious to even a limited experience, and no man can have any excuse for disregarding them.

IV.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION, AS RELATED TO THE MORAL SYSTEM.

The relations of man to society are numerous and complex. Society, from its very nature, must impose some restraint upon those who compose it. Unrestricted liberty of action or appropriation is impossible. The wrong-doer comes into collision with social forces, which, in the aggregate, are overwhelmingly superior to his own. In committing a social offense, in violating a law of the state, he matches his individual strength and resources against the united strength of the community. He exposes himself to the social or civil penalty, and that penalty, in the normal condition and action of society, will be in the interests of justice.

1. And here it is important to note the grounds upon which it can be claimed that the discipline and restraints of social

life are legitimately on the side of virtue. We may suppose cases where the individual comes into collision with society, in which the right is upon his side, and its triumph over him physically, or socially, or legally, would be the triumph of wrong. But these cases are exceptional. They occur only where social order is perverted, or social obligations and relations are falsely defined. The first point to be settled therefore, is, what is the moral relation of society, as organized—that is, with the mutual relations and obligations of its members defined by law or equity—to the individual? Is it such as, from the nature of society itself, as *organized*, to favor virtue and justice? The answer to this will be obvious in view of a fact, which, in itself considered, is of vast significance, and bears emphatic testimony to the existence of the moral constitution of the world. This fact is, that social organization, regarded in itself, and irrespective of its avowed objects, which may be either good or evil, is always on the side of virtue. It is not virtuous in itself, any more than the architecture of a dwelling is. It is a mechanism, which may be pronounced good or evil in proportion as it is wisely or unwisely constructed to attain its ends, but not good or evil in a moral sense. Yet, as an operative practical mechanism, it must be constructed on principles approximately just, and to some extent it must favor justice, as it aims at the common security and welfare.

2. Human society cannot be permanently maintained without organization. Individual interest or passion would soon work its dissolution or overthrow, unless subjected to some restraint. Those rules of social duty which are absolutely essential to social order, must have public and general recognition, and they must become authoritative as the law of the state. But these rules are emphatically moral. They limit violence and passion. They recognize a common good upon which no individual must be allowed to encroach.

3. But even this does not give adequate expression to that necessity by which social organization is made to represent justice. The combination of the social elements may bring together, we may suppose, nothing but what is, individually, completely selfish. Self-interest, we may freely concede, is

all that impels to combination and organization. Self-interest is that which protects and maintains the organization. And yet, if it is maintained, it is a limitation and check upon selfishness and selfish passion. It operates in the interests of justice. Each individual, looking only to his own advantage, might wish to have the exclusive privilege of plundering others, but he wants no one else to enjoy that privilege. If we consider the same thing to be true of all others, and then sum up the result, we shall find that a thousand citizens, if there are so many in the social organization, would concede the fatal privilege only to one citizen of the state, and deny it to the other nine hundred and ninety-nine. In other words, the general sentiment is as a thousand to one nearly, on the side of equal rights or public justice. So that social organization necessarily results in checking the selfishness of each by the aggregate selfishness of the state, and while no individual has any high respect for an abstract justice or the common good, his very selfishness prompts him, for his own sake, to sustain institutions which operate to check violence, and repress and punish crime.

4. But, moreover, in the construction of the social organism, the principles of equal justice must be studied and applied. Men cannot be brought to act together to a common end, except by laying aside, for the time, at least, whatever is so mutually repugnant as to repel confidence and co-operation. They must, to some extent, trust one another. They must be true and faithful to the end they have in view, so far as mutual intercourse is concerned. Their constitution, if they have one, must enjoin this. Their laws, if they have them, must punish the lack of this as criminal. Those laws, also, must recognize the rights of the members of the society. If these are questioned, they must call in justice—and substantially the same justice that our courts administer—to adjudicate them. If there are penalties, these must bear something like a just proportion to their crimes; and all this would be true, even of a band of pirates and robbers. A society thoroughly vicious, and vicious in all the mutual relations of the members that compose it, would be—among beings constituted as men are—an impossibility. It would be self-annihilating.

It would have neither frame-work or connections. Without the moral cement of confidence, and a confidence that must have its support in moral elements of character that warrant it, society would be, *ipso facto*, dissolved. It would be no more than a mere temporary aggregation of selfish sand grains, to be dispersed by the first breath of suspicion.

5. There is, then, in all social organization an absolute necessity of the recognition of justice, and of the rights of justice. No body of men could maintain permanent relations to one another without such recognition. The language of Fisher Ames, in his memorable speech on the faith of treaties, is fully warranted by the necessary laws of mutual confidence and co-operation—"If there could be a resurrection at the foot of the gallows; if the victims of public justice could live again, unite and form themselves into a society, they would find themselves constrained, however loth, to adopt the very principles of that justice by which they suffered, as the fundamental law of their state."

That this is so, is also obvious when we consider the necessary conditions of success, in case a corporation, or any body of men, conspire to nefarious ends—to plunder individuals or the state. There is inevitably an element of mutual distrust, and yet trust must be reposed somewhere. That trust will be reposed, not indiscriminately, but in that individual, if such an one can be found, who is known to keep his word, to scorn treachery, or to fear an oath. He will be elevated to the place of honor or confidence. He will be entrusted with the books, the seal, the treasures of the community; for there must be at least something that can be called "honor" even among thieves. Without this they would soon betray one another, and be dispersed by their mutual distrust.

6. We see, therefore, that social organization—no more virtuous in itself than parliamentary rules of order—is, considered simply as organization, on the side of virtue. If a band of gamblers wish to erect a magnificent structure as a den into which to entice their victims, they must yet conform to certain physical laws, in which the recognition of mathematical truth is involved. They will not allow their architect to ignore the law of gravitation, or knowingly use an incor-

rect plumb-line or a defective measure. They will not allow the multiplication-table to be falsified, so as to imbed a lie in every stone, and a geometrical iniquity in every angle, in order to harmonize their structure with the ends it is designed to subserve. And so a band of unscrupulously selfish men, in forming their compact, even though to an iniquitous end, find themselves constrained to recognize the worth of the moral elements of character, some of which, however associated with perverse principle or practice, they regard as indispensable to success. Without something to inspire a measure of confidence, they would pause helpless on the threshold of their enterprise. Indeed, the most absolutely powerless organization of which we can form any conception, would be one composed of elements so thoroughly wicked as to utterly destroy all mutual confidence. It would be palsied by its own iniquity. It would be afraid of itself. It could hope to hold together only by means of elements, in a measure, incongruous to itself. In its attempts at organization and co-operation, it pays an involuntary homage to virtue. In its final failure, its doom is oftenest the result of its own inherent vice.

7. In what has been said, the inherent weakness of vice, and the inherent strength of virtue, have been intimated. This contrast between the two runs through the whole scheme of things. We note it first in the individual himself. Here and there we meet with a character in which one over-mastering passion predominates. All the energies of body and mind are made subservient to its gratification. But usually, while one passion maintains its superiority, there are, in the evil-disposed, subordinate passions or appetites, which divide among themselves the energies of the soul. The result is that they cannot be concentrated to one end. One passion checks or limits the indulgence of another. By a keen observer of men it was once remarked of another, whose character he had critically studied, that he had been amused to watch the conflict between his ambition and his avarice. Here two passions in the same individual drew him in opposite directions, and as the inevitable result, they, in a measure, counteracted one another. This is ever the case where evil passions impel to diverse ends and gratifications.

Vice is weakened by its own discords, inseparable from it. This is true in the individual, and it is equally true in society. When men conspire for evil, each brings to the conspiracy his own peculiar selfishness. Discord, ere long, is almost inevitable. It is only the element of fear that suppresses its manifestation. If all could unite heartily, and pursue permanently the one common object, their united strength and resources might prove irresistible. But such union can rarely—we might say never—be achieved. Selfish depravities have their own separate interests. The triumph of one threatens the defeat of another, and must be defeated itself. Hence defection, counter-working, undermining, and conspiracies within conspiracies. Vice casts the stone amid the harvest host, sprung from its own dragon's-teeth, and the host melts away by mutual destruction. Many is the illustration which history affords of this truth, and every such illustration is a testimony to the inherent weakness of vice.

On the other hand, the very nature of virtue is such that it can combine and co-operate with whatsoever is virtuous, without any loss or diversion of energy. Good men can act together. The ends they have in view harmonize. The selfish, separating element is kept in the background. Each has a regard for the common good which overrides any sense of private advantage. The object to be pursued in common, can be agreed upon. It can be distinctly presented, and exhibited, without disguise or arts of concealment. There can be a thorough mutual understanding as to what it is, and in what manner it shall be pursued. There is by no means any necessary conflict in the mode of pursuing it, especially when virtue dictates the withdrawal of all selfish objections. Nor is this all. Good men can trust one another. They are not disquieted by fear of being betrayed. They have confidence in one another, and for that very reason a greater confidence in themselves, and in their own success—assured as they are of hearty and permanent mutual support. Thus it is that they can act as a unit. They can concentrate their energies. They fear no undermining, no betrayal. Strong in conscious integrity, they are strong also in the assured approval, not only of those who directly co-operate with them,

but of all good men. They have the best elements of public opinion on their side. This is enough to inspire courage, to strengthen resolve, to re-invigorate energy.

8. But the aggregate of the social force for good will be increased by individual contributions, that, instead of canceling, supplement each other. As vice is weakened by diverse passions, that can rarely harmonize, virtue is strengthened by diverse, yet ever kindred excellences of character. The ends that the good man seeks may be various; all of them may not be attainable; it may be necessary for him to make a selection; but they are not, like the ends that vice pursues, discordant and mutually prejudicial or destructive, and hence there is nothing to forbid the concentration of his powers on the attainment of his chosen objects. To their pursuit, he may devote the full strength of his being, and what he may do, other good men may do likewise. The aggregate result is such that the virtuous state finds in the union of its subjects, few elements of weakness or defection, and it may safely calculate on a measure of co-operation and support, which to vice is not merely impracticable, but impossible.

V.

MAN'S RELATIONS TO SOCIAL ORGANIZATION, AND TO SOCIETY.

Having noted the laws and forces, inherent in social organization and relations, that are arrayed on the side of justice and virtue, we have next to consider what the presumed, if not necessary, effect will be, when the individual comes into connection or collision with social order.

Passing over what we must consider abnormal in the political sphere—where, for instance, usurped power must be resisted—we direct our attention, first, to the case of the offender against civil justice. He invades his neighbor's rights. He defrauds him, or he assaults him by violence, wronging him in person or property. Here injustice is committed, and the state, by a necessity it cannot evade, must deal with it. There is no absolute certainty, perhaps,

that the criminal will be detected ; or, if detected, convicted ; or, if convicted, punished. But the presumptions are against his escape. He is one against thousands. He has made himself the enemy of all. Friends he may have, but he cannot be sure that they will not turn against him. If he temporarily escapes justice, he cannot escape his own fears. He knows that Justice is in pursuit of him. He knows that the attempt to conceal himself, or his crime, is beset with countless difficulties, and that the least clew that directs suspicion against him may awake suspicions in new quarters, or memories of old crime, till the chain of adverse testimony has all its missing links supplied.

2. In case of detection and arrest, the hope of escaping conviction may still be cherished. There are judges that pay slight regard to the claims of justice. They may be approached by bribes. They may be themselves overawed. But against all this, it must be borne in mind, that the judge does not make the law, and that, even against all his inclinations, he may be forced to state the law to the jury with an impartiality that will insure conviction. He cannot rule against the plain letter of the law. He cannot ignore precedents. His post of duty makes him a kind of finger on the dial-plate of civil justice, moved by forces independent of his will. Here, again, the result of social organization is seen in the fact that even the unscrupulous judge, by the very circumstances of his position and trust, is sometimes made to pronounce the sentence that breaks up schemes of iniquity, in the gains of which he was himself an accomplice.

3. Thus, in dealing with the criminal, all the forces of the state are legitimately arrayed against evil, and on the side of justice. The choice must be made between public insecurity on the one hand, and the impunity of the criminal on the other. This results from the constitution of society itself, and this constitution is the result of the natural order of things. It takes its place as an essential element in the moral system, and is in full co-operation with it.

4. Kindred in some respects to civil, is domestic government. In many cases, indeed, it scarcely deserves the name. Parental vice or profligacy may bequeath a curse rather than

a blessing to the household. But where this is the case, it is in violation of the legitimate scope and evident design of the family institution. The child is supposed and presumed to be in the hands of its natural guardians, who will seek its welfare, and warn it of what is harmful. To this they stand pledged by manifest duty and natural affection. But a limited sagacity and narrow experience on their part, suffice to show them that the child's welfare is identified with purity of life and virtuous habits. Unless grossly false to their trust, their example, influence and teaching will be studiously kept on the side of truthfulness, temperance and virtue. If they exercise discipline, it is to be presumed that it will be to restrain evil and mischievous propensities. If there are differences between those who are equally the objects of their affection, it is to be presumed that they will be settled, as nearly as possible, by the rules of impartial justice.

Thus, at the outset of life, when passions are developing themselves, and are unused to restraint, they are subjected to a loving and wise supervision, and the will that, if left unchecked, would become tyrannic, is subjected to a discipline that is dictated by the common interest of the household. And sometimes, where vice has made the parent its victim, natural affection comes in to shield the child. Many a parent has acquiesced in his own ruin, even while striving to rescue his offspring from the associations of evil in which he had himself become hopelessly involved. This feature of the family institution is a most eloquent testimony, not merely to the superiority of virtue, and the terrible apprehension which vice is calculated to excite, but to the fact, that even in the depth of degradation, a genuine natural affection may be found to co-operate with a virtue from which it is itself estranged.

5. Nor must we overlook the tendencies inherent in academic training, and the youthful associations it creates. The associations, competitions and rivalries of early years, are not without their moral value. Those who are brought together in sports and studies, are forced, to some extent, to adopt common moral judgments. In their dealings with one another, each act, each invasion of another's right, each generous

concession, is subjected to a verdict, though not formally given, of a jury of their peers. They are educating one another, and although often, by example, by speech, by mutual intercourse, leading to evil, yet at the same time constraining one another, in a most effective manner, to the recognition of justice and respect for what is upright, noble or true.

In the school-room the education goes on. It is not the education of books merely. Order must be observed. Merit must be conceded. Rules, that have a moral obligation as well as propriety in them, must be laid down and observed. Lessons of obedience to law, confirmatory of those of domestic discipline, must be learned; mutual relations, and with them, mutual duties, must be defined; the necessity of diligence and application must be enforced; forethought for the future must be constantly impressed, and while all this may work no reform where vice has preoccupied the ground, it must be conceded to lend all its influence, so far as it is legitimate, to the side of virtue.

6. And here we must consider what may be called the social training of the intellect, or the relation of society to man's mental constitution, taking it up in connection with the academic training of the intellect which precedes and prepares the way for it. In the school, the child is furnished with the text-book; when he leaves it, his text-book is society itself. In both cases, the training has a moral element, or, at least, is calculated to lead the mind to a recognition at once of a physical and moral order of the world. From the moment that the child learns his first letter, every step makes him familiar with law; laws of construction, laws of thought; laws of science; laws of obligation. Letters combine in words according to invariable laws. Every word takes its place in the sentence in accordance with uniform laws. The rules of grammar, the rules of correct speech, the rules of arithmetic, the rules of geometry, are the laws whose recognition conditions progress. Facts are mastered, but facts can not be left to loose aggregation. They must be classified by scientific laws, and indeed they cannot properly be mastered otherwise. Into the confused chaotic mass of fact, law must come to educe order, and create a Kosmos. The intellect is

made cognizant of this. It cannot be educated without it. It is thus familiarized with the sublime idea of the absolute supremacy and uniformity of law, and the necessity by which man, physically, intellectually and morally, is constrained to conform thereto.

7. Social influence, in the ordinary intercourse of life, is too important an element of education to be overlooked. How far it enters as an element into the moral order of the world, on the side of what is upright and humane and virtuous, it becomes us to consider. That it may be perverted, and become a powerful instrumentality for mischief, does not admit of question. As a matter of fact, this is frequently the case. In some instances, it exercises a power almost irresistible. It sweeps before it the restraints of reason, conscience, law and religion. But even in doing this, it demonstrates the concern which each individual has in public opinion and social usages, and the necessity imposed on all who would save society from wreck, to interpose in its behalf. In other words, it testifies to individual responsibility and individual duty.

But the legitimate bearing of social influence, is not to foster evil, but to restrain it. A simple fact will illustrate this. A vicious man will often shrink from exposing his own vice, to a companion whom he knows to be fully as unprincipled as himself. He will shrink, in the presence of his comrade, from committing the criminal act for which he is fully prepared when no eye sees him. But when his associates, though far from faultless, are yet more upright than himself, he stands in awe of their censure. Low as their standard of morality may be, it acts as a powerful check upon him. Even in a company of villains, the chance that some one may have an element of generosity or humanity, or a sense of justice not wholly perverted, may have more weight with the would-be criminal, than the chances that his crime, when committed, will be detected.

We see the fear—thus excited, and acting as a restraint upon evil—operating upon minds that can scarcely be reached by anything else. There are many bad men who fear nothing so much as to have their deeds published. They would keep their vice or crime out of the public prints. They would

voluntarily make great pecuniary sacrifices—virtually impose heavy taxes upon themselves—to escape publicity. Society keeps them back from evil by the terror which it inspires, and a terror that is independent of law-courts or prisons.

A fact kindred to this, illustrates the conscious weakness of vice—an illustration for which we are indebted to social influence. There are some vices that are made disreputable by society, and for that reason seek concealment. They shun observation. They screen themselves in obscurity or darkness. These vices are not made disreputable by mere social caprice. The infamy they incur is no accident: it comes about as a result of the necessary nature and constitution of society. It attaches to whatever is prejudicial to social peace, purity and security. In self-vindication, society must resent the invasion of what is vital to its well-being, and hence, not arbitrarily, but of necessity, it brands the invader with social outlawry. His defence is in concealment. There may be a consciousness of guilt producing cowardice—there often is; but it is enough that society inspires awe, or even terror, on account of what would otherwise excite scarcely a scruple. Vice is too weak, consciously weak, to face its own guilt in the presence of others.

But the reverse of this is true of virtue and virtuous action. The good man conceals his deeds only through the modesty of conscious worth. Society would hail with applause, if exhibited, what he keeps in the background. Yet its approval and praise are the proper and appropriate meed of virtuous deeds. Thus it educates and inspires to generous actions. With rarely an exception, as all will admit—without a single exception, as some would assert—the deeds which promote social well-being are morally good, or at least so far as the matter of the act is concerned. As such, they must be, and they will be, praised. The effect of such praise, from the lips of the orator, the pen of the poet, or the testimony of history, is to incite to emulation. Patriotic ardor is aroused, public spirit is kindled, generosity and sympathy are excited, and although these may not be accounted virtue in its highest sense, they are alien to all that is low and sordid, or simply vicious.

8. Thus society acts, undesignedly, and by a necessity imposed upon it by the author of nature, in the interests and on the side of virtue. Traits of character that command admiration and inspire enthusiasm, are developed by social action and influence. By their position as members of society, men who would otherwise have been hopelessly involved in the pursuit of selfish schemes, are made acquainted with certain social needs, in which moral interests are involved, and, assured that their generosity will be appreciated, they come forward to the rescue of interests that would otherwise be exposed to suffer, and enrich society and the world by their benefactions. Scores of public institutions, established in the interests of humanity, learning, good morals or religion, have been endowed by men who owe to society itself the inspiration under which they have acted.

9. Some of the most admirable deeds which history records have been performed in times, and in the face, of peril, in behalf of society. The story of patriotic devotion, which thrills us as we read, is a tribute to the moral power of social influence. When the voice of country has called to the rescue, a host has sprung forth, ready to surrender ease and wealth, or even life itself, for the common welfare; and in the presence of such devotion, the inherent baseness of vice and selfishness has been made conspicuous by the contrast. If patriotism is not a virtue, the lack of it is a vice; and when society brands the vice, it is a volunteer witness to the moral order of the world.

10. Society has its weaknesses and defects; it has difficulties to be met and problems to be solved. These difficulties and problems it puts in every man's way. To meet or solve these is an education in itself, and an education essentially moral. Sometimes the problem is simply one of want and destitution. It is to be solved by a prompt and generous charity that will feed the starving and clothe the naked. Thus it educates to charity, and the record of that charity becomes one of the brightest pages of history. Sometimes the problem to be solved is aggravated by the combination of vice as its cause, with want as its result. Here are graver questions to be met. But met they must be; and in forcing men to meet

them, society is forcing upon public attention the great fact that individual vice lies at the root of the great mass of the world's misery. Thus it stimulates intellect and sensibility at once; it sets the philanthropist to work; it sends a John Howard to European jails; it inspires a Wilberforce to become the champion of the wretched victims of the slave traffic; it sets a Romilly and a Mackintosh to the task of humanizing a barbarous code; it sends a Livingstone into the heart of unknown African wastes, as a pioneer of civilization and a champion of the oppressed; it impels thoughtful men to study the philosophy of crime, to devise remedial schemes for reaching the degraded, to set in operation plans for instructing the ignorant, and employing the idle, and recovering the vicious and the dissolute. In these, and countless other ways, it tends to diffuse information, to secure the co-operation of the good, to correct public opinion, to expose pernicious errors, and to make plain the only path along which it is possible for society to advance in steady and continuous progress. This state of things indicates that society is naturally on the side of virtue.

11. But we must note, at least, the bearing of society upon political ethics and theories. Here, then, is a problem to be solved, and society, in offering it, demands a solution. How can the liberty of the citizen be made to consist with the welfare of the state? How can individual freedom and social justice be combined? It is not too much to say that the answers that have been given to these questions, sometimes in formal constitutions, sometimes in wise statutes, and sometimes in elaborate treatises, constitute one of the most valuable departments of our literature, and furnish materials which no one can peruse without being impressed with the profound conviction, that individual integrity and public justice lie at the foundation of all stable government. It is thus, also, that the nature of vice, as radically destructive of national vigor, prosperity and well-being, is fully exposed, and it is made clear to every student of political science that the public welfare is identified with social purity and social virtue.

12. Society educates, moreover, to that sense of justice, without which it cannot itself continue to subsist. Human intercourse requires constant interchange of thought and of

commodities. It gives birth to commerce, and all the institutions of commerce and exchange. Political Economy is a social science, and there is no truth which it places in a clearer light than that the just and the expedient uniformly correspond in all human transactions. If any deed, any policy, is unjust, is false, is fraudulent, promises and does not pay, it may be presumed beforehand to be unprofitable. No fraudulent art can extract permanent gain from any measure which will not endure a moral as well as a party test. Thus society puts forward Political Economy as a witness in behalf of the moral order of the world.

But while doing this, it enforces the lessons of justice in all industrial and commercial transactions. It exhibits itself stung and wounded by everything which impairs public credit, or confidence between man and man. It forces upon the mercantile class a respect for integrity, if not integrity itself. It puts a brand upon the man that falsifies his word, that allows his note to be protested, that supplies a damaged article to the market. It insists upon inviolable truth and fidelity to every engagement. But more than this, it illustrates the absolute necessity of virtue to the prosperity and extension of commercial transactions. It exhibits to us that most curiously complex and intricate structure of commercial credit, reaching out to distant states and continents, built up, stage after stage, and story after story, on the implied fidelity of distant agents and customers, until the signature of a name, perhaps, becomes the single bolt upon the strength of which the stability of the whole structure depends. And then it shows us how this mutually dependent structure is, as a whole, dependent on public confidence, which a whisper of suspicion may shake, insomuch that it cannot stand without those moral qualities on the part of business men, which invite and justify trust. Back of all the parade of national wealth and prosperity, we must go and examine the moral element of society, if we would know whether that prosperity rests on a secure basis, or is merely a pageant.

But while scarcely apprehensive of this, or of its profound significance, men are educated to commercial truth and justice by their own experience. That truth and justice are de-

manded as the necessary conditions of success. They are demanded by those with whom they deal. Every mercantile or industrial exchange is a moral transaction. It introduces the question of right, the element of equity. It cannot take place without being watched by others, careful and interested to detect fraud. It calls for frankness, honesty, incorruptible integrity. And when we reflect how universal must be the system of exchange in a civilized community, how all-pervading is the element of mutual trust, how paralyzing and radically destructive is a blow to public confidence, we may readily perceive on what a grand scale society operates to vindicate the laws and constitution of the world which favor virtue and virtuous action.

13. If now, turning aside from the broad theatre of public life, we pay attention to the relations which spring up in more retired or obscure associations, we shall see how the social feelings are educated and trained in favor of humane and generous action. The inequalities of social life are notorious, and they are beyond the reach of remedial legislation. There must be, if not rich and poor, at least richer and poorer. There will also be the more learned and the more ignorant, the stronger and the weaker. In other words, there will always be the need and call for mutual help. Society is ever presenting to each member of it these diversities of social condition, and asking for them thoughtful consideration. And, to some extent, they must be, and indeed, are considered. The result is, that pity is awakened; sympathy is excited; forbearance is evoked. The ravages of disease; the prevalence of famine; an injury that prostrates a laborer, and robs his family of the means of support; a sudden illness that demands watchful attention and kind offices of friendship—all these, and a thousand other incidents that illustrate the relative diversities and dependencies of social life, are actually the occasions for calling forth self-denying virtues, for bringing human feelings into exercise, and for lightening the ills and calamities of life by the interposition of friendly service. Society thus becomes a school for mutual help. The hardest heart is softened by the sight of suffering which it is impelled to relieve. Public sympathy is evoked to extend com-

miseration to those that need, and public indignation is ready to denounce injustice, while it takes instinctively the part of the wronged. In this way all the gentler virtues of pity and compassion and generous self-devotion are nurtured and strengthened. Society becomes actually a school for their development, and to show how successful it has been sometimes in its training, it would only be necessary to mention a few of the familiar names which the civilized world has canonized for their self-forgetting consecration to the cause of humanity and the relief of human suffering.

14. But while we speak of social sympathy we must not overlook the fact, that it is more readily extended to the virtuous than the vicious. It is difficult to enlist it on the side of the latter. Even those who are little governed by moral principle themselves, will be backward to relieve those whose wrong-doing has challenged the hardships they suffer. There may be even a measure of satisfaction in seeing them forced to struggle with the consequences of their own vice and folly, or with calamities, not of their own procuring, which wear the aspect of just providential inflictions. On the other hand, the good man is sure of respect and sympathy from all that are good, and in the hour of calamity, he will not be left to neglect. Not merely those whom he has befriended, but, in some instances, those who have merely known him by name and reputation, will rush to his rescue, and it may be that the hour of adversity may surprise him with the assurance of friendships that he had never known or imagined.

We may thus perceive in how many and various ways, society, and social and civil organization, operate in the interest of virtue, and tend to confirm faith in the moral order of the world. In all its relations, hostile or friendly, to human character or energy, it is naturally, that is, according to its natural and necessary constitution, the ally of whatsoever is good, and the antagonist of whatsoever is vicious or socially injurious.

VI.

TIME AS A FACTOR IN THE MORAL SYSTEM.

Having considered separately the relations of man, with his complex nature, both to the material world and to society, we reach a point where we are prepared to consider these, conjointly with a new element, by which their operation is modified, and by which also the vindication of right and the exposure and punishment of wrong are promoted. This new element, which we must by no means overlook, is—Time.

Bishop Butler, in his "Analogy," draws a striking picture of the commanding position and superior advantages which, in a course of ages, would be attained by a government conducted on the strict principles of justice, and maintaining in its intercourse with other nations a reputation for incorruptible integrity. It is easy to see that its conduct and policy would inspire confidence and disarm resentment; that it would give no occasion for the formation of hostile leagues combined to assault it, through apprehension of its ambition or unscrupulous designs; that in every contest into which it might be forced, it would have the sympathy of all friends of justice; that oppressed tribes or nations would naturally resort to it for protection, and that, by its own subjects, it would be regarded with a patriotic affection, increased and strengthened by its unswerving administration of exact justice. With each succeeding age, such a nation would increase in strength, even while stationary in numbers, and its whole history would illustrate the truth of the inherent strength of virtue.

The very reverse of this would be the experience of a government conducted in disregard of the rights of its subjects, or its relative duties to other governments. It would provoke insurrections from within, and hostile combinations from without. If it indulged in unscrupulous violence, that violence would excite resentment, and invite indignant retribution. The memory of its wrong would be cherished by its victims, who would await the opportunity of revenge. It

would be accounted a dangerous neighbor—its very existence a standing menace to the existence of border states. Leagues against it would naturally be formed, and, at the same time, its own maladministration, conducted in disregard of the rights of its subjects or the common welfare, would rob it of the most reliable of all supports—the patriotic sympathy of its subjects.

This contrast is instructive, but in tracing the several results to their causes, we are led to note not only—what has been already adverted to—the inherent weakness of every vicious compact, but the marked superiority and advantage which virtue reaps from the mere lapse of time, which allows existing tendencies or causes something like a legitimate development. The good and the ill of social life may encounter one another, and in the immediate issue, the last may appear to triumph. But ere long it is found that there is something more than an immediate issue. Every day's, every hour's, delay is redressing the wrong and restoring the balance. The element of *time* works diversely as it respects virtue and vice. Let these be represented by digits, and it adds its cyphers to them, but in the one case it suffixes, and in the other it prefixes them.

1. Bishop Butler has compared the relative inferiority of virtue when confronted by the marshaled forces of evil, or gross physical strength, to that of reason when compelled to contend with wild beasts. Give reason time to devise plans and call in its resources, and it may defy the attacks of brutal rage. Taken unawares, by sudden assault, it is comparatively powerless to resist, and becomes an easy prey. But it has within itself the means of supplying this defect. So, in a somewhat analogous way, it is with virtue. In many cases an innocent man, falsely accused, needs nothing at all but time for his vindication. Time elucidates the obscure, sets facts in a clearer light, softens the bitterness of prejudice or blind passion, allows causes to work out their results, or perhaps the really guilty to make a confession that exculpates the accused.

On the other hand, vice loses by delay many of its seeming securities and advantages. It is subjected to a suspicious and

prying scrutiny. It risks the loss of the fidelity of accomplices. It is liable to exposure from most diverse and unexpected quarters. It is ever—from its own nature—making new foes. Its selfishness is not only forbidding new, but alienating old alliances.

In this, indeed, we find the relative disadvantage of vice notably illustrated. All its leagues are necessarily temporary. They cannot endure. The chances are ten thousand to one that where several parties are united in one evil scheme, they cannot permanently harmonize their several selfish policies. Give them time, and they are almost sure to fall out. A virtuous association, like a well-constructed arch, will knit itself more closely by time and its own weight. But a vicious compact, in which each aspires selfishly to be uppermost, crushes out its own foundations, and is betrayed by its own supports.

There can be no adequate explanation of this, except by adverting to those methods by which natural and social forces are made to array themselves finally on the side of truth and justice. It is time that is wanted to marshal them. They are often, simply—as we, perhaps, hastily judge—slow to act. The seed of retribution germinates tardily. It is like the seed that sleeps out the winter in its bed of frost, and gives no signs of life. Passion and prejudice must have time to subside. The excitement of the occasion must pass away, and give opportunity for a cool and calm reflection. Or it may be that the evidence of criminality, like a record written in sympathetic ink, only comes out after some peculiar exposure, before which months or years must intervene.

Thus, we see the martyrs of one age patiently waiting for the next to justify them. Criminals, great and imposing, whom their own generation did not dare to judge, are all unmasked before the tribunal of one that succeeds. The false colors of the present fade out with time. The mortar inscription to the memory of applauded wickedness, crumbles away, and leaves the granite record of truth finally exposed. Many a slander has been wiped away only when centuries have passed.

It is equally obvious that in the procedures of civil justice,

time is necessary for perfecting its work. Give the greatest possible promptitude and efficacy to the working of its machinery, and yet it can only, with the help of time, accomplish the desired result. A mistaken national policy may be prosecuted till the public opinion that condemns it has time to form. An iniquity, like the slave-trade, may outlast the generation that first assailed it, but a succeeding one will strike it the fatal blow.

It is thus that justice and virtue, *aided by time*, have vanquished the barbarisms, and cruelties, and intolerant theories and usages of earlier ages. The iceberg melts slowly as it approaches warmer latitudes, and it is time that drifts the icebergs of the past down to where they melt under the breath of the later centuries.

2. Nor is this all. Vice reveals its own proper nature oftentimes, only after what seems a tedious delay. At first, it may have youth and beauty, strength and vigor, associated with it. It may be invested with the charm of wit and cheerful spirits, and these may mask its nature, or hide its deformity. But time strips them off. When the sprightliness of youth has given place to the feebleness of age or of disease, and beauty has been succeeded by wrinkles, and gayety of spirit has been sobered by the reverses of life, or the weight of its multiplied burdens—then, at the very time when “the hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness”—vice exhibits itself as it is, inherently repulsive, nakedly deformed and disgusting. Its borrowed charms are torn from it. The fascination of its earlier associations is lost forever. The varnish of assumed respectability lingers only as a transparent cheat, like the plaster that covers an ulcer, suggesting a hideousness which it scarcely conceals. Such is the operation of time upon vice and injustice, when possessed at the start of all worldly advantages.

It is scarcely necessary to say that of virtue the reverse of all this is true. It is when all borrowed or conventional grace has vanished, when beauty of form and feature is gone, that the virtue of the good man shines forth with a grace and beauty peculiarly its own. Time, that gives the fruit its full,

ripe development, and bestows on the waving harvest its golden hue, invests the upright character with peculiar charms, making its very exhibition its commendation, so that every aspect of it pronounces its eulogy on virtue itself.

3. In calculating the effective value of the retributory tendencies and forces that we see constantly operative even now, time is a most important factor. Take it away altogether, and every vestige of retribution disappears. Continue it for a limited period—say for a score of years, or three-score years and ten—and as the period is prolonged, we witness a steady approximation toward exact justice. Some evil deeds are like seeds of a slow growth. They reach the maturity of their harvest only when most of those who witnessed their planting have passed away. More than a single generation is necessary to form concerning them a competent and exact judgment. But let the score of years be multiplied ten or a hundred fold; let vice have full opportunity to exhibit itself; let virtue outlive the envy or prejudice or reproach that belonged only to a peculiar occasion, or peculiar circumstances; let the veteran in crime be compelled, through successive centuries, to confront at once the memories and the consequences of his evil deeds; let the accumulating infamy of his baseness ever attend him till he becomes the loathing and scorn of all with whom he comes in contact; let his associates be those who have known him through his whole career, and who have seen the pliant elements of moral character harden into fixed deformity; and in such a case as this we should have data, such as we do not now possess, for estimating the retributory forces of the moral world. It is even appalling to consider what they must be in circumstances like these. Hidden wickedness would be brought to light. Moral perversity would betray its essential discord with individual happiness and social welfare. All the odium due to unprincipled selfishness would be paid to it with interest, till the facts of experience would transcend the fiction of "The Wandering Jew." We can readily suppose that in such a case existence would become a curse, and annihilation be coveted as a boon.

4. But it is when we allow these tendencies, of which we

speak, an illimitable scope, so that every deed, every evil thought, every vile passion, shall work out its legitimate results, yet with no prospect of a termination, that we are forced to feel that we have, actually in existence, and operative now, forces which need no more than time, to vindicate triumphantly the constitution of the moral world. Here the seed scarcely pushes up its germ to the light, and begins to betray its nature, before its further or full development is arrested by death or by social changes. But let it grow, and expand, and blossom, and mature its fruit, and who can doubt that under its deep shadow, blighted human hopes would so testify against it, as to visit it with full and merited reprobation. A moral nature, perverted and debased by long indulged sin, a memory stored up with all the elements that reflection can make effective for self-reproach; thoughts and fancies and imaginations that have all become steeped in vileness; passions that have run riot in reckless indulgence; affections that have been fixed on perishable objects—all these, combined with enfeebled and failing senses, to throw the soul back upon itself, may well suffice to make consciousness terrible, a kind of imperishable torture-chamber of the soul, from which there is no escape, and for which there is no alleviation.

And yet to this conclusion are we inevitably brought when we introduce into our calculation of existing tendencies, the element of duration. That element belongs legitimately to the solution of the problem. The nature of many things can be fully known only through the indefinite delay that is necessary to their complete working. Let the retributory forces of the world, with which we are familiar, and the existence of which no man can dispute, be judged of in accordance with this rule, and there will be few who will call in question the actual constitution of the moral system, as committed to the side and support of virtue and justice.

VII.

MAN'S MORAL NATURE.

If all the considerations hitherto offered in proof of the existence of a moral system could be set aside, there would still remain one which, properly weighed, would be decisive. This is the fact that man is constituted a moral agent. He is possessed of a moral nature, and by the laws of that nature he is actually subjected to moral discipline, and so subjected that it is evident that he was designed to be so.

It may, indeed, be questioned whether conscience is a distinct faculty, whether it may not be resolved into other faculties, or their combination; but there can be no question whether there is that in the nature of man which answers to what is expressed by the term conscience. If we call it a faculty, it is a faculty which asserts for itself a rightful supremacy. The tone in which it speaks is authoritative. It allows of no appeal. Other faculties or qualities of the mind speak in an advisory or persuasive tone. This is imperative. Prudence suggests that it would be well to avoid this measure, or to adopt that. Sagacity urges that such or such an issue, in given circumstances, is probable, and on this ground pleads for a policy accordant with the probability. Passion asserts preference, or resolute purpose; but conscience, in the most direct manner, says, this *must* be done, or that *must* be avoided. It makes no allowance for fear or favor, for profit or loss. It is simply authoritative, and admits no superior or rival among all its kindred faculties.

Perhaps the intuition of the poet, apprehending the facts of consciousness, throws more light on certain features of our spiritual being than the most profound investigations of the metaphysician. Certainly the testimony which is borne by our great poets to the existence and power of conscience, is surprisingly uniform and emphatic. Young, in his "Night Thoughts," asks—

"Conscience, what art thou? Thou tremendous power,
Who dost inhabit us without our leave;

And art within ourselves another self;
 A master-self, that loves to domineer,
 And treat the monarch frankly as the slave;
 How dost thou light a torch to distant deeds,
 Make the past, present, and the future frown !
 How ever and anon awakest the soul,
 As with a peal of thunder, to strange horrors
 In this long, restless dream, which idiots hug;
 Nay, wise men, flatter with the name of life !”

Shakespeare repeatedly gives us glimpses of conscience, both in its smiling and in its frowning aspects. He portrays it at one time as making “cowards of us all,” and again represents one of his characters as saying,

“I feel within me
 A peace above all earthly dignities—
 A still and quiet conscience.”

Milton, repeatedly alluding to the power of conscience, tells us, in his “Comus,”

“He that has light within his own dear breast,
 May sit in the centre and enjoy bright day;
 But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
 Benighted walks under the midday beam—
 Himself is his own dungeon.”

In his “Paradise Lost,” one of the most terrible pictures is that of Satan, exclaiming “Me miserable !” and plunged into despair, from deep to “lower deep,” when he would escape from himself; and what an apprehension of the power of conscience was required to trace these lines :

“O, conscience, into what abyss of fears
 And horrors hast thou driven me ! Out of which
 I find no way; from deep to deeper plunged !”

In some cases we are tempted to believe that, in depicting the terrors of a guilty conscience, the poet has simply photographed the facts of his own experience. If such is the case, the lines of Byron are peculiarly impressive :

“So do the dark in soul expire;
 Or live like scorpion girt by fire;
 So writhes the mind remorse hath riven:
 Unfit for earth, undoomed for heaven,
 Darkness above, despair beneath,
 Around it flame, within it death.”

Gifford, in his “*Juvenal*,” has simply reflected a thought that has poured its lurid illumination over the pages of some of the old classic tragedians:

“Trust me, no tortures which the poets feign,
 Can match the fierce, unutterable pain
 He feels, who, night and day, devoid of rest,
 Carries his own accuser in his breast.”

Nor has the importance of the inward approval of conscience, as an element of peace and happiness, been overlooked. Pope teaches us how poor is all worldly pomp or power to supply its absence, since

“More true joy Marcellus exiled feels,
 Than Cæsar, with a senate at his heels.”

The natural supremacy of conscience is sufficiently indicated by human consciousness, as well as by such citations as these, which reflect with such vividness the facts of human experience. Each man, in spite of taste, or passion, or prejudice, must confess that he is held in check by a power within him that asserts authority—a power with which his interests, as he often, though falsely, interprets them, are at feud—and yet a power from which he can never gain more than a partial release. In some cases, indeed, he goes deliberately to work to silence or suppress it; but, in the very act of doing so, he confesses how formidable it is, and how intolerant it is of the evil he loves.

But, however he may for a time seem to succeed in this effort at moral suicide, his success is at best but transient. It is more apparent than real. Conscience may be habitually disregarded. It may suffer from that intoxication of the soul

which is produced by the deliriums of exciting pleasure, or the lethargies of sensual indulgence. But in any case, the most trivial incident may serve to rouse it to an unprecedented activity. So little can its secure repose be trusted, that its seeming sleep may prove one of its most alarming attitudes. To this Young refers, when he exclaims—

“Ah, treacherous Conscience ! While she seems to sleep
 On rose and myrtle, lulled with syren song ;
 While she seems nodding o'er her charge to drop
 On headlong appetite a slackened rein,
 And give us up to license unrecalled ;
 See, from behind her secret stand,
 The sly informer minutes every fault,
 And her dread diary with horror fills.”

If we regard the constitution of man as anything else than the work of chance—supposing the word to have any meaning—we must recognize the importance of the fact that the power of conscience, or—if we choose to call it so—the moral sense, is supreme. It may be temporarily overborne by passion ; it may be studiously suppressed by methods devised in order to escape its sentence or its reproofs ; but that it may at any time resume its place and sway—that its temporary deposition may be succeeded by a terrible reactionary vigor of self-assertion—that it is the rightful sovereign of the entire conscious being—that spiritual peace and the harmony of all the powers of the soul are conditioned on its ascendancy—that when its sovereign control is suspended, all goes wrong, and man becomes a brute in his lusts or a tiger in his rage ;—all this indicates a manifest design in that relation which has been constituted between conscience and the other faculties—a design subordinating the end and scope of these faculties to the conditions of a moral system, of which conscience is the exponent.

Conceding to the conscience of man the proper place which it claims to hold as related to his whole conscious being, as well as its aims and interests, we are warranted to say that its existence is the proof of a moral system. Its sphere is co-extensive with consciousness. Its control extends to all volun-

tary action. We may consider it under several aspects, in each of which it asserts its supremacy as authoritative in the moral sphere.

1. In the first place, it forces upon the individual a sense of his responsibility. Whatever he does, or neglects to do, may be a subject of moral judgment. Conscience holds him fast under law, moral law, and if there were no civil statutes or courts, he would be none the less responsible. Conscience asserts a rule of duty, and impresses upon the soul a sense of its obligation. From this obligation there is no release. It is abiding. It is universal. It does not change with climate, nor waste away with years. From it, there is, and can be, no exemption.

2. The sphere of conscience extends to a judgment of our relations to our fellow-men. They share with us the same moral nature. They hold us responsible for our deeds, and even our thoughts, just as we do them. On this fact, the whole structure of social order and civil government is based. The ultimate appeal, that reaches after a higher and more perfect justice than that embodied in the written statute, is to that equity in which, as its vital air, conscience lives and moves and has its being. In all our social relations, we are spontaneously and inevitably applying rules and tests derived from our moral nature.

3. Conscience asserts its power in connection with the fears and hopes, the aims and the efforts of man. It makes the good man bold, and the bad man timid. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth; but the righteous is bold as a lion." It is through conscience, that guilt is made to excite apprehension. The concentration of attention and energy becomes sometimes impossible, through those inward rebukes which remind the transgressor of the real character of his acts, and fill him with anxiety not only for real, but imaginary dangers. He knows not in what direction he is secure, or rather, he knows that he is not secure in any. He is forced to feel that he stands alone, that he can have no allies upon whom he can rely, none who are not united to him solely by their selfish interests, that at any moment may come into collision with his own.

But the reverse is true of the good man. Whether he has human or unseen allies, he is confident that he has them. He knows that he has the hearty sympathy of all that appreciate his aims. The approval of conscience is sometimes equivalent to the support of an armed host. It re-assures the spirit. It dispels timidity. It inspires to do and to dare all things to which duty calls. The suggestions of fear, the doubts of success, the whispers of apprehension, are all silenced by the convictions of an approving conscience.

4. But conscience is not merely advisory. Its sphere is judicial and retributory. It is not with impunity that its rules can be transgressed. Unwritten, inaudible, unexpressed, they are recognized by the soul itself, as supreme above all considerations of ease or interest or gain. Their violation is followed by self-reproof, self-reproach, and, finally, the agony of remorse. Conscience, when in a state of merely ordinary activity, is a constant source of peace or disquietude. It is through its presence and operation that the thoughts of men are ever "accusing, or else excusing one another." But sometimes it exhibits an exceptional activity, a kind of spasmodic energy which bears down all opposition, and gives it a domineering and irresistible mastery over all the fears and hopes, the capacities and sensibilities of the soul. At such times it seems to transform a man, overpowering him with invisible terrors, palsyng his boldest resolutions, forcing him, in the face of his strongest passions, to surrender all the advantages of his crime, to expose his own shame, confess his own guilt, and even offer up, as a voluntary sacrifice, his own life. Its mandates carry with them a resistless authority. They are possessed for him of a moral omnipotence. Before them he shrinks back appalled and helpless. The great prizes of the world's ambitions count as nothing to him. He carries about with him a ceaseless accuser. He is tortured by restless forebodings. Let him go where he will, to the wilderness, to the solitary cave, to the deep darkness in search of a shelter from persecuting thoughts and accusing memories; it is all in vain. There is no shelter, no place of refuge. He cannot escape his fears. He cannot silence the terrible whisper, heard only in his own soul, of self-accusation. His state of apprehension

is such that a rustling leaf, a strange foot-fall, an echo of his own words, fills him with affright. Though reason might assure him of safety, and he might know that no minister of human justice was on his track; that not one of his fellow-beings suspected his guilt; he could not feel secure; and in repeated instances, the mere power of conscience has forced such an one to surrender himself into the hands of justice, to be executed upon his own confession.

It was the knowledge of such experience as this, undoubtedly, that led some of the ancient poets to depict as they did, the retributions of Nemesis, or the vengeance of the Furies. They understood, well enough, that in the very nature of man there are those elements out of which self-accusation evokes spectres of guilt, the tortures of remorse, or that intolerable curse of frenzied apprehension which drives its victim to suicide, in order to escape from himself.

Such is the retribution which even on earth is sometimes meted out to the guilty by the power of conscience. It forbids them sleep except in troubled dreams. It follows them behind granite walls, to the interior of palace or prison, to scenes of mirth and revel, through the street to the dwelling, from the dwelling to the grave.

On the other hand, its benedictions are as beneficent as its curse is terrible. With an approving conscience, men have smiled at torture and death. They have sweetly reposed in dungeons, have borne exile without a murmur, have actually triumphed in the surrender of all that most men hold dearest on earth. Asking no rewards, they have acquiesced in the hardest lot, have faced the gravest dangers, have risked fame and fortune, content to sink to a state of penury or scorn, or an unknown grave, if only they could carry with them the peace of their own conscience.

5. But the retributions of conscience are meted out to the guilty in the moral judgments of mankind. Even though a man's own conscience be torpid or debauched, this is not the case with the consciences of all other men. Without any formal process, they are, in a sense, his judges. They weigh his guilt; they pronounce sentence, and to some extent, they execute sentence. They put upon him the brand of reprobation.

tion, of moral outlawry. He must meet their contempt, their scorn, their averted looks, their alienated respect. This is often no light penalty. It may even prove crushing, if not fatal. Few men can endure it with equanimity. Some would flee from it to strange lands, where their iniquity is unknown.

But the experience of the good man presents a marked contrast. Beside the inward peace of an approving conscience, he is assured of the approval of his fellow-men. So far as conscience prevails with them, they will be his sympathizers, if not his eulogists. They recognize his worth. They regard him with reverence, gratitude and respect. His social relations are made more pleasant and agreeable on the very ground of a virtue which the moral sense of those around him constrains them to recognize. This certainly is of the nature of reward. It is the legitimate result of good deeds in a society constituted of moral natures.

6. It is to that element in man which is sometimes denominated conscience, and sometimes the moral sense, that we turn for the explanation of the fact that certain actions appear beautiful, while others are simply odious. In the daily experience of life there are some deeds that we admire, and some that we reprobate, and this admiration or reprobation is shared by those around us. It is not in our power, while conscience asserts its supremacy over our moral judgments, to determine capriciously in regard to our own actions, or those of our fellow-men. Some things inspire us with enthusiasm; others fill us with disgust; and we cannot, if we would, reverse the impression of their character. That which is selfish, vicious or sordid, to no purpose challenges our admiration; that which is pure, generous and virtuous, may be depreciated, but it cannot be despised. It is not our moral nature that invests these qualities with what is attractive or repulsive, but it recognizes, and must recognize the fact that they are so invested.

If any one could have any doubt on this point, he would need only to turn to those characters which figure on the pages of history or of fiction. We may find heroes of crime there, and they may challenge a sort of admiration. But on reflection we shall find that it is not the crime that excites ad-

miration, but the rare qualities—the indomitable will, the surprising sagacity, the incredible endurance, the exhaustless energy—with which it is associated. If the epic poet seeks a hero, it is one who, if an outlaw, exhibits these qualities; or higher and nobler qualities, if he ranks with the just and good. No one would think of making a Judas Iscariot or a Benedict Arnold the leading character in a work which was designed to appeal to the deepest and strongest sympathies, or the best and highest aspirations of the soul. A Dives in his purple and fine linen, and amid all the sumptuousness of his feasts, is no better than a human swine, and would rather paralyze the hand than inspire the soul of one who should attempt to draw his portrait.

It is thus that vice bears about with it a brand like the mark set upon Cain's brow, a manifest seal of reprobation, that all the resources of genius and all the skill of art can never erase. But a good deed, shining out of the rubbish of the past, fixes the admiring gaze. It excites emulation. It kindles enthusiasm. Sometimes it has an inspiring power, lifting men, as it were, out of themselves, and making them forget all selfishness, all low and sordid aims. It need not be associated with rank or station. It may have nothing external to illustrate or commend it. And yet men, void of principle themselves, will unite to do it homage. They will even build monuments to its memory. They unite in conferring upon it a fame, compared with which the blazoned achievements of mere strength or courage or animal energy are as dross to gold.

All this indicates the extent to which, in certain directions, our moral nature asserts itself against mere passion or capricious fancy. That nature compels us to recognize things as they are, to see beauty in virtue and sordidness in vice, to acknowledge the inspiring and ennobling example of the one, and the repulsive loathsomeness of the other. All voluntary actions thus come under the notice of conscience. They are right or wrong, and as such are to be approved or condemned.

7. Thus the extended connections and relations of our moral nature spread themselves over the entire constitution of things

to which man belongs. That constitution cannot be properly understood without constant reference to them. *It* is adapted to *them*, and *they* are adapted to *it*. The adjustment is mutual and all-pervading. It is in the light of such considerations as these, that we must interpret the present system of things. Of this system, the distinctive and most characteristic feature, is the moral constitution of man. This discriminates between good and evil. This makes every man responsible. This lies at the foundation of all government. This speaks authoritatively, while it also, in a measure, executes its sentences, inflicting penalty or bestowing reward. It makes man a subject of moral government, whether that government be considered as limited to the present state or not. It forces upon us those estimates of things and actions which command for virtue enthusiastic approval and admiration, and for vice hatred or scorn.

Thus, if other evidences of the existence and operation of a moral system could be set aside, the fact of man's moral nature, as it comes before us, would be all-sufficient. It alone would reflect the intention of its author. It would show that all men sustain to one another moral relations, that we must all judge and be judged, that a sense of responsibility is inseparable from our conscious activity, and that, whatever interpretation we may put upon the constitution of things to which we belong, it is framed and constructed as if with the evident design to produce the very results that must flow from a moral administration, so conducted, with a kind of deliberate forbearance, as to allow human actions to develop their proper nature, and await the slow but sure visitation of merited retribution. But when this point is reached, where we find all voluntary action possessed of moral character, and actually judged as such by the human conscience; when we see it subjected to retribution or visited by reward, independently of all civil laws or processes; when we see that no caprice of the individual or legislation of the state can set aside the laws of our moral nature, and that we must recognize these and their awards, whether we will or not;—there remains no longer a question whether a moral system exists. It exists, and it is actually exhibited before us. We see it in operation, and in-

voluntarily confess that it is a necessity flowing from the constitution of our nature.

VIII.

OBJECTIONS TO A MORAL SYSTEM CONSIDERED.

The conviction felt by thoughtful minds that a moral system *should* exist, will scarcely be questioned. Only such a system meets the instinctive demand—springing out of our moral nature—that systematic provision should be made for rewarding good and punishing evil. When we trace the career of men or nations, even if the story be merely fictitious, there is a peculiar satisfaction, when we find that the criminal is exposed and exemplarily punished, and that innocence is vindicated and justified.

Herein we discover the testimony which our own moral nature bears to the propriety of a moral system, and, we may add, to the necessity of it, if our own innate sense of justice is not to be violated by indiscriminate allotments. Our continued experience of human life develops and strengthens this conviction of the propriety of, and this demand for, a moral system. We see, sometimes with a kind of shuddering approval, illustrations of what we must admit to be a fit connection between the act, or course of acts, and its sequel. Just as, when the moral follows the fable, we give to it our hearty assent, or when listening to the parable, we accept its application as the just and true solution of a moral problem; so, our whole life long, we are coming in contact with the careers of other men, that, when followed out to the issue, have a kind of dramatic unity, and close with a fitting catastrophe. When Judas, smitten by despair and remorse, falls by his own hand—when Cæsar, the triumphant usurper, sinks under the blows of conspirators—when Napoleon ends his troublous career of ambition, an exile on the lone rock of the ocean—when the last bigot of the Stuart dynasty in England flees from the rising indignation of an outraged people, to drag out his lingering years, an ignoble dependent on a foreign court; our innate sense of justice, responding with ever increased and

strengthening conviction to the propriety of the result, is educated to demand that the same principles of retribution shall be applied universally, in other words, that they be reduced to, or embodied in, a system that shall comprehend within its sweep the whole sphere of human activity.

Now it is true that this instinctive demand for a moral system—a demand which is provoked within us at every step of experience, by every page of history, by the sight of every act, whether of right or wrong, generosity or meanness—does not prove that the system actually exists. But it does prove that such a system harmonizes with the instincts of our being—that if it does not exist, there is something wanting to our moral satisfaction which nothing else can supply, and that, supposing it to exist, we have such a mutual adjustment between our own moral nature and the sphere in which it operates, as accords with the analogies of creative wisdom—resembling, in fact, the adaptation of the eye to the light, and light to the eye, the lungs to the air, and the air to the lungs. So that almost as one might say the eye implies the existence of light, or the lungs the existence of air, so this instinctive demand of our moral nature for a systematic provision for the administration of justice, seems to imply the existence of a moral system, to which our nature itself properly belongs, and in which alone it can fitly live and breathe.

The facts that have been adduced in proof of a moral system cannot be set aside, and their cumulative force must be pronounced irresistible. But while the tendencies and forces and laws, which look to discriminating retribution of good and evil, will be admitted, it is asserted, by way of objection, that they are sometimes ineffective—that vice actually prospers—that virtue is subject to wrong and oppression—that a man's outward condition is no sure indication of his moral worth, and that society itself is full of these anomalies, which suggest only an inadequate and partial provision for the execution of justice, and leave one still in doubt whether this moral system, admitting it to exist, is not so cumbered with exceptions, as to detract very materially from the conclusiveness of the proofs of its existence.

To all this, there are several fitting replies.

1. In the first place, the very instances upon which the objection is based, may turn out in the end, when studied in all their bearings and results, to be rather the proofs of, than exceptions to, the operation of a moral system. They are cited at just that point in their progress where the process is manifestly incomplete. The wicked man is in the full enjoyment of impunity, rioting in his ill-gotten gains, while the good man is passing through the furnace of trial, and in each case the final issue is unknown. Let it become known—let it be patiently awaited—and the objector may be silenced. As a fact of actual experience, we see the carefully guarded secret of wickedness strangely betrayed. The ill-gotten gain eats the flesh of the possessor, “as it were fire.” Contempt and disgrace follow—however tardily—on the steps of false honor, and the short, splendid triumph of vice is succeeded by a reverse that derives a more impressive significance from the contrast.

On the other hand, the good man comes forth from the furnace of affliction, where he was tempted to despond, or even despair, purified by the fires of trial, illustrious by endurance, and applauded even by those who once, with sceptical indifference, cited him as an objection to the conclusive proof of a moral system. In fact, no present immunity of evil, no present oppression of justice, can properly be considered by itself, isolated and independent. It is only a link in a chain, and must be judged as such. The methods of a surprising and unanticipated retribution are practically numberless and inexhaustible. The wicked man may have obliterated the track of his guilt, and felt that he could defy pursuit. Justice may find itself baffled in the vain prosecution of a lost clew, but sometimes, long after all pursuit has been abandoned, the course of events, like an underground river emerging to the light, floats up to full view the buried evidence, and men tremble with awe before a providential vindication of justice, that has suddenly brought out of the dark background of sceptical questionings of a moral system, the blazing testimony to the sleepless justice of God.

2. The objector is met yet again by the reply that he has

no warrant to assume that he has before him, here and now, anything more than a fragment of the moral system. The presumption is that he has nothing more. He cannot assert—there is strong reason why he should not assert—that to us the entire moral system is visible. He might make a strong case, if he could prove that the only possible reward or retribution must take place on earth, but so far from being able to prove this, the presumption is all the other way. Of course, an objection that is based upon his assumption, falls to the ground. On the other hand, there is no need of *proving* an extension of the moral system beyond the visible limits of our experience. If there is nothing inconsistent with the system in *supposing* it, we are at liberty to make the supposition, and in that case the force of the objection is lost.

3. Still another reply may be made. A moral system is consistent with the possibility that other ends are to be gained by it, than an exact and immediate distribution of rewards and punishments. A moral system may include in itself a system, more or less complete, of moral government, and something else beside. It may be not only a hall of justice, but a school-room. It may be designed to develop moral character, as well as to mete out retribution to it. There is, as we shall see, the strongest presumption that this is the case. If so, it will necessarily modify the features of a moral system, and modify them in those very respects in which they will offer occasion for the objections that have been urged.

For instance, the very idea of probation implies a qualified and temporary suspension of certain processes which might be supposed essential to the perfection of moral government. The immediate infliction of penalty would exclude the opportunity to repent. Moreover, a man confronted with the certainty of immediate punishment following swift upon transgression, could scarcely be said to be in a state of trial. He would obey—if he obeyed at all—through the influence of terror, rather than from the deliberate strength of his own convictions. To allow him freedom to act and shape his own destiny, and to do it in view of conflicting considerations and inducements which he must weigh for himself, there must be

an apparent suspension of the processes of justice, precisely like what we witness in connection with this moral system, and of which the objector readily avails himself. His objection, therefore, is directed really not against the moral system itself, as a system of moral government, but at what is allied with it, and qualifies it. He objects to what is pertinent and necessary to probation, and yet he cannot assert that the anomalies which he cites as objections to the moral system, could be dispensed with, without dispensing with probation also.

4. Again, it may be replied that in many, if not all, cases where vice seems to be favored or rewarded, it is not the vice, but the energy, the industry, the sagacity, or some other natural gift or advantage, which is connected with it. A man may prosper in spite of his vice, because he possesses and exercises those natural qualities which may be said to merit or assure success. The rewards of virtue, on the one hand, and of sagacity or energy on the other, are not the same. They may properly enough be allied, but they may also be dissociated, and virtue alone may be assured of its proper reward—inward peace and public respect—and yet be compelled to forego the rewards that belong to qualities which it does not itself possess.

This distinction is noted by Pope, in his "Essay on Man." He exclaims :

" See, Falkland dies, the virtuous and the just,
See God-like Turenne prostrate in the dust;
See Sidney bleeds amid the martial strife;
Was it their virtue, or contempt of life ?"

And again :

" But sometimes virtue starves, while vice is fed:
What then? Is the reward of virtue bread?
That vice may merit, 'tis the price of toil,
The knave deserves it when he tills the soil;
The knave deserves it when he tempts the main,
Where folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.
The good man may be weak, be indolent;
Nor is his claim to plenty, but content."

The explanation of this is that the moral system is interpenetrated by, and to some extent combined with, the natural system of rewards for natural, as distinguished from moral, qualities. The laws of each operate within the same sphere, and the result naturally appears confused, unless we carefully discriminate the operation of each. Yet, just as the natural system indisputably exists, notwithstanding the industrious are sometimes cheated of the rewards of their industry, and the indolent are made possibly the heirs of fortune; notwithstanding that misfortune may be inflicted by the operation of physical laws in such a way as to deprive a man of his power to labor, or to rob him of the proper reward of his industry, so, in like manner, we say that when what may be called the natural system of rewards, with its laws, intrudes into the moral sphere, and confuses the results that follow the operation of intermingling laws, it is no ground for denying the existence of a moral system. That system is to some extent interfered with, and yet its character as a system is not lost. If we would judge it fairly upon its merits, we should note the results of actions, not as they indicate natural capacity, but as they are virtuous or vicious, and by thus separating the moral from the physical sphere, we should see how pointless and feeble are the objections against it, derived from unequal earthly allotments, due not to moral qualities, but natural capacity.

IX.

THE BEING AND CHARACTER OF THE AUTHOR OF THE MORAL SYSTEM.

If a moral system exists, has it an intelligent Author, a presiding Mind? Surely, if the argument from design is valid anywhere, it is valid here. The relation of man to his own mental and moral constitution, to society, to nature, with its laws and forces, is such that vice is reprobated and punished, and virtue favored and commended. The relation of man's moral nature to the constitution of things, in which it

finds its fitting sphere, is evidently adjusted by a nice adaptation, that seems to imply forethought and comprehensive design. Or, if we fall back upon the structure itself of man's mental and moral being, with its varied yet mutually adjusted faculties, adapting it to become the subject of moral government, our observation of it leads us to the same conclusion. There is an evident intention that man shall be made to feel that he is not at liberty to act capriciously, but must govern his course by such considerations as are suggested by the laws and conditions of a moral system, which sternly rebukes the evil, and emphatically commends the good.

Why should any man deny to this system an intelligent author? It is the simplest solution of the problem; the most natural inference from an impartial study of the subject. Is anything gained by the denial? Are the apprehensions of conscious guilt relieved by seeing and recognizing no presiding mind directing the laws and forces, the existence of which it is constrained to acknowledge? These laws and forces are ever visibly at work. Guilt cannot put itself beyond their reach. There is no line of precautionary entrenchment which they may not pass. In their operation, they are as stern and unbending as an iron will. In their reach, they are as comprehensive as Omnipresence itself. Human strength and skill are as vain to resist or evade them, as chaff in the grasp of the whirlwind. They work out their end, often silently, but steadily, surely, and as irresistibly as the fiat of an Omnipotent Ruler. They move on, passing and repassing one another—mysteriously, perhaps, to us—like the hands on the dial-plate, till the clock of Justice strikes the hour of retribution, and it is the well-studied and well-grounded confidence which they inspire, that teaches philosophy, little instructed by faith, to exclaim :

“ Truth crushed to earth will rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers.”

In any case, under the moral system as it is even now, we witness the most terrible retributions of guilt, enough certainly, if we suppose it continued and extended on, so as to

embrace the unseen future as well as the present, to inspire the gravest apprehension, to make the criminal feel that he breathes the air of retribution, and that all the elements of remorse and despairing anguish, which others have experienced, are in store for him. He certainly gains nothing by the hypothetical transfer of the control of the laws and forces of a retributive moral system, from the hands of an infinitely wise and controlling Providence, to a mysterious something, a resistless energy which he cannot define, but which he calls, perhaps, chance, fate, or "the nature of things."

Between this "nature of things," and a Supreme Mind, manifestly the choice lies. The moral system exists, and exists as it does, either by this "nature of things," or by the will and counsel of an intelligent author. Can we resolve it into the former? Is there anything in this *nature of things* that necessarily determines this moral system and man's relation to it? Is such an hypothesis tenable?

Plainly there is much which must be conceded to be necessary, and this necessity may be traced perhaps as well to the nature of things as to anything else. Two and two make four. The three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. Such is the fact, and it cannot be otherwise. But now, from the *nature of things*, it is assumed as a necessary result, that vice is attended by contempt, distrust, and other penalties or infelicities. Yet we cannot proceed far in tracing out the process by which the result is reached, before we come upon certain arrangements and conditions which cannot be predicated as necessary, on the ground of anything implied in the nature of things. The connection of a vicious disposition with a physical structure susceptible to the pain that follows vicious indulgence, is by no means necessary in such a sense that from the nature of things it could not be otherwise. The constitution of our moral nature, which fits us to be the subjects of a moral system, is by no means necessary in the same sense. There are elements that, for aught we can see, might have been omitted from our mental structure, and the omission of which would have cancelled features indispensable to that moral system which we find existing, and to which by virtue of our moral nature we belong.

Leaving, therefore, as broad a margin for the occupancy and operation of the *nature of things*, as any one can plausibly assert, there is still a broad sphere where we must recognize the presence and working of an intelligent force. The moral system, as it is, could not have been constituted without the determination and adjustment of the elements of our moral nature, and the adaptation of these to the various conditions of our existence. They must have been adapted to our physical frame and our material surroundings, to our intellectual aptitudes and capacities, to our social condition and relations; and to assume that there is anything in the *nature of things* which determines such adaptation to be *necessary*, is utterly groundless and unwarrantable. Obviously, such an assumption has no shadow of support in fact, and to admit it would, in logical consistency, require us to proceed further, even to the gross absurdity of asserting that all evidences of design in the universe, whether from a human or divine source, may be resolved into the operation of the *nature of things*. In such a case, we should, of course, deny the moral system to have an intelligent author, but we should also go much beyond this. We should logically annihilate the moral system itself, and all responsibility with it.

If we shrink from this absurd conclusion, we must admit that the moral system has an intelligent author and a presiding mind; that it is constructed and constituted in accordance, indeed, with the nature of things; yet with a variety and richness of adaptation which declare the character and purpose of the great Being with whom it originated. It is his work—after all possible concessions to the *nature of things*—as much and as really as any structure of human art—in which the various qualities of the materials to be employed are predetermined—is the work of man. To deny it to be his and credit it to the nature of things, would be as presumptuous and as groundless as to deny that any product of man's ingenuity was his, because the material he employed and its diverse properties might be ascribed to nature; because the wood or metal could be wrought only in a certain way and in certain forms, or was subject to the law that determines the strength and durability of materials.

If the moral system, then, constructed *in accordance* with the nature of things, is the work of an intelligent author, it will necessarily, when properly studied, reveal somewhat of his design, and it will serve to exhibit or illustrate his character. We may therefore investigate his character in his work, and see what attributes are involved in the design manifest in its origination, construction and administration.

1. The most striking feature, perhaps, of the moral system which we have surveyed, is the favor which it extends to virtue, and the reprobation which it inflicts upon vice. This is indeed its distinctive, characteristic feature. It is framed mainly in the interest of justice. If it should be asserted that human happiness is the main object in view—an assertion confronted often with manifest failure to attain the object—it must still be admitted that this happiness is conditioned on conformity to virtuous obligation, and that what constitutes the most prominent index of the character of the system, is, its stern repression of wrong, and its subjection of human action to the terms of inexorable law. There is no happiness, properly so called, except on these terms. This is the language of the moral system—the language of the author of that system. The one indispensable requisite is conformity to moral law. Is not this a plain indication of the justice of the author of this system?

2. But is not the system also one that indicates benevolence? True, it has stern features. It emphasizes justice. But it does not therefore exclude benevolence. Benevolence rather, in its broad sense, includes justice. We find in the moral system indeed no ground for ascribing to its author that easy indifference or unconcern which would leave men without restraint to do evil, or pass over their transgressions with impunity. Such an attribute would argue weakness and imperfection, rather than strength or excellence. It might even prove itself practically malevolent, allowing license to vice in the pursuit of imagined pleasure, till the most terrible and tremendous penalties overwhelm it. True benevolence will aim at the greatest good of all. It will punish where punishment is necessary to this end. It will never dishonor or depreciate justice, or be indifferent to moral desert.

Such benevolence is indicated in the moral system, and must be predicated of the author of that system. It is no argument, not even a presumption against it, that wickedness is sometimes overwhelmed by a terrible retribution. The exemplary chastisement may be interpreted as a necessary and even benevolent warning, contributing to the common, if not the individual's security. A hand thrust into the flame, feels the torture, and is at once withdrawn. The prompt admonition of the pain is proof of benevolent design. If it were not for the torture, a vital organ of the body might be seriously injured, or even consumed, without the victim being aware of it. So men, knowing indeed the destructive nature of vice, might persist in it, even to a fatal result, the more readily, if the transgression did not bring with it its own torture, the agony of mental remorse or physical suffering. The torture affixed to vice as its penalty is not only in the interest of virtue, but of the welfare of all observers; possibly, unless he has gone already too far, of the transgressor himself.

The general well-being is certainly dependent upon the existence of a moral system. The disposition to promote that well-being on the part of the author of that system, is evidenced by its actual introduction and administration. He is benevolent in the highest sense, when He holds out no false promise to happiness; when He plainly conditions its attainments on conformity to moral law. We may, therefore, on the ground of what this moral system implies, assert the goodness of its author. The evidence from this source is independent of, and yet in harmony with, that which is derived from the benevolent provisions of the natural world. The inward peace and self-approval which follow the performance of a good deed that makes others happy, is an incontrovertible proof that the author of the moral system desires the welfare of those subject to it. It sets the seal of His own approval on an act which diffuses happiness.

3. There is scarcely need of any elaborate exposition of the evidences which the moral system affords of the wisdom of its author. It is true, the illimitable extent of the system precludes us from doing full justice to this attribute. But even the narrow field open to us, is sufficient for its vindication.

The structure of our moral being, its adaptation to its appointed sphere, the varied provisions by which the ultimate exposure of wickedness is secured, the wonderful connection established between sin and penalty, such that, in the absence of all exterior interference, crime is made to become its own punishment in the consciousness of the wrong-doer—all these, and countless other provisions, indicate a wisdom of design and arrangement, that may possibly be paralleled, but cannot be surpassed in the material frame, or the operations of nature as distinguished from moral law.

Thus, with the moral system simply in view, we are warranted to assert unequivocally the justice, the benevolence and the wisdom of its author. These are the three leading attributes, which may be said to imply others kindred to them, and which constitute what is most essential in the divine character. But they are those in which we are most directly and personally interested. They are those, moreover, which throw the clearest light on our interpretation of man's relations to God, his duty here, and his destiny hereafter.

X.

THE FUTURE LIFE. THE NEGATIVE ARGUMENT.

The argument of Bishop Butler on the Future Life is simply negative. It is conclusive against the objector, who finds the burden of proving a positive thrown upon himself; but though it may silence his objections, it does not remove doubts. What was lacking in Butler's argument may be supplied from those results of the investigation of this moral system, which, by examining that system first, we are now prepared—as by his arrangement he was not—to use and apply.

The negative argument starts with what may be termed the postulate—that whatever now exists, it may be presumed will continue to exist, unless some sufficient cause for its ceasing to be, can be shown. The soul exists, an individual consciousness. It has already passed through successive states

and conditions, sometimes very distinct and varied, without losing its identity, and of the future experiences that await it, there is none, unless it be that which we term death, that can warrant the apprehension of its destruction. But of what death is, except in its formal aspects, we have no adequate knowledge, antecedent to experience. We only feel assured that it annihilates nothing—not a particle of matter, not an element of force. No such annihilation, by any power or change whatever, has taken place within the sphere of our knowledge in all time past. Forms of matter are dissolved, analyzed, etherealized, but never annihilated. The same is true of immaterial agents. The presumption is that all which constitutes that mysterious identity, the conscious being, will continue to exist, if death does not dissolve or disorganize it. Yet it can scarcely be argued that the change which death may be supposed to effect, can be greater than that which the soul has already undergone. The change in going out of the world can scarcely be greater than that of coming into it, and analogy itself might even suggest that death itself was but a new birth into another and higher sphere, another advance step that will open a new or broader world to disenthralled and expanded powers. This presumption derives confirmation from the facts of experience. These go to show that the mind is more or less independent of the body; that it uses it, in fact, simply as an instrument; that it may continue to exist in the full integrity of its powers while it gives, through the body, no external demonstration of it; that even when the physical frame is sinking in the weakness of dissolution, the soul, although in close connection and deepest sympathy with it, may give proof of undiminished and mature vigor, or even an unprecedented and triumphant energy.

These facts, while by no means conclusive of the point at issue, are not without weight. They are especially important, as determining the relations of the soul to the body. Evidently it is not the eye that sees, or the hand that wills to grasp, or the brain that thinks. These may be in certain conditions of existence necessary organs, but they are instrumental, precisely as a telescope is, or a lever, or the organs of articulate speech. Very considerable portions of the brain may

be removed, without affecting the mental powers. In sleep the exercise of the voluntary muscles is completely suspended, and in a swoon the activity of the mind itself is suspended, and yet the integrity of the soul itself remains unimpaired.

All this indicates a great and marked, we may say radical, distinction between the faculties of the soul and the organs of the body. They are not only not identical, but to a considerable extent, notwithstanding their close conjunction, independent of each other. The change that dissolves the body with its organs, need not necessarily disturb the identity of the Spiritual being that had made it its instrument.

Indeed, we are quite unqualified to define identity, or to show with what changes it may yet consist. Even continuous consciousness is no sufficient test. Radical changes of character will not destroy or even affect it. Much less will any physical change that takes place here and now prejudice it. If all the particles of matter of which the body is composed pass away, or change many times in the course of an ordinary life, the Spiritual being is not dependent on one or all or any portion of these particles. We can scarcely suppose that death itself, annihilating no element of matter or force, will subject spiritual identity to any more severe, or at least fatal, shock than it has experienced already.

Bishop Butler seems to admit that the conclusiveness of his argument depends upon the indivisibility and indissolubility of consciousness. To prove this indivisibility, he falls back on the arguments of his eminent predecessor, Dr. Samuel Clarke, in his controversy with Dodwell, who maintained the "Natural Mortality of the Soul." Dr. Chalmers speaks lightly of Butler's reasoning, more lightly, we may presume, than he would have done if we could suppose him thoroughly familiar with the controversy between Dodwell and Clarke. But we may safely say, that as against Dodwell, who was driven to assume the dissolubility of the soul in support of his conclusions, Clarke has not only the best of the argument, but simply overwhelms his opponent. One must prove the divisibility of consciousness, the dissolubility of the soul, as Dodwell never did, before he is qualified to assert that death can be fatal to spiritual identity. So long as, in all our inves-

tigations of the relations of soul and body, we find them sustaining respectively the characters of the originating and impelling power and the obedient instrument, we find grave difficulties in accepting the theory that thought or consciousness is the result or product of organization, and that with the disorganization of the body it must come to an end.

Such, in substance, is Bishop Butler's negative argument. It is burdened by the almost necessary collateral inference that brutes as well as men are immortal. It has perhaps some other drawbacks, but still its main and characteristic defect, is that it is simply negative. It silences the objector, but it does not satisfy the doubter.

It is at this point that we revert to those characteristics of the moral system which indicate the design and character of its author. We have seen that He is at once just, and good, and wise. Of course, we infer that what he does, or what he fails or declines to do, will be in perfect accordance with these attributes.

But before proceeding to this, which may be considered the positive argument for the future life, there are some other points which may here be considered.

1. In the first place, the circumstances of our being are such as to suggest naturally to us the thought of a life to come, as if to make it familiar, and habituate us to it. The present state of existence is limited and brief. We cannot contemplate it without noting its narrow boundaries. On either side of the three-score years and ten extends limitless duration, and the soul, gifted with the power of looking before and after, cannot fail to have its own relation to the boundless future, as well as boundless past, suggested sharply and often by the bounded present. The frequent experience of human life renews the suggestion—the fading hues of health, the decaying strength, the crumbling frame, the disease steadily encroaching on the vital powers, the prospective separation of those whom love or friendship has long united, the retrospect of many a death-broken association, and withal the countless symbols of decay and death that confront us with the changing seasons and the dying year. Nor is this all. We enter on courses of thought, on plans of study that reach

on in their proper connections and relations beyond all earthly opportunities of application; and in the enthusiasm of the mental pursuits in which we indulge, we find our restless endeavors chafing against the barriers that bound this present state, and impelling us to ask whether any or what opportunities may lie beyond.

It is true that this, in itself considered, is no *proof* of a future life; but the fact that such a life is constantly suggested by the conditions of our being, leads us to ask why it is so ordered if the present state is the soul's only sphere of effort or of hope? We cannot well harmonize it with the fitness of things, or the wisdom of a divine design, or, as Dr. Henry More has noted, with the veracity of God.

2. Moreover, we have, and are conscious of, powers, which here are at best but partially developed, and perhaps are incapable of development, unless in a broadly expanded sphere. We have capacities for a knowledge that is here beyond our eager grasp; for a happiness which eye hath not seen or ear heard; for attainments of which we can here only dream; for a conformity to, and a communion with, the Eternal Spirit, from which we are largely debarred by the limitations of our present sphere, with its material clogs and physical barriers; and the very possession of such capacities as ours, seems to warrant us in regarding them as prophetic intimations of a future to which they shall be more fully and worthily adapted. In the egg, or in the embryo before birth, there are rudimentary organs which are simply useless and answer no present end; but they are prophetic of a sphere not yet realized, in which they shall have full play—a sphere in which the eye shall behold the light, and the lungs shall breathe the air, and the wing shall soar aloft, and each once rudimentary organ shall be expanded to the full capacity of its developed powers. And why may we not regard the slumbering capacities of the soul, here developing, indeed, but never fully developed on earth, as prophecies of a future in which their largest efforts shall have full scope, and their longing aspirations attain full satisfaction.

3. Nor is this all. The world is full of what we are accustomed to regard as emblems of immortality. They are ever

before our eyes, ever at our side, ever beneath our feet. We see them in the buried germ that wears out the winter in its frozen tomb, to wake with the new spring-time to bloom and vigor; in the seed that is stored away sometimes for months, sometimes for years, sometimes for centuries, with a mysterious life folded up in it, that may at any time—if it has been preserved from damaging exposure—give evidence that its long-suspended activity has no identity with death; in the hidden root, covered up by the dying herbage and the winter's snows, and giving, for a long time, no signs of vital energy, but at length sending up the green blade or the vigorous stalk, and clothing these in bloom and beauty; in the close-packed bud that forms itself beneath the very stalk of the dying leaf, and enfolds the immortalities of future leaves and blossoms, which it guards safe beneath winter's icy coating for the fruits and harvests of months to come; in the worm that weaves about it, as with its dying energy, a kind of silken shroud, to emerge, after the long inaction, as it were, of a death-sleep, with all the gaudy beauty and the winged capacity that fit it for a sphere as strange to a worm, as an angel's sphere to us; in the *Anastasis*, or, properly interpreted, the resurrection flower of Eastern deserts, swept, withered, and almost crisped by the consuming blasts, far away from its birth-place, and yet, at the touch of moisture in its new home, unfolding its shrivelled leaves, and shooting downward its withered roots, and putting on again all its lost beauty, till it triumphs in a transformation like a resurrection from the dead.

Here we find beautiful symbols, striking analogies. Do they prove anything? By the tests of logic, nothing at all concerning man's immortality. But his sensitiveness to their suggestions does prove something. It proves that his nature is such that he grasps at these analogies, that there is a native affinity between it and a future immortal life. It is this which gives such point and force to the words of the poet—

“ Shall man be left forgotten in the dust,
 When fate, relenting, bids the flower revive ?
 Shall nature's voice, to man alone unjust,
 Bid him, though doomed to perish, hope to live ?

Is it for this fair virtue oft must strive
 With disappointment, penury and pain ?
 No ! heaven's eternal spring shall yet arrive,
 And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
 Safe through the ceaseless years of love's eternal reign."

XI.

THE FUTURE LIFE. THE POSITIVE ARGUMENT.

We have seen that the justice, goodness and wisdom of God, may be fairly inferred from the moral system of which He is the author, and we are now prepared to ask, What is the bearing of these conceded attributes upon the great question of a future life ?

We begin with what to some may appear the weakest point, the consideration of what may be inferred from the wisdom of God.

1. We assume here only that the same wisdom which has constructed the moral system, has placed man under it with reference to some designed end. From this assumption, which none can deem unwarranted, we infer that the end must be such as will justify the wisdom of the means. For unless this be so we shall have an anomaly in the moral system which dishonors its author and impeaches His wisdom, and makes Him an object of universal distrust.

Let us, then, for a moment—for argument's sake—assume that there is no future life for man—that the entire period of his conscious existence is included within the narrow span of three-score years and ten. Yet it is in him that all the schemes and provisions of this lower world center. He is the one object to which they all ultimately refer. Nature, with all her forces, with all her orders of inorganic, vegetable and animal existence, pays tribute to him, and spontaneously acknowledges him her rightful lord. Everything around him confesses its own subordination and his superiority. He speaks the word, and the answering echoes come back from the hitherto unbroken solitudes of the tropics, or the poles. He puts

out his hand, grasping only the instruments that hand has wrought, and the forests fall before him, and cities rise in the wilderness. He intrudes into the sphere of immaterial forces, summons them from their latent beds, and makes them do his bidding. The lightnings come at his call, and say "here we are." And yet all past conquests seem only the earnest and pledge of greater.

It is thus that his presence and agency gives a meaning to nature that it could never have had without him. It is for his comfort, his discipline, his development, his perfection, that nature opens her treasure-house, surrenders her secrets, presents her voluntary offerings. Take him away, and all that is left below is like the planetary system without its central sun, the ring without its jewel, the pedestal without its statue.

And yet, if three-score years and ten constitute his entire existence, constraining him, as he sums them up, to say with the old patriarch, "few and evil have the days of the years of my life been;" what fitting proportion does this result bear to the varied, countless, costly and elaborate processes by which it was brought about? Would not any fitting symbol of it seem like a satirical exposure of infinite folly, a provision so disproportioned to the issue realized, as to

"—resemble ocean into tempests tost,
To waft a feather or to drown a fly."

Should we not have before us something like a huge pyramid erected, so that on its apex there might be placed, soon to crumble to dust and insignificance, a Chinese toy, or a withering flower? Would there not be something like an elaborate drama, with a catastrophe almost trivial? Can we suppose such a scheme as a moral system—with all its multiplied provisions and adjuncts, including in it all the lavish skill of creation, all the varied contrivances and adjustments which make the soul's relations to the body, to matter, to the daily experience of life what they are—to end only in such a conclusion as warrants the sceptical contempt of those

"—who hail thee man, the creature of a day,
Spouse of the worm, and brother of the clay;

Frail as a leaf in autumn's yellow bower,
 Dust in the wind or dew upon the flower;
 A friendless slave, a child without a sire,
 Whose transient life and momentary fire
 Light to the grave his chance-created form,
 As ocean wrecks illuminate the storm;
 And when the gun's tremendous flash is o'er,
 To night and silence sink forever more?"

We may, then, confidently assert that the wisdom of God, as evinced in the existence of a moral system, seems irreconcilable with such a scheme of human existence as bounds its hopes and prospects by the grave.

2. The goodness of God, in like manner, may be made the basis of an argument for the future life. That goodness implies a kindly disposition to promote the highest well-being of the creature. It is inconsistent with the infliction of gratuitous or unnecessary suffering. It certainly cannot be credited with the design of placing man in a sphere where hope is excited, only to be disappointed, and where the very capacities of the soul become necessarily the instruments of severer torture.

And yet must not all this be imputed to the divine goodness, if man is doomed inevitably to an existence bounded by this present life? He is placed where the field of knowledge before him is absolutely limitless—where his three-score years and ten, as diligently employed as they were by a Newton, leaves him, like Newton, the conscious possessor of only a few pebbles which he has gathered on the shores of a broad ocean that invites his exploration—where all the education he can hope to attain is little more than mastering the alphabet and spelling out a few syllables from here and there a title-page of the countless volumes of the library of creation—where over his head there is a wonderful universe expanding into immensity—where, on either hand, there is an eternity which his prying thought essays in vain to explore—where the activity of his powers is fettered by the weakness and frailty of his physical frame—where free thought and soaring aspirations seem imprisoned, and, like the caged bird, are ever beating their wings against the unyielding wires or bars—and

where, the moment he recognizes his condition, he is constrained to envy the brute that may perish without the consciousness of its misery through limited existence and disappointed hope. And with what bitterness of spirit, must one that cherishes the instinctive aspirations toward an immortal destiny, which are rooted in his nature, surrender all his high hopes, and sinking to the level of the brute or the clod that shall survive him, exclaim "to corruption, 'thou art my father,' and to the worm, 'thou art my mother and my sister!'"

There can be no question that man is so constituted by Him that made him, that his nature shrinks back instinctively from the thought of annihilation. That thought repels him. It is abhorrent to his sympathies, his sensibilities and his hopes. And yet he is gifted with powers that enable him to apprehend it in all its repulsiveness, nay, which sometimes seem to compel him, even against his will, to contemplate it with a torturing intentness of gaze and a shuddering horror. At such a moment, he might well be tempted to invoke as a boon, the extinction of those superior gifts which render him conscious of a superior misery, and to exclaim with a despairing sadness, in view of the gulf of nothingness into which at the very instant he may be about to plunge—

"Cursed be the powers that but divine
What we have lost beyond recall;
The intellectual plummet-line
That sounds the depths to which we fall."

To attempt to reconcile all this with infinite goodness in the constitution of man's moral nature, is simply preposterous. The admission of that goodness carries with it, by implication, the future life.

3. And the same conclusion will follow from the admission of the divine justice. We speak of this attribute with far less hesitation or distrust than of that of goodness. Above all things, the author of this moral system is, and must be, just. But how can infinite and perfect justice be reconciled with leaving the processes of retribution, begun in this life, forever suspended by death? How can it possibly consist with such a

fragmentary and interrupted administration of a moral system as the order of this world would present, if virtue and vice, crime and innocence, have nothing to fear or hope beyond what they experience here and now? We discern laws and provisions evidently designed to operate in the vindication of justice, but they are of such a nature that sometimes vice enjoys, for a time, at least, manifest impunity, and the slow process of retribution has, perhaps, only just begun, when death snatches the criminal away from the scene. We are constrained to ask, Is this the end? Is the retributory process broken off forever?

Sometimes, in a cemetery, our eyes rest upon a broken shaft, standing among the varied monuments that affection has reared to the memory of the departed. Its significance strikes us at once. It brings up before us a life interrupted by a sudden stroke, broken off in the full vigor of manhood, and thus left, as it were, incomplete, the fragment, beautiful as far as it goes, but still only the fragment, of a perfect whole. Is there not a somewhat analogous impression made by the study of this present scheme of things, as related to the processes of perfect justice? Is it not visibly a fragment, that requires a future retribution to supplement it and make it complete? Is it not to our view, a kind of broken shaft, shooting up to a point where the mists of the future gather over it and around it, so that we cannot trace it farther? And yet does not its visible incompleteness at least suggest that if those mists were but swept away, we might still discern it shooting upward in all the full proportions of its earlier promise, till upon its rounded summit there rests the vindicating light of an eternal and perfect justice?

Or, to present the subject in another phase, are not the foundations laid in the moral system now existing, for a structure which can only be completed in a period which stretches on into the future life, and requires that life for its completion; and is not the justice of God a pledge that whatever is required in the interests of a perfect justice shall not finally be wanting? All the objections that are urged against the moral system, as now conducted, derive their force from the unequal distribution of rewards and penalties which we wit-

ness here, and even our own weak sense of justice seems to demand that somewhere and in some way these inequalities shall be provided for. Innocence, despairing of vindication at the hands of human justice, instinctively appeals to the great hereafter and to the future judge, and its faith that the Judge of the whole earth will do right, is based on the conviction that a future life will afford the desired opportunity for a rectification of the inequalities of present justice. That future life is a necessary factor in the process which alone leads to the conclusion which saves oppressed innocence from final despair.

On the ground then of the wisdom, the goodness, the justice of God, we rest the positive argument for the future life. To its cumulative force, we add Bishop Butler's negative argument, and the other considerations which have been adduced. With the preponderating probability of the validity of our conclusion, we accept the doctrine of a future life, and proceed to test its harmony with some of the recognized facts of human experience, thus securing for it a new confirmation.

1. It accords with the view which we are necessitated to take of the mutual relations of soul and body. The body is the soul's instrument, supplying it the organs by which it can take cognizance of, and come in contact with the outer world. Upon this outer world it is largely dependent for the means of knowledge, the lessons of experience, the conditions of progress and development. It is in material forms and relations that the truths with which the soul is to deal, are to be sought. They answer to abstract truths, as the lines and angles of the diagram do to the principles they are employed to demonstrate. Only by means of these material forms and relations—so far as we can see—can the soul arrive at the apprehension of the spiritual truths most vital to its well-being, and yet all the lines and angles of the diagram would be in vain if the soul had not at command the means of seeing or coming in contact with them. The body provides these means. In its young vigor its senses are fresh and vivid, and drink in knowledge and fact, using the outer world as its board of diagrams, till the soul has obtained the data for its

reflection, the basis for its practical conclusions, in a word, the means for its development and progress.

But when this point is reached, the organs that have performed their office, and furnished their quota of contribution to the soul's resources of thought and reflection, begin to give way. They have served their purpose. They have laid what tribute they could gather from the material realm at the feet of their imperial sovereign. They have earned, as it were, their discharge. Together with the body, they feel the pressure of decay, and sometimes, ere death finally sunders body and spirit, the last is so isolated, by the deaf ear and the blind eye, and the deadened feeling, that it is ready and waiting for its release, ripened and perfected for its own proper spiritual sphere.

So with the living germ of the buried seed. It sends up its stalk, with its fresh leaves, and its multiplied folds that wrap themselves about the forming ear. But ere long the freshness fades. The leaves grow sere. The husks fall apart, or wither in the sun and rustle in the breeze. The change is in the direction of decay, and seems like the steady onward march of death. Why is this? All the organs of the stalk have performed their office. They have earned their discharge. They did their duty well till it was no longer necessary—till, sheltered within the husks, there were formed the soft milky cells of the new ear, and then the hard kernel, that would remain impassive, though its husks deserted it—the kernel in which a mysterious life was folded up, that would endure when stalk and leaves have mingled with the trampled dust, and then become the germ of future, and still future harvests, till time should be no more. Is not this one of nature's parables, richly suggestive? Is not the body the stalk and leaves, and the soul the living kernel, to which it has ministered, and is not bodily decay a kind of prophecy of the future life of that germ, to whose development the body and its organs were simply subservient?

2. Again, the doctrine of a future life accords with the inferences naturally drawn from the processes of the soul's education. These processes conduct it from, and through, the material, to the spiritual. It is first the visible with which

we have to do, but the visible symbolizes or interprets to us the invisible, until finally the soul, even now, may often be said to live far more in its own ideal world, than in the realm of sense. It is, from the first, subjected to an education that is emancipating it from bondage to sense, and educating it for the invisible.

The earliest moral lessons of childhood come to it through material forms. Before it knows the meaning of words, it is gathering up the meaning of things. The process by which it rises to apprehend abstract thought, to grasp moral and spiritual truth, is by studying the relations of material forms to one another and to itself. It has to deal first with object lessons, palpably presented. It masters the alphabet, perhaps by block letters, and without knowing their ultimate use. It puts the letters together to make words, and the words to make sentences, without attaining as yet to much more than sensible images. But at length, blocks, spelling-books, grammars, are cast aside, for the mind has passed beyond the need of them, and is storing up the ideas and conceptions which they have prepared it to apprehend.

In like manner, the student of geometry has his attention first directed to diagrams, with their lines and angles. When he has mastered the problem, when he has attained the impalpable mathematical truth he was in search of, his diagrams are laid aside, his lines and angles rubbed out. But the whole after-experience of his life keeps up its analogy with that of the child. The transactions of business, converse with men, contracts and schemes of gain—all dealing with material things—are ever evolving moral lessons. The transactions are past and forgotten. The actors in them vanish from view, but the principles which they served to illustrate, and the truths of which they were exponents, are indestructible. They are treasured up in memory. They are incorporated in character. They furnish the moral imagery of the soul, and constitute its imperishable intellectual or spiritual wealth.

Thus it is that the material—when we study its significance in connection with human uses—is forever pointing away from the seen to the unseen, from itself to what it sym-

bolizes or suggests—the immaterial and mortal. With each new advance in its experience, the soul is creating for itself, by the aid of visible forms, an invisible world, in which more and more, till the senses fail or the body crumbles, it lives and moves and has its being. What is the meaning of such a training as this? Why does the line of development and progress, that begins in sense, reach on to that which reason alone can apprehend? Why, at the close of all the lessons read to us out of material forms, do we find ourselves confronted with the invisible and eternal? Is there not a manifest accord between all this, and the proper explanation of it, that the soul is created for a life above sense, and that this life awaits it, when it has been educated, by and through the material, for a spiritual sphere?

3. In like manner, it might be shown that the doctrine of a future life harmonizes with the necessities of civil justice, which requires the recognition of penalties beyond any that it can impose—with our social affections, that reluctantly surrender the hope that reaches to a reunion after all earthly vicissitudes—with the demands of conscience, that stumbles at the suggestion that the author of nature can violate rules of justice that are the axioms of social duty and political science, and, among other things, with the only possible scheme of human existence, that invests it with dignity or entitles it to respect. Such accordance lends new confirmation to nature's evidence of a future life.

Here we pause. Grant the existence of a moral system, with a presiding mind whose character it reflects, and a future life, the proper sequel to present probation, and there will still remain a broad field for investigation in the relations of natural to revealed religion. But it is enough for our present purpose to have shown that the great truths of the moral system have not appeared improbable to human reason; that, however often denied, they have been as often reasserted, and that, in all time to come, it is to be presumed that they will never lack witnesses in their behalf.

XII.

PROBATION.

ADMITTING the probability of a future life, it reflects back upon the present something of its own importance. The term of present existence is, indeed, brief. Oftentimes, also, it can show for itself little more than trifling results and disappointed hopes. It is passed for the most part in obscurity. It sometimes becomes intolerably wretched, and seems a burden to be thrown off. But, like the pedestal of a statue half buried in the earth, it derives high importance from the fact that it is the pedestal of the soul's immortality.

Is the present then a state of probation? Is man here placed upon trial, so that his future experience will depend upon, and be shaped by, his conduct here? Is he placed in such circumstances that it is largely in his own power to determine whether he shall enter upon his future state to find it a scene of blessedness, or have it forced upon him as a sequel of just but severe retribution? This is the idea which we properly attach to probation. It proves a man: It puts him to the test. It subjects him to temptation, which may be yielded to, but should be resisted.

That the present is a state of probation is rendered probable by the analogies of human experience. But before proceeding to show that this is the case, it may be noted that the proof of it will carry with it by implication an argument, additional to the considerations already presented, for the future life. As will be seen, the two doctrines of probation and the future life support one another. As the system to which we belong is constituted, we cannot conceive of the future consciousness, independent of, or unmodified by, the present; while on the other hand, if probation conducts to certain definite results, these results become insignificant and of no account, without such use of them as is possible only on the condition of a life beyond the present. In other words, the tedious processes of present trial must have some end in view, and what can that end be within the limits of probation itself?

1. But for the present assuming, on the ground of what

has already been advanced, that a future life is probable, in what relation must the present stand to it? It must be its introduction. It must give shape to it. It develops consciousness. It stores the mind with images and ideas. It creates, as it were, that ideal world in which the soul lives, and moves, and has its being. It surrounds it with the associations that form its tastes, and mold its opinions, and determine its aims. It assigns it the tasks that develop its energies, or provides it the indulgences that dissipate them. It forms those habits which cleave to the soul as a part of its being. It confirms those features of character which exhibit their firmest texture and most rigid lines as death draws on.

Now, all this cannot take place here and now, without laying the basis and shaping the prospects of that existence which succeeds the present. Here we have the title-page and preface to which the future record must correspond. The thoughts, words, and deeds of the present cast their shadow, or reflect their light, upon all that is to follow. This is, indeed, inevitable. It results from the very constitution of the soul and the laws of consciousness.

This, then, is probation. It follows from the very relation of the present to the future, which cannot but be determined by it.

2. A strong confirmatory presumption of this may be derived from what would otherwise appear anomalous and inexplicable in the Moral System. Moral system is a broader term than moral government. The latter implies an exact administration of rewards and penalties for human conduct, on the principles of strict justice, with only such delay as is necessary to judicial process. But in the actual system of things, as it has come under our eye, we have seen mysterious delays, opportunities for repentance, apparent though temporary triumphs of wrong, virtue persecuted and sorely tried. Here is something which may and does co-exist with moral government, but it modifies it by the introduction of foreign and apparently incongruous elements. If we assume that probation, for wise and sufficient reasons, is combined with moral government, the incongruity disappears. The anomaly is no longer inexplicable.

That this combination is actually made, may be proved from the facts of experience. Under a strictly administered moral government, excluding what is so obviously anomalous, probation would be an impossibility. If retribution always followed swiftly upon the evil deed,* if the prize of virtue, ever kept in view, was at once bestowed, man's condition would be reduced almost to that of mechanism. There would be simply enforced obedience. All other motives would be overshadowed and dwarfed by those of terror. Confronted ever by the majesty of justice with its armed sword, the soul would lack those conditions of experience in which alone it can be educated to strength of endurance, to patient, hopeful endeavor, and reliance upon the invisible forces of truth and justice.

But the actual Moral System is more than this. It is modified so as to allow the necessary elements of probation to come in. While all its forces and tendencies may be discovered, on close examination, to be ultimately on the side of justice, their operation is often retarded or concealed. The subject of government is also subject to trial. He is ever plied by opposing and conflicting motives, till one side or the other gains the ascendancy. If he falls by transgression, the opportunity is frequently given him to recover himself. If, persistent in virtue, he endures persecution, his very trials and afflictions are made to develop new energies of will or a new grace of character. Thus, with the assumption that the present is a probationary state, the Moral System no longer stands in need of that vindication that would otherwise be requisite, and what appeared anomalous is seen to be in harmony with it.

3. But the fact that we have around us precisely those elements which constitute the conditions of probation, has, independent of its place in connection with the Moral System, a

* "Were punishment to follow close upon the heels of transgression, and the difference between good and bad made obvious to every eye, it must totally put a stop to offense; duty would become instinct, and rectitude an object of sense. So we should have no use for habits of virtue or exercises of reason; which seem growing powers within us, destined to greater services than we can perform with them in those gloomy tabernacles and clumsy bodies we inhabit."—*Tucker's Light of Nature*, I. 631.

significance and force of its own. Men are actually put upon trial in this present life, and this trial, in its highest degree, is moral. Our present existence is pervaded by the element of probation. Our daily experiences are rife with analogies of a moral probation. Men come into being gifted with powers to be developed, and developed by trial. It is for them to say what they will make of life. All the tyranny of circumstances, and of necessities which they cannot master, does not preclude a measure of freedom which renders them largely responsible for their own acts, their own habits, their own success, or failure in life.

There is no evading the issue which is thrust upon them. They must fit themselves for their tasks. There must be attention, patience, toil, discipline of the powers and faculties, in every sphere of effort, if failure is to be avoided and success assured. Childhood and youth are a probation for an honored or dishonored, an useful or an useless manhood. Before it can appreciate its task, the child has its task assigned it. It must study and apply itself, and on that application vast results will depend. It must resist temptations to passionate indulgence, to untruth, to dishonesty, or the alternative is a character that excites distrust, and makes after life torture or tragedy.

Throughout every department of human activity, this probation is going on. It is not a matter of choice. Every art, every profession, every industrial pursuit, must be laboriously mastered, and on the patience and thoroughness with which it is mastered, success or failure, honor or shame, happiness or misery, depend. Before any one can be allowed to accept of an important trust, he must have given proof of his fitness by a probation. Before he can command confidence, he must have endured trial. Even what the world calls success—however incorrectly sometimes—has its stern conditions, and these are of the nature of probation.

Thus, to a very large extent, each one is made the arbiter of his worldly destiny. It is for himself to say what he will be, and for what sphere he will be fitted. By energy, sagacity, and perseverance, he can acquire new powers, or vastly expand faculties which he already possesses. He can open

his way to new, higher, and enlarged spheres. Upon this capacity, the whole theory of education is based. We are made familiar with its laws, till they pass as axioms. Thus the idea of probation confronts us everywhere. It is pressed upon our attention continually. From childhood onward, it is ever becoming more distinct.

4. But the manifold analogies of probation in common experience, prepare us to understand and appreciate that higher moral probation which is ever going onward in connection with each human life. Wherever questions of right or wrong are involved, and a choice is to be made, the soul is put upon trial. Wherever it is tempted to evil, whether by prospects of pleasure, or gain, or applause, the responsibility to determine its own course is thrown upon it, and it must be met. The inevitable issue is sometimes too vast for calculation or description. A mistake, through ignorance, or heedlessness, or regard for a present and transient satisfaction, often has far-reaching consequences. The whole after life is clouded by a single dark deed of youth. A course of weak indulgence in any one of many forms of vice, is followed by disease, lingering torture, premature decay, self-reproach, or the scorn and contempt of the world. And yet at the time of crisis, in the hour of sharpest temptation, there was no audible warning. The inexperienced eye discerned no cloud, betokening the approaching tornado, on the distant horizon. Months and years passed by, and it seemed as though there was, and had been, no trial, no abused probation. Only experience revealed the sad mistake.

So, where temptations to evil are resisted, there is probation, but probation endured triumphantly and utilized. Often the trial is severe. At the time, it may seem likely to cost more than can ever be repaid. But the results—confirmed habits of integrity, disciplined virtues, inward peace, character rich in all noble traits—show that there is a close and necessary connection between severe probation, well endured, and the highest rewards, even on earth, of which the mind can conceive.

We find, therefore, that just as childhood, in its relations to manhood, is probationary, so the whole of the present, as

related to future existence, appears to be probationary also. We might, indeed, anticipate this from what we know of the general scheme of things to which we belong, in which we expect to find substantial harmony and consistent analogies. If the present existence is not in keeping as probationary with this scheme of things, it is an insoluble problem, an inexplicable anomaly. We see a principle pervading the whole scheme, from the earliest moment, and in every department, up to a certain point, and that most important and momentous, to which, indeed, all else is subordinate. We see men familiarized with the idea of probation; we see it impressed upon them perpetually; we see them actually forced to accept it in every secular sphere, and yet when it comes to the most serious religious application, unless life is a probation, it is to be abandoned and rejected.

5. Such a conclusion is in the highest degree improbable. Nay, it is in conflict with everything within, and up to the limits of our experience. In our ignorance of the future, we can still see that even on earth the moral results of life, considered as a probation, outweigh all others, and that in them, all that is good or evil, blissful or miserable, is involved. These results are registered in the development or modification of the moral nature. They constitute the soul's inseparable property—what it must carry with it to the grave, and beyond. They are seen to be unspeakably precious, or simply despicable. To the man that has well-nigh completed his earthly career, all his material acquisitions must appear of small account. Fame is an empty sound. Honors are an idle show. Wealth is the merest dross, which skeleton fingers can no longer hold. The spirit's frame and character, capabilities, sensibilities, and habits, these are all in all. There has been going forward all through the years of life, a process by which this result is reached. What is this process but that of probation?

6. And has this process been going forward without a definite and well-considered end in view? Have there been varieties of acquisition, all manifestly subordinate to the education, discipline, and perfection of the spiritual nature, and yet, when this nature has reached the development which the

experience of life has given it, is this the end? Is there nothing beyond? Manifestly, a preparation has been made for something yet to come. But without a future life, what can remain? And, granting a future life, how can it but receive its impress for good or evil, for weal or woe, from the experiences of the present?

7. But here the objection meets us—why may we not conceive the entire future existence to be a probation like the present? Why should we draw a distinction between two parts of the same consciousness, the one earlier, and the other subsequent? May not probation extend throughout the soul's entire conscious existence, here and hereafter? To a certain limited extent, reasoning simply from the light of nature, we may admit that this is possible. But only to an extent exceedingly limited. The fact is, that in thousands of instances, long before death, probation is practically at an end. The great work of life for good or evil has been accomplished. Character has been molded; and change, to any material extent, is hopeless. Trial has well-nigh accomplished its complete work. The righteous will be righteous still, however assailed by temptation, and the filthy, filthy still, however plied with motives, and admonitions, and appeals to reform. The earliest period is that in which the processes of probation are most rapid and effective. In a few years they have done their work, and it is a work practically beyond recall.

8. But why, then, is death made the normal limit of probation, when probation may virtually terminate before it, or when the same consciousness is supposed to continue beyond it? The answer is, that death effects necessarily a marked change in the condition and relations of the soul, and a change which has a special bearing upon the question of a continued probation. As to the future life, we have no knowledge how far the soul shall sustain relations to material things; whether its "spiritual body," if such there be, shall have material elements, and be subjected to material laws; but, however this may be, a great change in certain relations essential to present probation, comes with death. In the present life, the soul is indebted to its union with the body for certain important elements of moral discipline. Through this

union, it is subjected to the necessity of exercising prudence and forethought. It is forced to consider how its condition will be affected by the indulgence or restraint of its passions. It has the means, also, of diverting itself from gloomy thoughts, of evading any direct confronting of its prospective destiny, while, to the last, through the opportunities secured through the bodily senses, the hope of repentance and reform still survives. But with the dissolution of the body, all this comes to an end. Probation, so far as its elements are supplied by material relations, ceases. Henceforth the soul is thrown upon itself. The prospect of spiritual change or modification, that had before been steadily diminishing, now vanishes almost, if not quite altogether.

From the several considerations that have been presented, can it be seriously disputed, whether the present is, indeed, a state of probation for a future life?

9. At this point the question may pertinently be asked, why is man placed in a state of probation? Why is he not so constituted by original creation, as to enter at once upon the spiritual and final sphere of perfect purity and perfect happiness?

In respect to this it may be said that, whatever the answer that may be given, it does not change or cancel the fact of Probation, in which we are most deeply and personally concerned. It is with the fact that we have to deal, rather than with the reasons for the fact. These reasons—some of them, at least—may be, and doubtless are, beyond the reach of our present faculties. Our probation may have connections with other worlds, or other parts of the divine administration, of which we know nothing, and yet these connections, if once understood, might contribute greatly to explain it.

But leaving uninvestigated what lies beyond or above the sphere of our present powers, we can see obvious reasons why man should be placed in a state of probation. If there is a future sphere which he is to occupy, and for which he needs to be prepared, the preparation must be previously acquired, and it might naturally be supposed to require peculiar conditions; in other words, a state of probation. This state is necessary in order to acquire the requisite experience,

tastes, and habits. It will scarcely be said that these might have been created with the soul itself. Holy beings might doubtless be created, but their holiness would not be the holiness that has been wrought out and perfected through trial—the holiness that is fitted to do its work, and struggle through adverse influences to final triumph. The virtue that has been wrought out through probation, is that which is fortified and strengthened by memories and experiences of the past; by the consciousness of successful endurance; by the practiced and ready mastery of the resources at its command. Here are elements that from the nature of the case, cannot be *created*. The facts of memory must be realities. On these experience must be based, and without them it is itself a delusion, which can no more be created a reality than falsehood can be made truth by the fiat of Omnipotence. Only through probation can *that* holiness or virtue be attained, which seems to possess an intrinsic and effective superiority over everything that is merely connate, born, or created with us.

10. Again, probation, when successfully endured, gives strength to character and firmness to virtue. It expands and develops the moral nature, knits together and compacts its energies, and fits it for responsible position and enlarged usefulness. We are familiar with its operation in the experiences of common life. The pilot that will grasp the helm with a firm hand and carry the vessel through the storm safe into port, is the one who has learned by hard experience to shun the rocks and buffet the blast. The man who can stand firm and self-reliant in the shock of public calamity, or under the pressure of fearful responsibility, is the one who has already learned to bear his own burdens, and to shrink from no issue to which duty may challenge.

It is in virtue of their antecedent probation that these men are what they are. Probation develops the latent powers, disciplines, and educates, and perfects them. And, in like manner, it is that probation operates upon the moral and spiritual nature.

11. Again, if the future is a social state, the security of its peace and happiness will be dependent largely on the mutual confidence of those that share it. They must know one an-

other, and so know others as to be assured of their firm loyalty to truth and duty. But how can the elementary basis of such confidence be possible, unless those who are called upon to exercise mutual confidence, have the evidence that there has been a probation, successfully endured, a probation which has evinced unspotted integrity and unswerving loyalty to truth? The conditions of future blessedness in a social state seem to require absolutely an antecedent probation.

There are other reasons which might be adduced, if necessary, to vindicate the wisdom of making the present state one of probation. If only through its union with the body, the soul can come in contact with the moral truths that are evolved out of material relations and connections, it is difficult to see how this is possible without constituting something of the nature of probation. Nor could responsibility be brought home to the soul, unless the burden of foreseeing and providing for itself were thrown upon it, and it were made to feel that its destiny was largely in its own hands. No other conceivable state of things in which man could be placed here, seems to address him in tones and language so adapted to his nature, as probation. It summons him to self-consciousness; to the recognition of his exposure through temptation; to duty; to effort; to all the compliances with virtue and the demands of self-denial which his own conscience enforces, or his future and final blessedness implies.

XIII.

SEVERITY OF PRESENT TRIAL.

THE severity of the trial to which vast numbers of the human race are subjected, very properly demands our attention in connection with the subject of probation. Why it is made thus severe is an inquiry to which perhaps no fully satisfactory answer can be given. But when it is urged against a moral system proceeding from a beneficent author, it must be met.

Properly, however, we have to do with the fact, rather than the reasons for it. The fact must be admitted. The trial to which the integrity and moral capacities of men are subjected, is often greater than they can—or at least, actually do—sustain. The result is, the defeat of the great end for which probation is supposed to be instituted. Multitudes are found too weak, or too morally debilitated, to endure the stress of temptation to which they are subjected. They yield to it, and become moral wrecks.

Indeed, in some cases, there can hardly be said to be such a thing as probation. The result is apparently predetermined, by natural constitution, by early associations, by circumstances over which the victims of them have comparatively slight control. Some, from their very birth, seem fatally doomed. Their first breath is drawn in a poisoned atmosphere, and they are made the slaves of vice, before they know the nature of their bondage. Every step they take carries them deeper into that abyss of vile habits and depraved indulgence from which, except by some almost miraculous interposition, they have no hope of escape. The tragic close of their earthly career, with its foreshadowings of a fearful hereafter, is united to its depraved original, by what seem indissoluble links. Why is such a state of things, under the name of probation, permitted?

1. To this it may be answered, in the first place, that this extreme severity of trial does not necessarily pertain to the original scheme of probation. It has been engrafted on it by human perversity. The social depravity which so intensifies it, is a gratuitous and not a necessary element. Take out of the world all the evil influences that flow from corrupting association, from vile example, from the contagious license of bad men; in a word, remove from probation just what human wickedness, in violation of the laws of the moral system, has introduced into it, and who does not see how different an aspect it would present, how its harshest features would disappear, how its seemingly cruel severity would vanish. We cannot make the Author of the moral system responsible for what has been introduced into it, in spite of His warnings and threatenings.

2. The simple fact that the severity of trial is often greatly aggravated by parental crime or neglect—a fact which is indisputable—when viewed in its various bearings, conducts us to certain important conclusions. Resulting from the constitution of things, it interprets that constitution. It shows how original iniquity may bequeath its curse. It admonishes the parent, through his affections, to beware lest by his own sin, he visit others with exposure to trial too severe to be endured. It suggests the power of that aggregate social influence, made up, so to speak, of individual depravities, which is practically irresistible, but which is simply the perversion of energies for good, and which would be found such in the right and proper use of social relations. Let these be what all confess that they ought to be, and probation loses that terrific aspect which it sometimes wears. The prospect of it becomes rather assuring than desperate. Place a youth at school or college among a certain class of associates, and he *may* be more secure against the formation of dissipated habits, than within the circle of his own home. Temptation is shorn of its sudden, overmastering power, and probation is tempered to a point where it scarcely excites a fear or apprehension of the result.

If, then, we may suppose—and we have a right to the theory for purposes of explanation, so long as it cannot be disproved—that through perverted social influences, probation has been aggravated—that this perversion is due to the voluntary transgressions of men for which they are distinctly responsible—that uniform, upright action on the part of one entire generation would be the almost assured salvation of the next—that the very force of transmitted influence, now so powerful to curse, might have been equally powerful to bless, that if all had heeded the admonitions of reason and conscience, those powers of the soul which are legitimately supreme and authoritative within it, would have had universal prevalence—so that what now renders probation harsh, would have contributed to lighten it in a high degree—if we are at liberty to suppose all this, which seems, however, to be established on clear evidence, no fault can be imputed to the Author of the constitution of things that probation is so severe. The result is due to the fact that the constitution of things has been

perverted by the debasement of man's moral nature, a debasement voluntarily incurred, and for which voluntary action, cumulating its force for evil through successive generations, must be held primarily responsible.

3. Thus there is evidence, as Bishop Butler has remarked, that man is a degenerate being. He is not now what he was as originally created. He has in his make, moral elements that are rightfully sovereign, but they have been forced to give way to passion, and wherever the degeneracy began, at the first, the tenth, or the hundredth link in the chain—though its universality would lead us to impute it to the first—the result would necessarily answer to what we witness in actual experience.

The mischief, so far as the severity of probation is concerned, is two-fold. The victim of temptation may be morally debilitated by transmitted traits or tendencies, and at the same time, he may be confronted by an array of influences and associations that intensify temptation, and arm it with fearful power. But all this serves not as a ground for impeaching the justice, goodness, or wisdom of the Author of that constitution of things under which we exist, but rather for exposing that heedlessness, which, in contempt of the law of transmitted tendencies or sensibilities, ventures to introduce into the moral system, new elements at once of aggravated trial and consequent woe. It is not for man to arraign the wisdom of the conditions of probation to which he is subjected, but rather to correct the mistakes of the past, and lighten the burden which must otherwise fall upon those who follow him.

4. Again, this severity, by being allowed, is calculated to impress upon the individual his personal responsibility for social corruption. He sees that by contributing to it, by acquiescing in it, or by making feeble or no effort to remove it, he is really an accomplice in the guilt that multiplies its victims. If this conviction were allowed to produce its legitimate effect, it would prove a most salutary warning; would tend to put under arrest those many activities for evil which are rooted in social vice.

5. Moreover, it may be asserted that there is no absolute necessity that the power of temptation should prevail. The

conscience of the transgressor rebukes him for his base surrender to its influence. He feels and acknowledges the obligation to resist and endure, even while he violates it, and though others may justify him, he condemns himself.

6. To this it may be added that in some instances at least, those whose condition under trial seemed the hardest and most desperate, have been recovered, and have triumphed in the end. This shows what is possible under a moral system like ours, not left without extraordinary instrumentalities, to rescue the exposed, and restore the lost. It forbids us, barely on the ground of severity of probation, to despair of any.

7. But again, experience attests that, as a general rule, the excellence of the results of probation, will be proportioned—up to a certain point—to its intensity. If a man's virtue is not overcome by temptation, the confirmation and strength of it in the issue, will be proportioned to the severity of the temptation. If he has resisted again and again the bribes of pleasure; if he has stood firm in his integrity when that integrity was assailed by all the threats or allurements of power or gain; if he has unwaveringly adhered to his convictions, when those convictions were made the subject of scoff and ridicule, his real worth comes forth out of the furnace of trial, like gold "seven times purified." When the struggle is over, and the triumph achieved, he looks back exultant and thankful for what he was called to pass through, nor would he consent that one feather's weight should have been abated from his burden, or one blow less have been required to win the victor's prize. Having run the greatest risks, he acquiesces in the goodness and wisdom by which they were permitted, if not ordered.

8. It is the severity of probation to which we owe the great achievements that have lighted up the dim memories or dark panorama of past ages. Their struggles and endurance have been heroic, and it is from the background of their hardship, their almost desperate wrestlings with difficulty and danger, that the triumph of good men shines forth with its inspiring record. By persevering fidelity to their convictions, they transformed reproach into honor, and won the applause of men not prone to sympathize or admire. There is nothing which so

enkindles in us a lofty and generous enthusiasm for excellence, as the spectacle of their heroism and its reward, and the broad desert tracts of history, impoverished by the ravages of almost universal selfishness, grow rich once more when sprinkled over with these diamond fields that shine with the illuminating examples of the good, the true and the brave.

9. But it may be asked, how can the severity of actual probation, so great as to result in the ruin of multitudes, be made to consist with divine benevolence? Remitting to another chapter a more comprehensive answer to this and similar objections, we may yet reply here that it is, first of all, incumbent upon those who bring this objection, to be sure that they have correct conceptions of divine benevolence. Mere good nature is not benevolence. No more is weak indulgence, or indifference to moral distinctions. It is not true benevolence that would grant every wish, and avert all that is contrary to the most common ideals of what constitutes happiness. It is better for youth to be disciplined, than left without any check or restraint against which the propensities may chafe. True benevolence would not shrink from imposing that discipline. Moreover, benevolence, allied with omniscience, would take into view the ultimate and most enduring blessedness. If that can be reached only by trial, it will impose trial. If that requires that the nature of wrong-doing be exposed and rebuked by its legitimate results, it will bring about that exposure. If it implies a comprehensive and general regard to universal well-being, it will never sacrifice the whole to a part, the community to the individual. It will not suffer the latter to escape through pity, while allowing his impunity to seduce others with the vain hope of escaping themselves.

But the benevolence which some would impute to God, as that with which present probation is inconsistent, must be considered rather a weakness and a defect. It is irresolute, too weak to enforce justice, too weak to inflict penalty. It cannot sustain government. It cannot crush rebellion. It cannot protect the whole at the expense of the guilty. With such a benevolence, probation, even of the weakest kind, is indeed inconsistent; but with such benevolence on the throne, there might as well be no throne. It would be itself—as re-

lated to the universal welfare—weakness, inefficiency, and even injustice.

10. But objections to the reason of a fact do not change the fact. That at least, with all its significance, still abides. Probation, within our narrow sphere of observation, is sometimes fearfully severe. It begins in light or even trivial things. It proceeds unnoted. It is characterized by falls and mistakes that produce perhaps no immediately calamitous result. But in the end we see it assume the most sad and tragic phase. The veteran gambler cursing himself for his folly, and expiring in an atmosphere of crime and pollution—the drunkard driven on by the tyrannous force of his vile habits to that point where fatal delirium closes upon him the door of hope—the victim of debauchery parading before the world all that is odious in bloated features and forms of suffering or disease for which medical art knows no remedy—the miserly being whose habitual selfishness has alienated his last friend, and whose profession of repentance would be accounted the new crime of hypocrisy—these men, and scores or even thousands of others, illustrate a fact almost too notorious to need illustration—that there is a point even on earth, beyond which the attempt to arrest the results of a perverted probation, is perfectly vain. The penalty is seen to be a final one. Repentance cannot recall the past. Regrets cannot arrest the retributory process. Excuses and apologies find no acceptance. Retribution, stern and pitiless, steadily marches on, and crushes the victim of sin, like a worm beneath its heel.

11. On the other hand, a well-spent probation secures rewards even on earth, which are, in a sense, infinite—so far do they surpass any assignable standard of human conception, so far do they transcend any material or sensual enjoyment.

And all this comes within the bounds of three-score years and ten. If this be so, and if it consists with the actual justice of God, who can say when the results of a probation perverted on earth, can ever find an end? If the soul continues to exist, it continues with its old being, its old habits, its confirmed tastes. If it made itself once an outcast, self-excluded from life and hope, when and how is its exile to terminate? How is a disease that takes possession of the soul itself, to be

met and remedied? There is little light on this dark point in human analogies. Probation in its results, looks to a blessedness that is changeless, or to a wretchedness that can know no relief.

XIV.

RETRIBUTION.

ADMITTING the force of those considerations which lead us to conclude that the present state of existence is one of probation, it naturally follows that the future, as the appropriate sequel of probation, will be one of retribution. Indeed, in our study of the Moral System we discerned those evidences of a disposition on the part of its author to see justice done, virtue rewarded and vice punished, which seemed clearly to warrant the inference, that the unequal allotments of the present will be rectified hereafter. We discerned what created a strong presumption that perfect and exact justice shall triumph in the end, and that it is intended that it shall triumph. But this is possible only as the future is made a state of retribution.

1. But, though we may be at liberty, we are not *compelled* to suppose in this case, the introduction of any new or unprecedented methods for securing the result. There are laws and forces now at work, which need only to be released from the restrictions which impede their full operation, or hold their tendencies in check, to secure a complete and exact retribution for the deeds of this life. We are not warranted, indeed, in saying that there will not be devised and applied something beside these, some positive retributory element that will more summarily effect the end in view.

But leaving this, as a matter upon which reason can urge nothing more than suggestions, we are led to consider what machinery of distributive justice, now at work, must hereafter—if left free to act—render the future life one of retribution.

2. And as to this machinery of distributive justice, now at work, we have seen that it pervades and largely constitutes, the entire Moral System. The tendencies of things even now, are to an exact retribution. There are some special provisions in the constitution of man's complex being, indicative of retributory design. The passions and volitions of the soul not merely disturb its own repose, but derange the order of the physical frame. Bodily suffering and disease are the result of moral transgression. We can see no necessity in the nature of the case that it should be so. But so it is, and this fact must be ascribed to the Author of man's constitution. In like manner the hereditary curse of transgression operates in such a way as to show that the principle of retribution is indissolubly involved in the established order of things. The iniquity of the parent is, as a matter of fact, visited upon his children. There is a penalty of his transgression which is not inflicted sometimes until he has passed away. It is in some sense a posthumous retribution, whether he is tortured by the foreboding of it, or not. Thus a machinery of retribution is inwoven with the structure of man's being. Penalty reaches him—whether inflicted by his own perversity, by the resentments of those he has wronged, or by civil justice—through the connection of his soul with its physical frame. Here we have plain intimations of design, harmonizing with other intimations in the moral and social sphere.

From the moment an offence is committed, the forces, whose proper scope is to visit it with its just penalty, begin to operate. The conscience of the transgressor protests and rebukes. The angry elements of social provocation, of indignation, or contempt, or retaliation, begin to gather. Distrust is produced, or even abhorrence, sundering the transgressor from the sphere of social confidence and sympathy, and leaving him outlawed or proscribed, to depend as he may, on the poor resources of what has been purchased by his wrong. Even if civil justice does not interfere, and social resentments are not awakened, the moral nature seems to take upon itself the administration of penalty, and sometimes we are made to feel that a man of selfish schemes and worldly success, exhibits in the height of success, those evidences of restlessness, appre-

hension, self-reproach, or possibly self-contempt, which make him supremely wretched amid all his wealth and honors. His wretchedness may be written legibly upon his features. Or, if the offence is secret, the course of things is such as to tend to bring it to light. Sometimes conscience, unless its power has been deadened by a long course of wrong-doing, will not allow the guilty man to keep his own secret. His looks will betray it. He will excite suspicion by his excessive precaution to keep it safe. Sometimes he will mutter it aloud in his dreams. Sometimes it will become such an incubus upon his consciousness, that he will be forced to disburden himself of it even by voluntary confession.

3. But if he is able to guard against self-betrayal, time will ever be threatening to bring it to light. If he had accomplices, their diverse interests may impel them to sell out the guilty secret, or turn State's evidence. The consequences of the crime may be gradually revealing themselves, and, like a track of blood, indicating the locality, or motives, or peculiar circumstances with which its commission is to be associated. Some tell-tale instrument or memorial of the crime may, even after long delay, be discovered, and give new emphasis to the old adage—which demands a broad interpretation, and is endorsed by popular experience and acceptance—that “murder will out.”

Indeed, the modes in which secret crime is brought to light, are practically infinite. If that crime is a mystery, the very fact that it is so, challenges human curiosity to expose it, and a thousand eyes watch for, and a thousand hands are ready to grasp, the clue of discovery. The spark of suspicion is blown to a blaze of exposure. Somewhere, there is an unexplained fact, a missing weapon, an unaccountable absence, a suspicious flush of money, a stain of blood. It may be that after the lapse even of years, the current of evidence that has been flowing like an underground river, suddenly breaks out in full volume to the light. It is thus that time itself turns against the culprit, and to the last hour of life tortures him with apprehension of the exposure that may come at any moment.

4. Nor is this all. The course of things even now tends

not only to the detection, but the punishment of crime. In innumerable instances, the good man fails of his reward, and the bad man evades penalty, because the natural tendencies of things are arrested by what is evidently disturbing and anomalous in the Moral System. The good man's aims or deeds are misunderstood or misrepresented, and he is robbed—not of self-approval, which is inseparable from an upright conscience—but of the praise and honor, or public reward which his conduct merits. So the wicked man is sheltered by his own plausible apology; or by an accidental relationship or compact with men in power; or by the interests of a party or society which he has served, and brought under obligation to himself.

But all such interferences with the natural course of things are manifestly temporary, and cannot permanently be maintained. Sooner or later, they must come to an end, and the supremacy of those tendencies which favor justice, will—if time is allowed them to operate—assert itself. If we could suppose the lives of the good and bad continued on here indefinitely, without the introduction of any new forces or arrangements other than what would be thus implied, we yet might feel confident that the exceptions to distributive justice which now occur, and attract attention, would be vastly diminished, if they did not disappear altogether. As has already been remarked, if a career of seventy years were extended to ten times that number, it would be next to impossible that the accumulating forces of retribution should not overtake it. If, in the course of a few score years, the moral nature of the transgressor, by the perverting influences of wrong-doing, becomes such as to be a torture and burden to him, and if in that period the indignation and contempt, or vengeance which his fraud, or violence, or inhumanity have provoked, begins to recoil with terrible and crushing weight upon himself, what would be the result when these scores were changed to hundreds or thousands, and the hatefulness of inveterate depravity, stripped of all the decorations or palliations of its hideousness, which the charms of youth or the enterprise of manhood had thrown about it, stood forth, in its naked deformity, isolated from all social sympathy, and in its

hardened perversity, proof against all the kindly essays that might be made for its reform! Indeed, we are not surprised that, even on earth, guilt sometimes seeks relief in suicide, shrinking from the desperate effort to bear up under the oppressive consciousness of its own shame or difficulties, even for the near term of natural life as constituted now.

5. It will thus be seen that a simple extension of probation would go far to ensure retribution. Life often seems to terminate, like a premature season, before the harvest of virtue or vice is fully ripe. A few days more in one case, a few years more in the other, might reveal results which would indicate what the matured harvest must be. Frequently, before goodness can attain to the majestic beauty of its normal development, and before wickedness can mature to its shriveled hideousness and present itself in its true aspect to the world, the process of probation, having reached its practical conclusion, is cut short, and men see, only in the bud, as it were, the foreshadowing of what by its exhibition might seem the blessedness of a holy, or the hideousness of an infernal sphere.

6. There can be no reason why this result should not manifest itself in a future life, unless with the dissolution of the bodily frame, the action of certain laws by which it is brought about is suspended. The assumption that things can go on permanently there as they do here, so that justice may be evaded, or inequalities and mistakes remain uncorrected, is gratuitous. Even here, there would be, with time, a steady approximation to justice, until finally the retribution was complete. But in the future life, we have no warrant to suppose that the action of any laws bearing upon this result will be suspended, or cease to act, with the exception of those which make the body, through its sensibilities, the victim of sin. We must assume that all others will remain as they are. Reason will still discriminate. Memory will retain her treasures. Conscience will judge, and approve or condemn. All the elements of mental experience will abide unchanged, and if, as we have reason to believe, the future state shall be social, all the elements of harmonious and pure friendship, on the one hand, and all those of discordant passions and jealousies on

the other, will act with a force that may become more vastly effective, when released from the incubus of connection with such a material frame as sometimes burdens the spirit now.

7. Let it not be said that this would greatly reduce the fearfulness of retribution; that by the withdrawal of physical sensibility the main grounds for apprehension or foreboding would be removed. We are not warranted to assert this. We cannot say what new condition of things might supervene, and more than offset the physical sufferings occasioned by vice. But it should be borne in mind, that even now, the keenest anguish of guilt, the torture that drives to desperation, that makes all physical suffering light in comparison, is not anything which is derived from nervous sensibility, or the constitution of the body. It is rather the anguish of the soul, the agony of conscious self-accusation, the burning sense of self-reproach, of remorse, of incipient despair. It springs from the consciousness of inexcusable wrong-doing. It is aggravated by the sense of wilful self-alienation from all that is good. The soul becomes its own accuser. It loathes and despises itself. It feels itself everywhere repelled, without a friend from whom it would receive help among the good, without an ally it can trust among the abandoned and the lost.

This is what is sometimes witnessed on earth. What reason can be urged that all this, and whatever more might accompany quickened and disencumbered emotional sensibilities, may not attend the soul to the future that follows a wasted probation? Without borrowing the language of revelation to describe it, reason might pronounce it the torture that burns on downward and deeper, with the forever extinguishable taper of the soul's existence.

8. Of the continuance of the future retribution, reason can only speak from the light of analogy. It will continue while its causes continue; and what prospect there may be of their arrest, may be inferred from the difficulty of arresting them now. Even his manifestly impending doom will not deter the drunkard from the indulgence of his appetite. The terrible risks of infamy and bitter penalty will not stay the criminal in his desperation. With the full knowledge of what they challenge, men defy the operation of all natural, social,

moral, and divine restraints. They plunge into the gulf that visibly opens before them. The motives that should have paralyzed them at their first step in wrong-doing, lose something of their terror at each successive step, till at length they are scarcely felt. Even when overtaken by the fate they have rashly and willfully invited, their repentance is often rather the regret that the law should be vindicated at their expense, than any genuine sorrow for their transgression. In heart they are still unchanged, and they bear with them still the same elements of passionate insubordination, of reckless self-indulgence, of defiant contempt for virtue and its restraints.

Of course, in such circumstances, recovery or deliverance from the power of habitual motives, that have long asserted indisputable supremacy, is practically hopeless. We cannot see where or how the process of retribution can be arrested by any of the causes by which it has been brought about. It threatens a duration commensurate with the soul's existence.

9. If now we turn to the rewards of virtue, we can readily see how its entrance upon the future life may be to it the era of final and complete triumph, over all that it once had to struggle with or to fear. It passes from imprisonment and subjection to physical conditions, to spiritual freedom, leaving behind it not only pain, and disease, and the various ills incident to the physical struggle for existence, but the sphere of temptation to which the soul was susceptible through its union with the body, and through which it was subject to perpetual harassment and assault. It may reap now in full measure the fruits of inward peace and outward beneficence. There is nothing to disturb a composure which is grounded on enlightened self-approval and the consciousness of pure and holy aims. It is no longer inextricably involved, through physical relations, in associations from which it revolts, and if it may have access to its own chosen companionships, and give and take what help they may lend to the aspirations of goodness and virtue, it may, perhaps, be said that it has attained to the full and perfect measure of a gracious reward.

10. We may conclude, therefore, that as the present is a state of probation, the future must be one of retribution. The seed is sown here for a harvest there. Upon the con-

science a course of guilt must accumulate a burden of self-reproach, permanently crushing. Habits of thought, feeling, and character, formed now, will then have become so rigid, that any prospect of change is hopeless, and in these necessarily abide the elements of a misery as permanent as the depraved affections or tastes in which it originates. Reason can discern no remedial provision in suffering endured, so long as kindred suffering, no matter how intense on earth, is seen to effect no radical or permanent reform.

XV.

INVALIDITY OF OBJECTIONS TO THE MORAL SYSTEM.

IN the study of a field so vast and complex as that presented by the Moral System, difficulties are inevitable. These difficulties, however, are not so much in the facts, as in the reasons for the facts. Sometimes they consist in our inability to harmonize the facts with our preconceived notions, and might be removed if these notions were so connected or modified, as to accord with the truth.

1. But sometimes the difficulty is simply in the inadequacy of our powers to the problem we essay to solve. Such objections as meet us in vindicating human freedom and responsibility, in setting forth in a world of sin and death, the goodness of God, in harmonizing this goodness with the severity of probation, and in other kindred problems, can sometimes best be met by considering how inadequate are all our powers to comprehend even the conditions of the problem to be solved.

2. With certain obvious facts within the sphere of our experience, we are, to some extent, familiar. But we know that there must be an infinite number of facts beyond the sphere of our observation, the distinct interpretation of which may be to us, circumstanced as we are, impossible. There may be connected relations between the facts we do know, and those we do not know, which must be studied and understood before we can assume to be competent critics. But if

it were possible for all the facts and relations to be known, it would still be impossible for a finite mind to grasp them in all their number and complexity. For we must ever bear in mind, when it is asked of any provision, any arrangement, any particular feature of a general system, why it has been constituted as it is, that to render a full and satisfactory answer, we may possibly need to apprehend it in the various relations which it bears to the entire system, as well as the several parts of the system to which it belongs. Some un-noted fact, some far-reaching consequence, some incidental result, might furnish us the key to the mystery, and resolve into light what was utterly inexplicable before.

3. And no one can question that human probation may be such a feature of God's universal Moral System, that we should be justified in criticising certain aspects of it, only when we had comprehended the system itself in its various parts, and as a symmetrical and combined whole. As it is, we are incompetent to draw any line which we can assert to be the boundary beyond which the influence of a specific fact, law, tendency, or provision does not extend. As there is not a particle of matter in the universe, that does not, through the all-pervading principle of gravitation, exert its influence on every other particle, in every other world, however remote; so in the moral frame, which is alike universal and infinite, we are not warranted to say that there is an event, or influence, or provision that stands isolated, and can be judged by itself alone. It would be unjust to judge the whole by the seeming defects of a part, when the correct apprehension of that whole would bring the ostensibly obnoxious part into harmony with all the rest, and restore to it all the symmetry of its relative proportions.

4. If the universe is the work of a single mind, if it is characterized by unity of design, if it stretches beyond the measure of our thought, above and around us, into limitless space and boundless eternity, then does it constitute a scheme so vast, that none but an infinite mind is competent to pass a final judgment upon even a single feature of it in all its possible relations. The sphere of our observation is narrow. Our faculties to observe and discern are feeble. The light of

reason or of nature, by which we see, is dim, while any fragment of the vast system may sustain manifold relations, both to the known and to the unknown, of which we are able to form no adequate conception, possibly no conception at all. Our limited sphere and limited powers impress upon us the lesson of humility. He that, from the standpoint of this atom-globe, and this inch of duration that we call time, should attempt to pass judgment on some minute portion or fragment of the universal Moral System, would exhibit only a practical analogy to the microscopic insect, that after tedious efforts, emerging to the surface from some cave-like interstice of a minute pebble in a block of stone, deep buried in the foundations of a structure like Solomon's temple, or St. Peter's at Rome, should presume to criticise it on the basis of such information as his observation could gather up in that secluded nook, where sand-grains become Alps and Andes to bound his vision, and shut out the very possibility of any comprehensive conception of the magnificent whole.

5. So there are even mechanisms, wrought by human skill, which appear inconceivably intricate. They are constructed wheel upon wheel in successive ranks, so that there may be found some among them that seem useless, or that apparently do not move at all. If now, upon one of these there should be discovered a seemingly unsightly projection, how might the superficial and hasty critic expatiate on its uselessness, and condemn the folly of the constructor! And yet it is not only possible, but it is very strongly to be presumed, that the time will come in the operation of that vast mechanism, when not only every wheel will move in its proper time and place, but when that unsightly projection will, in some most exemplary manner, vindicate the wisdom of its insertion, and justify the profound sagacity of the, perhaps, unknown builder.

But it is easy to see that even such an illustration as this is utterly inadequate to set forth our relation to a system so infinitely complex, so inconceivably vast, as that universal Moral System of which our own sphere might appear to our enlarged vision only as an outlying, minute province. Our questionings of why and wherefore, when we stumble upon

the investigation of what the great Maker has ordered ; when we ask, for instance, why probation has been made so severe, or why some retributions seem so final, as well as terrible ; may find the fitting rebuke for the presumption that they sometimes involve, in that awful silence with which the stars look down on our globe, as they sweep past it in their orbits, and eternity swallows up our dead centuries, like drops in its illimitable ocean.

6. The simple fact, beyond which we cannot pass, and which forms an insuperable barrier to our presumptuous criticism, is that this Moral System, though a fragment considered in itself, can be no detached fragment, isolated from the mighty scheme of the universe to which it belongs. By itself it has never been comprehended by human reason, ever forced to shrink back repulsed and baffled when it has undertaken its exposition. How much less, then, can it be understood in all its countless relations to the universal scheme itself ! And how shall that scheme be so comprehended that we shall feel ourselves competent to define its bearings upon earthly probation and sublunary interests !

We find, moreover—and this is to be specially noted as a presumption against hasty objections—that, on investigation, the objections which are urged against certain arrangements in the constitution of the material universe, are seen to be often quite groundless. Plagues have ravaged the world, and men have regarded them as inconsistent with the divine benevolence. But when we trace them to their origin, we find them resulting from violations of the laws of nature, while the lessons they so terribly impress are of permanent benefit to the race. Broad deserts stretch over portions of the globe, and this has seemed like waste or blunder in the scheme of the world's construction. Yet it is now held that the vast African Sahara heats the winds that sweep over the Mediterranean, and bear to Europe the warmth and moisture that make it habitable and productive. Storms interrupt the peaceful order of nature, and torrents desolate the fields, yet they purify the air, and water the earth. The trees of the forest grow slowly, and wear out the centuries, in spite of man's importunity for the timber they produce ; yet if

trees grew in a day, or the order of nature were disturbed to meet human emergencies, who could count upon that stability of things on which we ground our confidence, and our provisions for the future?

7. In the sphere of Probation and of the Moral System, the difficulties that meet us are manifold. The sins of the parent are visited upon his offspring. But who can say that the repeal of that provision which ensures this result, would not be an overwhelming calamity in robbing ancestral piety of one of its most cheering rewards, as well as breaking down the restraints which hold in check the reckless impulses of the profligate parent? The seeming impunity of notorious criminals, up to the moment when their sudden doom overtakes them, seems inexplicable. But who can say that the final vengeance, more signal for the delay, or the trial of faith thereby occasioned to the good, may not be more than an offset? The continued existence of whole tribes and nations that curse themselves and the world, century after century, by their turbulence and vice, may appear an insoluble problem. But can we regard it as such, when a regenerated race, tens of thousands of years hence, shall look back at the terrible spectacle, and, warned themselves to practical wisdom, shall at once recognize and adore the long-suffering and the justice of God?

8. The planets took their name—wanderers—from the apparent irregularity of their movements. Yet they move in their orbits with a mathematical precision. Are we warranted to say that the seemingly abnormal features of the Moral System are not in like manner reducible to the terms of universal law, both wise and just? Of two sculptors employed to make a statue for a pedestal, one produces what, seen by itself, appears an incomparable work of art, while the master-piece of the other seems disproportioned, rough, and uncouth. Yet it may be that, when severally placed on the pedestal, the first shall appear dwarfed and misplaced; while the other shall challenge the warmest praise as exactly adapted to the position it is to occupy. So we may sketch out our ideal of a more perfect constitution of the Moral System, producing what, if practically applied, would be a pigmy or

a monstrosity, while yet we may fall into the mistake of criticising the work of the Infinite artist, which, placed on its proper pedestal, will justly challenge the admiration and applause of the whole intelligent universe.

XVI.

THE END DESIGNED IN THE MORAL SYSTEM.

ASSUMING, as we are now warranted to do, that a moral constitution of things exists, and that the origin and order of it must be ascribed to a Supreme Intelligence, it will follow necessarily that this Supreme Intelligence has a design to be accomplished, in reference to man in connection with the peculiar discipline to which he is subjected, and the order of things to which he belongs.

1. If there is manifest design discoverable both in the constitution of nature and of man, and in their mutual adaptations, it is proper to inquire what this design is, and what is the end evidently contemplated in man's creation and probation.

Here we recur to what has been said already as to the uniform and concurrent testimony of all the revelations of science as to the position occupied by man in the order of nature. The relations in which he stands to the entire material and animal creation, show that it is, and was meant to be, tributary to him. The flower is beautiful and fragrant in itself, but not for itself. It is man alone that enjoys it. For him the earth yields its fruits. For him, too, the animal creation, brought into subjection by his superior reason, lives and dies. The bird may be happy in its own song, but it warbles for the ear of man. The beast may excel in its strength, but it is the genius of man that utilizes it. He is gifted with powers that are denied their proper sphere, when they are not allowed to control the forces of nature within certain limits, and to retain the mastery over them. Without him, the visible creation would be like a pedestal without its statue—like a house with-

out an inhabitant. To know the divine design we must study the statue. We must investigate something more than the brick and mortar of the building.

2. Design is manifest throughout nature. It is evidenced in the moral system; but it culminates in man. Without him, all the marvellous arrangements and adjustments of the material world, with its beauties and its grandeurs, are but the exquisite frame waiting for its portrait. Yet the portrait must be worthy of the frame. The nature, capacity and rich endowments of the human soul are such that by proper molding and discipline, it may supply such a portrait. Here then is the end, plainly kept in view throughout the whole scheme to which it belongs. This end is to make man as perfect as his nature will allow; so to develop and educate his being as to make the best that can be made of it; expanding his powers, and harmonizing them in a willing subjection to the highest—that is, the moral—law of his being, so that he shall be seen to justify the wisdom lavished in providing his rich endowments and his favored lot.

This is no groundless assumption. We have here the visible and invisible, but by no means obscure, mechanism of probation, operating constantly upon human life and character. Studying its results, we find them various. They range from the line of admiration to that of contempt. There is the high and the low, the beautiful and the base, with all the intermediate gradations. By which of these shall we proceed to judge of the end in view for which a Moral System was established, and probation ordained?

3. In studying any human mechanism, to find out what kind of thing it was meant to produce, we do not interpret it by its manifest failures, or its imperfect results, unless these are invariably uniform, and do not admit of improvement. We do not accept a defective and imperfect casting as authorizing us to set forth the molder's design; but we select that which is most perfect, that which comes nearest to the full standard of the mold. So under this divine constitution of things, we infer the design of the author, not from those results which bear evidence of being abnormal, through unfavorable circumstances, or through the perversity of human

will, but from those which seem most worthy of the lavish expenditure and wonderful provisions of the Great Designer.

What are these? Evidently the best possible development and structure of life and character attainable under the terms of a probationary Moral System. What this is, does not admit of question or doubt. Just as readily as we can distinguish the metal from the dross, the diamond from the mass of gravel or earth in which it is imbedded, or the wheat from the chaff in which it is buried, so readily can we distinguish the triumphs of probation from its failures. When temptation prevails over virtuous aims, we see what we instinctively pronounce odious or contemptible; but when temptation simply tries, tests, and confirms that devotion to righteousness which it has failed to subdue, we witness a result, compared with which beauty of feature, sprightliness of genius, or bare intellectual symmetry lose their charm. There is nothing more beautiful than a pure and noble life; nothing more repulsive than the dregs of a probation that has sunk to the level of selfish or sensual vice.

To argue a point like this, is like attempting to prove an axiom. It appeals for its truth to the universal intuitions of the race. The end in view in the constitution of the Moral System is to produce the perfection of human life and character; all, and more than all, which the old philosophers meant by the phrase, "living according to nature." "Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report"—all go to constitute, in their measure, that perfect ideal—often suggested, yet never but once realized on earth—which may be pronounced the most complete type of humanity, the faultless result of probation.

4. It matters not to our argument that the attainment of this is so rare—that it constitutes the exception rather than the rule. A mechanism that produces but a single perfect fabric out of a thousand, reveals in that, more than in all the others, its own, and its author's design. Nor is the world so poor in virtue, that out of its schools of trial, hardship, self-denial, or temptation, it has not sometime produced lofty characters, great and good men, who need no other eulogium than the simple narrative of what they were and did. In

them, even while they often humble themselves as consciously imperfect, we recognize elements wrought out evidently in accordance with the divine scheme of probation, which show what it was meant to produce.

5. But in this moral development and perfection of the individual, a scheme that extends to the whole race is implied; a scheme that would conduct each successive generation to even higher positions, in progress toward perfection. The race, as well as the individual, is subject to probation, and no reason for the discipline of one can be offered, which does not apply to all. The mere suggestion of the steady or persistent advancement of the race, as the normal result of this present scheme of things, carries its commendation, if not the assurance of its truthfulness with it. There is a peculiar fascination in the thought that at each new step of human experience, the new lessons learned shall help the race onward, till, in its progress, it has left behind it all its dross, and become refined to bear more and more perfectly "the image of the heavenly."

With such considerations, then, in our favor, how can we but conclude, on strongly probable grounds, that the moral system is not only constituted with an end in view, but that this end is the perfection of the individual soul, and, through it, the progressive regeneration of the race? Or, rather, how can we reach any other conclusion? Is there anything to shake this, or to render it improbable?

6. It may be said, perhaps, that man is doomed to toil, and that his physical necessities chain him to tasks which leave no room for intellectual development and moral progress. To sustain physical life and energy, he must therefore be a drudge. But is this true? Does such a necessity exist? There are, doubtless, cases where it seems to be so, but in most of them there has been some original mistake committed; or society itself, failing to improve its opportunities, has become degenerate and corrupt, and so stands in the way. But there is nothing in the original scheme of things which requires this. By proper forethought and industry, one may make all suitable provision for the body, and yet have time and opportunity left for moral training and discipline.

But more than this, toil itself and the necessity of it may be made tributary to moral ends. The active energies are developed and strengthened by it. Man comes in contact with physical nature, to learn the conditions of success; to find his path of experience strewn with emblems of moral truth; to discover that what a man soweth, that shall he also reap; to understand that what is worth striving for, demands effort. Meanwhile, the necessity of toil wards off the danger that flows from the vices which idleness engenders. It impels to the study of the laws of nature, to devising means for taking advantage of them, to recognize rights of labor, rights of exchange, mutual obligation and the measure of it, inso-much that even before we have fully explored its sphere, reaching on to social arrangements and relations, we find that toil itself lies directly in the line of moral training and moral progress. So far from being an objection to the truth of the theory that man's proper end, according to his Maker's design, is moral perfection, it rather tends to confirm that truth.

7. Is it said that the history of the race gives no encouragement to hope that a scheme for man's moral perfection can be realized, or that a study of the past concludes against its possibility in the future? It is, indeed, a sad truth, that where such a scheme has been cherished by some lofty and enthusiastic minds, they have often been doomed to disappointment. Their cherished plans have been wrecked upon the rock of human depravity, and often they have been compelled to surrender their task in despair. Thus, for long periods, we see little progress made toward the desired result; or, it may be, temporary progress is succeeded by reaction and degeneracy. The eye rests on gloomy tracts of history, ages of darkness and debasement, of violence and lust, of effete civilizations, and crumbling or dissolved empires. The impression which such a survey, apparently, is calculated to make is one of utter despondency as to the possibility of any brighter future.

Yet, a conclusion of this kind is not altogether just or warranted. We see, on closer observation, something beside repeated failure and the collapse of effort. Out of the very ruins of these there are springing up, like verdure from

decay, hopes of better things. There are irrepressible outbursts of reforming energy; aspirations after an unreachèd, but imperishable ideal; actual attainments, however partial or transient, that challenge admiration; possibilities and even actualities of virtue, which inspire a renewed enthusiasm, and give assurance that the scheme for the moral perfection of the race is not altogether a mere romantic dream. It is not too high or distant for human contemplation. It is repeatedly suggested. It lies directly in the pathway of our serious thought, and when once recognized, it is found often to possess a charm that fascinates the soul.

Still more, all the failures and disappointments of the past do not bring about its final abandonment. Thoughtful minds, wrought upon by humane affections, refuse to relinquish it. Reformers are springing up—often in little sympathy with the methods prescribed by revelation—who are bound, under some modified phase, to revive the scheme of the moral perfectibility of the race. It cannot be buried so deep as to be beyond the hope of resurrection. Can we believe that a scheme that is so forced upon our attention, that is made so familiar to human minds, is strange and alien to the divine thought? If the moral system is established for a designed end, what can that end be other than what has been designated?

8. But has there not been some actual progress, however feeble or intermittent, toward this end? Has all the past been uniformly disappointment and defeat? Has it exhibited nothing but the collapse of exhausted effort? Far from it. Some things have been achieved of permanent value. Names have been gained for the record of virtue that the world "will not willingly let die." Examples have been held up for imitation that are worthy of it, and that have been an educating power for after-generations. Laws have been made more just, usages more humane, and social and national morality has been elaborated in codes that have gained widening recognition. Even history, with all its dreary wastes, will not, when rightly read, tolerate the theory that the world is unprogressive, that through all the past there has been no permanent gain, and that the human race must ever keep to

its tread-mill task, never advancing, though ever toiling. There has been actual progress, and progress in moral as well as other respects. The old pagan civilizations have perished, but something better has succeeded them. As the rubbish of the Roman empire decayed, the germs of Christianity sprang up through it. Europe felt the powers of a new life. It put by its old barbarisms; it adopted new usages; it submitted to culture; until now it presents itself at many points in contrast, intellectually and morally, with what it was a few centuries ago.

9. It is not necessary here to inquire into the causes of this progress. It is immaterial to the present argument whether it has been brought out exclusively by the ordinary operations of human energies, or by these impelled or supplemented by divine interpositions. If the latter are recognized, the whole matter in question is conceded, and we see the end to which a Divine Providence is visibly working. If it be denied, yet Christianity must take its place as a resultant in some way of natural forces that find their original in the Author of the moral system, and thus enters as a component and distinctive element in the divine scheme.

Thus, we must concede that there has been actual progress, however limited or unsatisfactory, toward what reason suggests as the end for which the moral system was constructed. We find no facts in human experience or history in conflict with the theory. We infer, inasmuch as no plausible rival theory has been or can be suggested, that this theory must be true. And yet, if true, we are forced to admit that human progress has been very slow, and that the end in view is, as yet, far short of attainment.

10. In these circumstances, what are we warranted to anticipate as the course of divine procedure? Here is a moral system, complexly constructed, a system, too, of probation, calculated to discipline and educate a race, and the obvious end in view—the only conceivable one worthy of the Great Author of the system—is the moral and spiritual perfection of the race. That object is but partially attained. In some way—we are not required to state how—human perversity has come in to frustrate its general attainment.

Looked at, so far as the broad, comprehensive end in view is concerned, the moral system appears to be a failure. Taking the past together, the scene is a dismal one. We see the result of probation apparently calamitous to the great and overwhelming majority. Ten fall where one stands fast. Impurity and vice and selfish greed are the rule; their opposites the exception. Such has been the process that has been going on for thousands of years, and during these years there have been periods when the prospect of anything better was utterly hopeless, when it seemed as if—conceding the end in view in the divine design to be what we have found it—nothing remained but the frank confession that it had been utterly and hopelessly defeated, and that the prolonged continuance of the moral system would be only the allowance of continued degeneracy, a steady relapse from bad to worse.

11. Why, then, has it been continued? Evidently because it is not, even yet, and is not meant to be, a complete failure. Its continued existence is the strongest presumption, if not proof, that it has an end to subserve. We cannot, we dare not, impute to its Author an utter indifference to what looks like a deliberate, cherished plan, elaborately constructed and continued on for centuries upon centuries. We cannot reconcile its abandonment with wise and far-reaching design.

There is a manifest and strong *a priori* presumption that, at some point, where an interposition becomes necessary, in order that the end in view may not be utterly frustrated, such interposition will take place. Let us suppose—and the supposition is simple historical fact—that, after the lapse of a long period, it had become increasingly manifest that the race, instead of advancing toward perfection, is obviously degenerating and becoming more corrupt; that it is darkening the little light it had; that, in its highest artistic culture, it is yet going more and more astray; might we not presume that by some interposition, through natural or supernatural means, this retrograde movement would be arrested, and this tendency, in some measure at least, counteracted?

But this supposition does not come up fully to the facts of history. What are these? The Apostle Paul has concisely summed them up in a single sentence—“The world by wis-

dom knew not God." At the very height, and in all the splendor of its intellectual attainments, it was, and remained, morally debased. That in the streets of Athens, the "eye of Greece," there should stand "an altar to the unknown God;" that the wisest of heathen teachers should humbly confess his own ignorance and inability to solve the problem of man's destiny, and bid his inquiring friends to wait for a teacher from heaven; that in the writings of Plato, Cicero, Seneca, and Epictetus, where we meet with sentences that seem almost instinct with a divine wisdom, and indicate a profound study of natural law, we should find conjoined with them doubts about fundamental truths, or false maxims in morals, reminding us at once of the greatness and weakness, the nobleness and the degradation of the loftiest intellects; that these should, by silence at least, implicitly indorse gross superstitions and idolatries; that, after having excited wonder and admiration by their genius, they should vanish like meteors, and leave no permanent light, but only the memory of their transient blaze; that, on their disappearance, the race should resume again its career of degeneracy—that can scarcely be said to have been arrested by them—and that the course of speculation should turn back upon itself, and sink in the decrepitude of age at the cradle of a blind superstitious faith from which it sprung; that, meanwhile, vice and violence, crude religious notions, and barbarous rites should resume their sway—all these things, repeated again and again, in some measure, in human experience—prove the incapacity of man, without aids beyond his own reason, to attain a permanent moral elevation, to make real and absolute progress, or to elaborate any ethical or religious system which could solve the problem of his destiny, disperse his doubts, calm his fears, inspire his hopes, or give lasting peace to his soul.

12. If this is our conclusion from a survey of the condition of people intellectually most favored—teachers of after-ages in eloquence and art—what shall we say of the case of less privileged nations? How pitiable seems their state, whether of intellectual helplessness or moral perversity? Are the generations that are interminably to follow them to be left to grope their way in darkness, and no provision to be made for

their relief? If the great end of a moral system is not abandoned, shall there be no manifest effort or interposition to revive the possibility and prospect of a brighter future for the race? Are these ages of moral weakness, ignorance, and degradation to be perpetuated? Can we imagine an Infinite Mind, the Author of the moral system, framing it for the specific end of perfecting man in moral excellence, and elevating the race to a recognition of its near relation to Himself, comprehending at the same time fully the difficulties occasioned by human perversity, and the hopelessness of unaided reason to grapple with them, thus measuring at a glance the whole problem, and discerning how near His own plan approaches to final defeat—can we imagine such a Being indifferent to the result, continuing the race, after all sufficient reasons for its continuance have ceased, and leaving it with utter unconcern to abide as the monument of His defeated designs?

This is, indeed, incredible. We must anticipate powerful interposition of some kind. We must look for some divine rectification of the manifest evil, the introduction of some method to arrest the tendencies and forces that threaten the final defeat of a great design.

XVII.

DIVINE INTERPOSITION ACTUAL OR PROBABLE.

It may be said, perhaps, that we have had as yet so sufficient evidence of human degeneracy, inasmuch as the moral starting-point of the race may have been so low and degraded, that its subsequent career indicates marked and absolute, as well as relative, progress. Assuming this to be a fact, it may be argued that, with sufficient time and opportunity, the grand design of man's creation may be attained by his own proper resources, directed by sagacity and the accumulated wisdom of the past.

1. If this be the view proposed, it can be met only by the

evidence of facts. Putting sacred history aside, that our investigations may be unbiased by what assumes the point at issue, we inquire, What are the facts? Amid the obscurity that covers the earlier history of the race, and the long periods that intervene before the human record becomes distinct and reliable, we must often grope our way and accept surmises and probabilities as approximations to the truth. Yet there are very strong indications that the moral and religious starting-point of the human race was far different from that of a debased feticism or idol-worship.

The study of the comparative history of the religions of the most ancient nations with which we are acquainted, indicates a progressive debasement of the religious ideal with which they started. We are not, perhaps, fully warranted to assert that they all derived, by inheritance from a common original, that approximately pure Theism of which we find them possessed at a very early period. Yet there can be no question that several of them did possess a Theism which embodied the main truths of Natural Theology, associated and incorporated with which were views of the character, attributes, and providence of God, which well accord with the simplicity and spirituality of a religious worship that had not as yet degenerated into idolatry, or into those grosser forms of polytheism which subsequently prevailed.

2. Among the Chinese, for instance, we find what good scholars have regarded as conclusive evidence that they possessed at a very early date—more than a thousand years before the Christian era—a knowledge of the One God, which was subsequently lost. While civilization and the arts progressed, religious knowledge and purity as steadily declined, till to later generations the language in which their ancestors spoke of God conveyed no adequate meaning. Of Egypt, we know that it was early famed for wisdom; that a supreme Deity, the Judge of the dead, was recognized by those who reared its earliest monuments, and left their religious thought pictured on walls or sculptured on pillars. The unity of the Supreme God and the immortality of the soul were fundamental points of the Egyptian creed at the earliest period of which any decisive trace survives, and this “Supreme God of Egypt

was, indeed, such as Jamblicus has described Him—ONE, self-existent, eternal, and the Creator of all that is.” In the case of India, Assyria, Persia—and of Greece also, if the facts asserted as to the Dodonean cultus can be maintained—we find the earliest worship the purest, as if nearest to the fountain-head of truth; and with the progress of ages, we see it transformed, encumbered, and overlaid with idolatries and superstitions that almost disguise its identity.

3. We may account as we please for this singular fact. But whatever theory we adopt, the conclusion is substantially the same. If we assume an original revelation, the common inheritance of all these ancient nations, and suppose this revelation to have conferred upon them the knowledge of the One Supreme God, and kindred truths, we find “that where they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things”—the manifest proof of a steady and sad degeneracy, which no form or exercise of reason was sufficient to arrest. The only marked instance of its arrest is the case of the Jewish nation, and all will concede that only by peculiar institutions and peculiar teaching—not philosophical, but religious, and which they uniformly credited to divine and supernatural origin—was this arrest affected.

If, on the other hand, we assume that this early Theism was reasoned out; that, independent of the traditional wisdom of ages, the human intellect grasped for itself, and by itself alone, the simple yet sublime and comparatively pure doctrines of natural theology, by what process was this early treasure lost or corrupted? How does it become overlaid and buried under cumbrous mythologies, that multiply fanciful deities, and identify them with idols, or the images of depraved men, or even brutes? Such progress as this evinces, is progress in the wrong direction. It is progress backward and downward, to the unreasonable, the incongruous, and the absurd.

4. In either case, therefore, the original Theism of ancient nations was in advance, so far as purity and simplicity are concerned, of their later religious cultus. If this was due to an original revelation, we have that very interposition which seemed necessary to start the race upon the career which might answer the end of its creation. If it was the result of reason, then reason, deteriorated with the ages, became inadequate to keep what it had gained, and gave full evidence that, if left to itself and its own resources alone, it could never advance to any fit apprehension of man's condition, relations, or destiny. In such a case it must be crushed, as it were, under the superstitions which it had admitted or tolerated, and the great end for which human probation was introduced must necessarily be frustrated. The only condition, at least, of escape from this would be some sort of interposition from a superhuman source, to revive lost truth, represent it with new vividness, and enforce it with new emphasis.

5. But the very fact that there has been so extensively progress in the right direction, constitutes the basis for a strong presumption that there has been interposition to some extent. In no other way can it be accounted for. This is especially true in the case, already referred to, of the Jewish people. They possessed no marked intellectual superiority to other nations. In some respects they were inferior to the Egyptians, in others to the Syrians, and in others to the Greeks. Yet, while these other nations are becoming more gross in their idolatries, the Jews, with alternating periods of degeneracy, are advancing to that confirmed Theism which almost startles the Roman general, when, pressing into the Holy of Holies, he finds there no visible embodiment of the object of worship.

This is the more singular, when we find that as early as from 1500 to 2000 years before Christ, the original Theism was undergoing a rapid process of deterioration. The different attributes of God are separately deified. They are identified with the powers of nature, or the mysterious forces which manifest themselves in the economy of the world. They are symbolized by animals. They are fashioned according to human tastes. Human fears, fancies, and passions in-

vest simple spiritual truths with features and drapery of their own, until a Pantheon is constructed and an Olympus peopled with the creatures of a mythology which outrages reason and violates the sense of propriety as well as morality.

The result is an utter debasement of the religious ideal, the destruction of any conservative or elevating influence upon society. Villainy and lust are furnished with divine precedents, and the awful idea of God is dragged down to a human level. This is substantially true, not of one people, but of all. The evil is spreading contemporaneously over the globe. Everywhere—with a single exception—and that, at times, is scarcely an exception. Where is there any hope of improvement? The original light is sadly obscured, and steadily becoming more and more dim, till it flickers to extinction. If the breath of some reformer, more sagacious or pure-minded than those about him, fans it to a flame, it proves little more than a transient flash, expiring with the breath that kindled it. There is gross ignorance, or unreasoning credulity. Reason enters but a feeble protest, contemptuously disregarded. Age after age, while art and eloquence and brave deeds illustrate heathen history, the moral darkness thickens, until the Roman world, having subdued the nations, sinks under the load of its acquisitions, settling down from its height of grandeur to a moral level, lower, possibly, than that of the banditti to whom its origin was ascribed.

Contemporary literature reflects the almost universal dependency of the age, as well as its wickedness. Hope seemed dead. And well might this be. There was a deadly disease, as well as alarming symptoms. The doom of Sodom could scarcely furnish a more pointed moral than the fate of Herculaneum and Pompeii, buried, with the still-extant memorials of their hideous vice, under the volcanic shower. But if their fate was exceptional, their depravity was not. It was a tide-wave, not a river. It rolled on over the world, and no human power could stay it. All things seemed to be sinking in universal decay. Learning and wisdom had toiled and spoken in vain. No prophet's tone could be recognized in the voices of the time. An Epicurean or a Stoic philosophy might flash out brilliant apothegms, but to anxious, burdened, struggling

souls, they were rather like the gleam of the meteor than the steady beam of the light-house to the tempest-tossed sailor.

6. Heathenism could not lift itself out of its own darkness and degradation. The power of a Cæsar, with victorious legions, could not arrest the progress of moral decay. No orator, no philosopher, no moralist, no priest, can be found to utter the word that shall call a dead nation back to life. This sad truth runs through history. A conservative moral element is needed, but can nowhere be found. Nations may escape the blow of conquest, but it is only to fall under the stroke of their own vice. We pass on from age to age, as if over a fruitless, treeless waste—a Sahara of barrenness and death. If we meet with some stunted shrub amid the parched sands, or reach some possible oasis, it only serves to intensify the sad contrast.

7. To suppose such a state of things to be continued on indefinitely, while presided over by such a Being as we have seen that the Author of the moral system must be, is incredible. It is still more incredible that His original design should be abandoned—that design which is manifest in human probation. We can well conceive the wisdom of allowing human reason to demonstrate its own insufficiency, to exhibit to the world the need of divine help, but we can discern no sufficient ground for leaving the history of the world to become one uninterrupted record of tragic crime and depraved indulgence. We turn away from the appalling prospect, as one that imprecates the swift vengeance of a merciful as well as just annihilation, or some interference to help and save.

8. Only in this last is there ground for hope. A race that has progressed in corruption as it has in art; that has dimmed the light it had, and chosen darkness rather than light; that is proved to have exchanged truth for fables, and religion for mythology; that has only put forth spasmodic and uniformly abortive efforts to recover itself; that has cherished dreams of blessedness and perfection, till they are found confessedly to be nothing but dreams—how shall it be brought up out of its self-wrought degradation, and put upon a new track? This is a great, and, so far as reason is concerned, an unanswered question. For, surely, experience has shown that, of all pro-

jects, there is none more disheartening than that a degenerate people or race should recover itself by its own unaided energies, voluntarily relinquish its errors and vices, and spontaneously resume a position of purity in thought and life, from which it has once receded. The thing has never occurred. It cannot occur. There is no lever to raise such a people. There is nothing to rest it on. There is no power to work it in reason alone. The theory of its possibility is simply posterous. One might as well propose to gather up the shattered or water-logged hulk and splintered spars of a dismantled wreck, and attempt to restore its decayed fibre and its lost beauty, and send it forth again to battle with the waves, or do brave service in the fleets of commerce or of war. He might as well propose to re-erect and replace the prostrate shattered columns and decayed temples of ancient oriental capitals, in order therewith to revive the long-vanished splendors of dead dynasties. As well might we cherish the hope that out of their cindered rubbish and fractured sculptures, the splendor of those old palaces in which kings once feasted and reveled, could be brought back, as imagine that the spent energies and demoralized life of nations can be reinvigorated by their own efforts, or that out of the pit of their degradation, into which they have fallen or plunged, they can lift themselves up by any means or resources of their own devising.

9. What, then, are we to expect? The swift vengeance that might have been apprehended, has not overtaken the race. It has not been flung aside like a broken vase, or rejected as dross. Judgment is, as it were, kept back. Indeed, while degeneracy has been the rule, there has also been enough of exceptional progress to encourage the hope that a better issue of the grand experiment of probation, as a whole, may be expected. To what has this partial progress been due? In each instance, to what has the appearance of Providential interposition, and to what has been claimed as such. The original Theism of the nations can be explained satisfactorily only by an original revelation, or an original purity and strength of reason, which in the lapse of ages fell into decay. In one case, interposition must have taken place; in the other, it is called for as a pressing necessity. Again, how is the

pure theism of the Jewish people to be explained? While the rest of the world sinks into idolatry and gross mythologies, they possess a religious literature sublimely simple, and rich in outbursts of the grandest conceptions of the divine government, and the Providential order of the world. We can understand this—if their claims are just—if the founder of the nation and his descendants were under the direct training and guardianship of God. Otherwise, it remains an unsolved and insoluble problem.

Again, when the old Roman world was sinking to decay; when the force of Greek wisdom and art had expended itself, and left none to bear up its banner; when in morals there was no character but that of satirist which authors could fitly assume; when each successive age was sinking under the load of new vices and crimes,—this downward tendency was arrested by a new form of religion grafted upon the old Jewish stock, and that result was witnessed, in part described, and in part prefigured, in that grandest of prose epics, Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*. It was Christianity, at first as unobtrusive as the leaven hidden in the meal, that slowly, but steadily, remolded society, built up again—what had never been done before—a new fabric out of old ruins, and for the first time made a new and permanent civilization possible. Does not this look like divine interposition in the world's history?

10. Now, is this interposition to carry out a specific design, without analogy in the natural government of the world? When the heat would become too fierce and intolerable, does it not call up the breeze and storm? When winter's cold would, if continued, destroy life, does not the sun turn back to rescue it? When the law that bodies generally are condensed by cold would operate on our rivers and lakes to carry the ice to the bottom, and make them glaciers that the summer's sun could not thaw, is not that law suspended in this case of necessity? When a Roman empire sinks in its own effete civilization, is not a hardier race called from northern forests to replace it with a new vigor? When Liberty is writhing in the old world in dying spasms, is not the wilderness of the new made the sheltered home of Freedom, regulated by law?

XVIII.

THE FACT OF A REVELATION CONSIDERED.

IF the probability of some superhuman interference—to prevent the otherwise assured and certain failure of the Moral System to answer its designed end—be conceded, a probability strengthened by the, at least, plausible assurance that interference *has* taken place, we are prepared to press another inquiry of no little importance. What sort of an interference do the circumstances of the case require, and what are the attainable objects which it must keep in view?

1. The evils to be met and remedied are manifold. The first of these is man's ignorance or uncertainty with respect to his condition and duty, his relations to other beings and to his Maker, and the terms of the trial to which he is subjected here. If there be a divine interposition, it must, therefore, take the form of a revelation, either restoring the lost truth in its original purity, or setting forth new truth in advance of the old, and truth applicable to the condition of man as a degenerate, or we might say, apostate being. Old errors must be expressly or implicitly discarded. Mythological obscurities and fungi must be swept away. Vital truths must be set forth in such a way that they may be popularly apprehended, reaching the understanding of not merely the favored few, like the pupils of ancient wisdom, but the great mass of nations, sunk in ignorance and indifference.

2. This restatement of truth must be accompanied by what is applicable also to the new conditions of a race enervated by past degeneracy, and needing more than a general presentation of its exposure and its duty. We look for something which, while it accords generally with the highest wisdom of the best men of the past, far transcends it in distinctness and emphasis; embodying a purer morality, a loftier ideal of perfection; setting forth practical methods for realizing that ideal, and abounding in those more powerful motives by which the hearts and consciences of men may be impressed or inspired.

3. We may look, also, for some provision that shall be permanently operative—that shall preserve the memory of truth and perpetuate its influence—that shall secure for it a recognized championship and trustworthy guardians—or, in lack of these, shall secure a permanent record, to be transmitted from age to age.

4. How such a revelation, as the nature of the case requires, shall be made, reason is silent. We are not warranted to say in what circumstances, or in what way, it shall be communicated—whether by the lips of inspired men or angels, or by articulate voices from heaven—whether once for all, or through successive ages—whether to one people, to many, or to all—whether by words only, or by words, institutions, and signs conjoined. The truth that is sufficient to instruct, to command attention, to impress, to regenerate and save—this is all that is required, and nothing less will answer.

5. Has a revelation of this sort been made? There is but a single affirmative response among many, that is entitled to recognition and respect. A revelation is announced, and the Bible claims to be that revelation. In most respects it has no competitor. It is true that there have been many different forms of professed revelation, enough to show the general sentiment—and we might even say, anticipation—of mankind that some revelation was to be expected. But among the systems which presume to rival that of the Bible, we find that most carry the condemnation of their claims upon their face. The polytheisms of past ages we dismiss at once. The religion of Mohammed, with its bloody intolerance and its sensual paradise, forfeits all title to our respect. No one would seriously propose to improve Christian ethics by any substitution or supplement from Buddhism. The question, then, is narrowed down to this, Is the sole claimant to the character of a revelation entitled to our respect?

6. We have noted the presumptive evidence of an original revelation, as necessary to explain the comparatively pure Theism of the ancient nations. We pass on then to the time when idolatry threatened to overspread the world, and we ask, By what means was its progress arrested among the Jews alone? Certainly not by their superior reason or superior

genius. Their professedly sacred writings furnish the only sufficient or satisfactory explanation. They were taught by prophets inspired of God. They were disciplined by providences which deeply imprinted theistic lessons on their hearts. "Holy men of old spake" as they were divinely moved to speak. So it was asserted. So it was admitted by contemporary thousands, as well as assumed and professed by those that spake.

If this be so, this peculiar exception to the religious usages and systems of the world is explained satisfactorily. We can account for it in this way, but in no other. Admit the explanation, and it concedes a revelation. Reject it, and some other is called for, and must be given if a revelation be denied.

7. Again take the system, engrafted on the Jewish sacred writings—that of the gospel in the New Testament—and see what the presumptions are that it is what it claims to be. It has proved itself the mightiest moral element in the world's history. Some most significant facts in regard to it are obvious almost at a glance. From the very first it has been scrutinized jealously, assailed vigorously, reviled, caricatured, persecuted often in the persons of its adherents. It had all the prestige of ancient mythology and philosophy opposed to it. It had to hold its own, or make its way against national prejudice, and power, and imperial sanctions, while its friends and allies were the weak and despised. But all combinations failed to crush it. Nay, rather it crushed them. It did more than the wit of a Lucian to make the old classic mythologies weak and ridiculous. It silenced forever the heathen oracles. It emptied the Pantheon. It robbed the temples of their old worshippers or filled them with its own. It broke or banished every idol in the Roman Empire. It reached kings on their thrones, and peasants in their hovels, and bowed them, oblivious of human distinctions, at the same altar. It leavened legislation, and tempered and molded public justice. It took possession of the schools, and educated nations. It shaped philosophy, and created a literature of its own, the most extensive and elaborate that the world has ever known. The most inspiring heroisms of history have been born of it. It

has had for its cloud of witnesses, "the noble army of the martyrs."

8. Its triumphs have been signal and numberless. It has pioneered all permanent progress. The slave, the prisoner, the outcast, the beggar, have been the objects of its compassion. In the most humane and charitable provisions of legal codes, in the triumphs of legislative reforms, may be traced its autograph. Despotism has never found any antagonism so persistent as that which it has originated. Philanthropy has found no alliance so effective as that which it has offered. No other moral or spiritual force has ever exercised such a transforming power over man's social condition and prospects as it has possessed.

All this creates a strong presumption that there is somewhat divine in it. It lies entirely outside of what might be considered the natural course of human progress. And if we add to this the fact, that the agents which it has employed have been won over by it, changed from enemies to friends, surrendering what they prized most, to accept reproach, or hardship, or self-denial, or even bitter persecution, the presumption is vastly strengthened.

9. With this much conceded, we ask what internal evidence of its claims is afforded by this so-called revelation. The documents which constitute it are derived from many different sources, and date from diverse ages. Their authors could not have conspired, and yet the result is a unity—a complete and coherent system of religious truth, in which part answers to part, pillar to pedestal, foundation to cap-stone. The result is as marked as the completion of some of the great mediæval cathedrals of Europe, that were ages in building. Successive generations carried on the plan of the original architect, and when the work was complete, the shadow of spire and turret swept over the graves of those who had toiled at their tasks centuries before, and never exchanged views or counsels with their predecessors or successors.

10. That this is no exaggerated representation of the grand unity of Christianity as a religious system, will be disputed by no one who has fairly studied it. Its leading doctrines are almost universally admitted. They follow one upon an-

other, or fit into one another, with an apparently unstudied, but logical sequence. Man's creation in God's image, with capacities to know, love, worship, and serve him ; his original uprightness ; his lamentable apostacy ; his depraved nature, in which conscience and feeling, reason and passion, are ever at strife ; his alienation from his Maker, and his exposure to the consequences of his willful transgression ; his need of clearer light ; of the help of divine grace ; of an atonement for his sin, on the ground of which he may hope for forgiveness and peace ; the actual provision of a Redeemer, long foretold, in whom the divine and the human met, who spake as never man spake, lived as never man lived, died as never man died ; the sufficiency of this redemption for all the necessities of an apostate race, as verified by the experience of more than eighteen centuries ; the organization of a church, of the nature of a witness to the truth it is appointed to guard, against which human malice and "the gates of hell" should never prevail ; the duty and possibility of a moral change in man, so great as to be called regeneration, wrought without violation of human freedom by a divine energy working in and through the truth, by which the subject of that change is made one with his Redeemer in hope, and sympathy, and spiritual brotherhood ; the fact of a probation, by which the future destiny of the soul is determined ; the glorious and yet gracious rewards of obedience, transcending all that eye has seen or imagination can portray ; the fearful retributions of transgression imaged forth by terms whose meaning we vainly seek to fathom, as "the outer darkness ;" "the second death ;" the consummation and triumph of the divine design in man's creation through the glorification of the redeemed, and the assurance of their perfected purity and bliss forever ;—these are but a portion of the leading truths of the Christian system, which harmonize so wondrously, that, like the stones of an arch, you cannot tear one away unless all the others fall with it.

Such a system must have had an architect, for its structure implies it, and its professed end declares it ; and that Architect could not but have been divine. Of all whose writings have contributed to it, no one ever claimed the honor of it.

Moses, David, Isaiah, Paul, John, and we scarcely know how many others, never allowed that they were anything more than instruments in working out a design they did not fully comprehend. But in the midst of them, among them, but not of them, there is One who, with a tone of divine authority, says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," and to His claims they all do homage. Who will venture to impeach either His integrity or His superiority?

11. But the full claim of this system cannot be weighed, without considering the actual power which it has exerted upon the human soul, when brought into competition with the most energetic of all opposing influences. It has repeatedly vanquished them all. It has routed them, like a defeated army. It has disarmed inveterate passions. It has wrought the cheerful surrender of the most cherished plans. Curiosity, avarice, ambition, thirst for revenge, aspirations for ease, or honor, or fame, have given way before it. It transformed a persecutor into an apostle. It has made the ambitious scholar more than willing to become the obscure missionary. It has taken their terror from prison, exile, torture, and the flames. Out of timid souls, it has made heroes and martyrs.

12. And if we look to more commonplace and every-day experience, we find that in all literature, ancient or modern, there is nothing whatever like the Bible, to illustrate "the power of a book." The secret is not in its age, or its style, or its grand simplicity, or its poetic beauty, however remarkable these may be. It lies deeper. It is in the truth it reveals, and the motive power which this truth develops. By these its hold upon the heart is oftentimes, so far as there is any human measure of it, simply omnipotent. Some have gone so far as to call this *bibliolatry*, but that term demands explanation. So far as there is any truth in it, it carries us back to survey that long process by which the soul has come to be knit to what it regards as dearer than life itself. Then it is seen how wondrously adapted, like a key to a most complex lock, is the truth of this book to the nature and wants, fears and hopes, of the human spirit. It fits itself alike to all ages, all races, all grades of thought and culture. It stoops to childhood, and fascinates it by narrative and vision, and

ideas so grand and solemn, as to overshadow or illuminate the whole horizon of its future. In maturer years, it has the most satisfactory response to be found on earth, to questions of human destiny, and when age comes with its burdens and shadows, it is the only thing in the whole realm of reality that promises to lighten the one or illuminate the other.

The question whether such a production may be considered simply human, must be asked in view of the presumption that revelation might be expected; in view of the fact of its admitted necessity; in view of the design in accordance with which this Moral System is constructed, and in view of what this revelation is in itself, and what it has accomplished. To it there can be properly but one answer. It constitutes a superhuman element in God's providential government of the world.

XIX.

REVELATION AND THE MORAL SYSTEM.

ACCEPTING as indisputable the conclusion that some divine interposition was called for, if the end for which this moral system was evidently established was not to be defeated through human debasement; and also admitting the strong presumption that the tendencies implied in this debasement have been checked, by what purports to be revelation or divine interference, we are prepared to inquire whether, in the scope of this assumed revelation, there is anything that necessarily conflicts with the moral system as already expounded, and on what points revelation and the conclusions we have reached in regard to the moral system, harmonize.

1. One main objection to a revelation is, that it is encumbered by miracles. But this objection loses much of its force when it is considered that revelation itself, though communicated through human instrumentality, is itself a miracle. It lies outside the line of what the course of human history teaches us to expect as the result of unaided human development. Men, left to themselves, form theistic conceptions

after the pattern of their own sensual imaginations or perverted tastes. They lack, in themselves, that original impulse which is necessary, at once, to elevate their conceptions and bring them up to the moral and spiritual level, which in exceptional cases, as in the instances of the ancient Jews and the early Christians, they actually attained. The moral contrast between Greek and Hebrew literature, as between Greek and Hebrew religion, cannot be explained on the principles of natural reason alone.

But, if a supernatural element must be called in connection with this exceptional moral and religious development, the revelation, or succession of revelations, which is thus introduced, is of the nature of a continuous miracle. If the revelation is supernatural, the methods by which it is communicated or confirmed may well be also. The difficulty is not in the repetition of what is miraculous, so much as in its occurring at all. The presumption against miracle is destroyed the moment it is admitted that actual history presents us facts which are explicable alone on the theory that miracle—or that which transcends the unaided powers of man—has taken place.

But, in the sphere of human experience, we are constantly coming in contact with a will-force that controls and modifies the action of physical laws. We may call this will-force natural or supernatural, but, in the one case, we enlarge the sphere of the natural, so as to take in what is quite exceptional and overruling, so far as physical laws are concerned; and in the other, we admit expressly that an intelligent will-force must be recognized as super-sensuous and inexplicable on the principles of natural philosophy. It is in no case contrary to analogy to suppose the uniform operation of the ordinary laws of nature to admit of arrest or modification through the action of the will, and with reference to ends important enough to warrant such arrest of modification. If the great end of Probation requires for its attainment such interference as may be pronounced miraculous, the minor end of the uniformity of physical law may well give way to it, on the presumption of a will that has the capacity to set it aside. We conclude, therefore, that in the presence of such an end

as probation has in view, the miraculous element in revelation is what not only may be expected, but is actually necessary. The incredibility of the miracles will attach to them not as miracles—in themselves considered—but in their specific character only. The presumption against them is set aside both by the ascertained fact of a revelation and by the existence of an actual will-force in the human sphere, that transcends and controls physical law.

2. The doctrine of a Divine Providence, as taught in the Scriptures, harmonizes with design as implied in this moral system. That Providence must extend not only to the general plan of the system which it conducts, but to all its parts. The moral system, like the material, is one. As there is not a world, not an atom, that is not connected with the entire universe, so there is not an event of human history that stands isolated and alone. A general providence implies a particular providence. A mechanism is incomplete where a single wheel, or pin, or cog, is wanting, and nothing is more obvious than that many of what are called the great events of history have hinged on small events or occasions. A most trivial incident, apparently, has changed the career of men and nations, and no one can intelligently accept the doctrine of a general providence, and make it less comprehensive or minute than that which revelation ascribes to the Omniscient and Eternal Mind.

3. Read in the light of revelation, history is a continuous commentary on an overruling Providence. The events of time, introducing new scenes, opening new prospects, and these suggesting a steady progress toward the regeneration of the race, move along with a dramatic order and unity, and their very confusions and incongruities harmonize as they contribute to the evolution of a plan which connects the beginning and progress of this scheme of things with a predetermined end. Thus, the calling of Abraham; the special religious training of the Jewish nation; the laws and types of its worship, foreshadowing fuller revelations, as the Paschal Lamb prefigured Him who is called "The Lamb of God;" the tuition of bondage and captivities, preserving the chosen people from surrounding idolatries; the sublime lessons that

fell from the lips of the prophets ; the advent of the “ Desire of all nations,” when His way was prepared ; the unity and peace of the old Roman world, when His Gospel was to be published ; the crystallization of mediæval Christianity in a hierarchy which preserved the truths fatal to itself ; the outburst of reforming energy, when the discovery of the new world, and of the printing-press, and the diffusion of the old classic literature on the fall of Constantinople, had prepared the way for it ; the planting of a Christian civilization in this then Western wilderness, and all the wonderful events which have since inspired the hope that all nations—as prophecy long ago foretold—shall be regenerated ;—all these are but the great land-marks of that history of the world which elucidates the scope of a divine design, and evidences the continuous presence of an overruling Providence.

4. But, when we turn to the subject of man’s individual relations to God, we find that revelation inculcates some doctrines which may be examined on their own merits, and in the light of their own specific analogies.

Among these, one that is never lost sight of, and is fundamental to others, is what is termed human depravity. This does not deny man’s moral sensibility, or his possession of capacities for generous and noble efforts. It does not imply the lack of a conscience that upbraids him for wrong-doing, or the necessary absence of a high moral ideal. It does imply, however, a native tendency to alienate himself from God, to make self-interest his law, to prefer ease or comfort or pleasure to the claims of duty, and in the indulgence of passions which usurp the place of reason and conscience, to become worse instead of better.

But what are the analogies of human experience ? What means the universal distrust felt toward those with whom men deal, if they have not proved their truth and honesty ? What, according to all writers on government, is government itself but the check of individual selfishness by the combined selfishness of society, forced in self-defence to appeal to justice and that natural law which is inscribed ineradicably in the constitution of man and of society itself ?

5. The manifest opposition of this depravity to natural law,

to the moral code which has God for its author, subjects it to deserved condemnation. Man is a transgressor of that law. He fails in that supreme love and perfect service which he owes to God. The sense of this forces him to ascetic and superstitious rites. Heathen sacrifices, self-inflicted tortures, costly ransoms, grew out of it. The need of expiation or atonement is confessed. The conscious burden of guilt rests on the soul, and no rhetoric or logic of mere reason can remove it. Revelation accepts the fact of this burden, this exposure to law, this condemnation, and it makes known what is called an atonement. It represents Christ as that Lamb of God, foreshadowed by the Paschal Lamb of Jewish history, who offers Himself as a sacrifice, an atoning sacrifice, for the sins of men, with whom He identifies Himself by assuming their nature.

Here we have the statement of what, by no possibility, can find any perfect analogy on earth or among men. But is the principle of it without analogy? Why have patriots laid down their lives? Why have martyrs been content to die? Why have philanthropists worn themselves out to benefit ungrateful and unappreciating thousands? History would be poor, indeed, in great and inspiring examples, if you took out of it the element of voluntary vicarious sacrifice. What is Redemption itself, according to revelation, but the crowning illustration of the principle implied in such sacrifice? And, if this be so, who can deny the substantial harmony of an Atonement with corresponding features of the moral system?

6. Take up, now, the doctrine of "Original Sin"—as it is, not very felicitously, called—the apostacy of the race in its first progenitor. Of course, there is and can be no perfect analogy of it within the sphere of our observation. But can we, with human experience before us, deny the fact of transmitted depravity, the vitiation of nature working out a hereditary curse? The sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, not only through the influence of example, or as the consequences of parental indolence and vice, but by that constitution of things by which the perverted faculties and tastes and appetites of the parent descend to his offspring. This may be termed an injustice, but, before that term is applied,

it should be asked on whom the responsibility rests for the perversion of an order of things by which, if man had never depraved himself, only good results would have followed.

There is another analogy, where a faithless trustee sacrifices, by his folly or wickedness, the interests of those he represents. He may be at the head of a corporation or a government; he may be the trusted agent of a company or a state; but he acts in a federal or representative capacity. Hundreds, perhaps, or thousands, or possibly, future generations, innocent of the original transgression, suffer through his fault. The position of Adam necessarily gave him such a relation to the race, as their progenitor and representative both, as no other one could possibly occupy, and may not the results be correspondent?

Take another prominent doctrine of Revelation, the necessity of such a change in man's nature and disposition, in his views and practice, as the Great Teacher denominated being "born again." Who, when he considers the relation of a depraved human nature to the holiness of the divine, can for a moment question this necessity? And is it not in analogy with other moral changes, so far as these extend, in the matter of appetites, tastes, and aspirations? And can any one question the fact of this change having often taken place, and that in so marked a manner that the result seems to be not only a reformed life, but a new nature—the drunkard becoming sober; the violent, gentle; the persecutor, an apostle; the revengeful, forgiving?

7. Then, take the natural constitution of this moral system, as already exhibited, and lay it alongside the moral system of Revelation. The correspondence is perfect as far as it extends. In both, God is legislator and administrator. In both—virtue corresponding to holiness—the advantages of wickedness are temporary; the triumph of goodness, in the end, assured and eternal. In both, the elements of retribution are alike involved. In both, law is sovereign, and the arrest of its execution is but transient and readily explained. In both, Probation is a leading feature, modifying the administration of moral government, and adapting it to a state of trial in which evil is left free to evince its nature, and virtue is sub-

jected to a discipline which, though it seems harsh, operates to confirm virtuous purpose and give fixedness to character, and development and strength to its every grace.

8. In the natural government of the world we meet with that invariable sequence of cause and effect which gives a plausible aspect to the theory of necessity. And we meet also with facts that demonstrate, that whether allowed or denied, that theory does not set aside the fact of personal responsibility. So, in revelation, we meet with the opposite poles of the eternal designs or purposes of God, and the free-will of man; and however plausible the argument of the man who says, "All is fixed; I cannot change it"—he is confronted with the assertion of personal accountability, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

9. In the natural government of the world, again, we have to deal with fragmentary parts of a universal system, to us practically infinite. We are incompetent to criticise, as a whole, what is manifestly a part; and our judgment is to be held in check or abeyance by the consideration of our ignorance and limited powers. But does not revelation present the same system, only with portions more minutely portrayed, while it asks, Who, by searching, can find out God?—while it teaches us expressly that here we see, as through a glass, darkly? Could there be a more perfect correspondence in the nature of the case?

10. As to the results of Probation, are not those which are foreshadowed in the moral system of nature precisely such as are distinctly asserted in Revelation? There some are final in their fatality. There is no place for repentance. There is no possible recovery of the past. Does not this exactly express the aspect in which Revelation exhibits the issues of probation? Is there not here also a fixed point, where the climax of probation is reached, beyond which the triumph or the failure is final?

11. Thus does the system of Revelation coincide with the moral system of nature. It cannot be confuted, though objections may be raised to it. But most of these objections are almost precisely the same that may be, and sometimes have been, urged against the moral constitution of things

which exists before our own eyes. In denying many of the leading doctrines of Revelation, we must logically deny many corresponding facts of the Moral System.

XX.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

THE course of our argument, from premises to conclusion, has been along the stepping-stones of fact. A Moral System exists, with its constitution and laws. It must be recognized, and it is recognized, as a fact of actual experience. Man's moral nature—such that he is forced to be a law to himself; his complex being, which becomes a chaos or a torture-chamber unless the moral authority of conscience is paramount; social retributions, domestic and civil government, with their rewards and penalties,—all these are indisputable facts, uniting with others to constitute the complex fabric of a Moral System.

This system indicates constructive design. Accident, or "the nature of things," cannot explain it. Its penalties would be impossible if the body were not so constituted as to allow it to suffer through mental transgression—if it were not so endowed as to be made a medium of suffering through social retaliations or ancestral guilt. But this, instead of being a necessity of "the nature of things," is evidently designed. We can suppose it to have been otherwise, so that, in being what it is, it conforms to conditions which must be presupposed and predetermined, in order to bring about these results, by which the seal of approval is set to virtue, and that of reprobation affixed to vice. Here, too, we stand on the solid basis of fact.

Again we say, and have the right to say, that the character of the Author is reflected in His system. The design manifest in it is His. We infer His character from this manifest design. We say He is wise, just, and good—wise because all the arrangements and adjustments of the Moral System imply

it; just, because these arrangements are plainly intended to favor justice; good, because even where pain is inflicted, it is in most cases plainly salutary or monitory, while, in countless instances, enjoyment is actually provided for. Here we deal with facts.

Our next step simply asserts that man's existence is comprehended in the scheme of Him who is wise, just, and good. There is no evading this. It follows, then, that the scope of man's being cannot be inconsistent with the perfect wisdom that must be justified in it: it cannot be inconsistent with the justice that will ultimately assure virtue its exact reward, and vice its exact penalty: it cannot be inconsistent with perfect goodness, which we can scarcely suppose engaged in bestowing conscious powers by which man is exalted only to the misery of appreciating what a destiny annihilation is. On these grounds—obvious facts—we base the plain presumption of a future life.

Again, we assert that this present life is a probation. In some respects, it is confessedly so. It is so up to the close of what is visible here, although in a steadily decreasing ratio. But it cannot be, without implying that the present existence, as the preface to a future, is probationary. What we see of its results confirms the conclusion. Here are facts, with the least possible element of presumption.

Once more, we assert that the future state must be one of retribution. It cannot but be so, if the laws and tendencies that affect the spirit now continue to operate. Continued conscious existence on earth would ever more and more approximate to perfect retribution. The dissolution of the body must, on the whole, if it leave the soul to itself, expedite the operation of retributory forces.

We take our stand again on the ground of conceded fact, when we assert that man, in his present state, only exceptionally at best, attains the end worthy of creation and probation. He bears evidences of having degenerated from the original state in which he was made. Heathen authors have insisted on what is equivalent to the fact of human depravity. There is a call for interposition. Man cannot restore himself, or, at least, has rarely, if ever, made any serious effort to do so,

except in cases where he was plied by motives that he accounted supernatural. The recovery of the mass of men, without more powerful motives and clearer knowledge than human reason affords, is evidently hopeless.

We have the right to infer, therefore, that in a system constituted like ours, if the design of it is not to be defeated, there will be supernatural interposition. The disordered machine will never right itself. It must be set right by its Author, or He must supply the means to this end. It is not for any one reasonably to call this in question.

Again, there are strong grounds for asserting that interposition has taken place. The early Theism of ancient nations antedates their idolatry and Polytheism. They exchanged spiritual for idol worship through a process of degeneracy. They wandered farther and farther into darkness. In some cases, this wandering was arrested. It was, by what was asserted, and what purported to be, divine interposition. The Revelation in which the assertion is made is unlike all other human productions. Its manifold phases; its complex structure; its substantial and wonderful harmony in itself; its unrivaled power in literature; its unprecedented triumphs; its superhuman ideas—all unite to attest its divine original. Here we stand upon admitted facts, and simply assert their most obvious and natural explanation.

Each new position, as we advance, is thus seen to be in itself probable, and in some cases, such as scarcely to admit of dispute. But each new position, as it is itself substantiated, strengthens all the others. From the firm buttress of the bridge—the Moral System—we advance pier by pier—the whole structure gathering to itself mutual support as new additions are made—till we reach the last pier, and find it to be the well-supported buttress that extends its strength back to all that had gone before. In other words, all the leading truths of the Moral System, which have their correspondencies in the asserted facts of revelation, are not so much links in a chain, where, if one is broken, all coherence is at an end, as pillars in a common structure, where each not merely rests upon its own foundation, but lends support to every other, and to the entire edifice.

The result is that the Moral System takes its place in the broad and comprehensive scheme of things, as that to which all else is subordinate. What the body is to the soul, physical nature is to the moral realm. Science, throughout all her departments, pays tribute to the spiritual supremacy of man. Nature must be interpreted by its relation to its ultimate end, and that end is revealed in the divine design manifest in man.

Thus read, the universe, with all its mysteries that remain unsolved, is no longer the sphynx-riddle that puzzles and confounds humanity, sinking to despair. With Lord Bacon, we recognize the fact that "this universal frame of things is not without a mind." With Locke, we confess the inadequacy of human reason to discover that which, when revealed, approves itself to reason, and thus with him subscribe to the "Reasonableness of Christianity." With Milton, we soar above the ruins of human apostacy, to discern beyond a "Paradise Lost," the hope of a "Paradise Regained." Life has a meaning, and it may have a beauty and a destiny worthy of that Divine tuition by which it is in training for an immortal sphere. The development of the race is under the guidance of One who sees the end from the beginning; and who can make future ages of perfected humanity, the contrast to that introductory period of darkness that has gone before.

To recognize the existence and laws of the Moral System is the obligation by which reason is bound. To conform life to its conditions is that practical wisdom that leads to the highest blessedness, here or hereafter, which man can hope to enjoy. The laws of duty are as real, as changeless, and as abiding as the relations—constituted by the great Maker—out of which they spring. We can suppose the material frame-work of the universe dissolved, reduced to primeval fire-mist, or even annihilated, but we cannot conceive that truth and falsehood, holiness and sin, can ever change their nature, or that over a violated conscience, or through the tortuous paths of transgression, man can pass onward to the goal of his perfected being. He is the subject of a Moral System, which reflects the love of a Father and the authority of a God. To the terms of that system he must conform, or life becomes at once a rebellion and a curse.

QUESTIONS.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

I. What is system? How extensive is it? What two classes of elements does it include? Why may moral elements be said to be natural? What is the Moral System? How is it natural? How is it to be distinguished from moral government? May a moral system be proved by evidence that would not establish a perfect moral government? Why has the Moral System been variously apprehended? What is a leading characteristic of the History of Herodotus? What was the doctrine of Pythagoras as to virtue and vice? What other doctrine is he said to have held? What were the views of Socrates? What were the leading views of Plato? Was Aristotle a Theist? What doctrines of a moral system are presented in Homer? What other Greek writers support similar doctrines? What are the peculiarities of Æschylus and Sophocles? What view did the Epicureans take of the Moral System? What were the peculiarities of the Stoics? What was Cicero's position? What did Seneca hold? What did Plutarch teach on lingering retribution? What view did Marcus Aurelius Antoninus take of Fate? What was the character of the ethical teachings of Epictetus? What Roman poets and historians are mentioned as bearing testimony to the Moral System?

II. What three elements were combined to produce Gnosticism? What did Gnosticism essay to do? What was Neo-Platonism? What terms in Greek literature are of great moral significance? Of what is Nemesis expressive? What is the character of the Erinnyes? Is Fate used in different senses? How in Homer? How is the sense of the word in Herodotus to be explained? What does Hierocles maintain? With what does Jackson assert that Fate was synonymous? By what writers is he sustained? Is Fate generally used in a sense consistent with human responsibility?

III. What leading features of the Moral System are conspicuous in the Jewish Scriptures? In what portions of these are they most strikingly manifest? What may be said of many of Christ's parables? How came the study of the Moral System to fall into partial neglect? What exceptions to this were there among the early Christian Fathers? What questions of natural theology were early Christian writers led to discuss? Did Mohammedan writers take up similar topics? What had Scholasticism to do in this connection? What was the first great English work to discuss the Law of Nature? What other two works soon followed?

IV. What eminent English writer stood opposed to the views of

Hooker and Grotius? What controversy originated with him? What were his views as to the Law of Nature? What two classes of opponents did he meet? Mention some of his leading assailants, of the Platonic school? To what did Bishop Cumberland trace obligation? How does Bishop Parker hold that the obligation of rules of life may be demonstratively established? What two points does he urge? Does he hold that a moral constitution must be admitted, even by Atheists? Does Archbishop Tillotson make the obligation of moral duties to depend on revelation?

V. What was Locke's position as to innate ideas, and a Law of Nature? By whom, and how, was the power of reason exaggerated? What was Locke's position as to the relation of the Law of Nature to Revelation? What was Toland's aim? What Deistic writers followed Toland? What was the plausibility of Tindal's argument? What noted work gave Tindal an advantage to present his views?

VI. To whom is it probable that Pope was indebted in his preparation of his "Essay on Man?" What is its professed object? What does he insist upon as man's duty? What is the character of his third and fourth Epistles? How is the Essay related to the controversy going forward at the time? On what grounds is it important? What are some of the more noticeable points that he makes? How could Bishop Butler make use of the grounds on which Pope rested his argument? What were some of the more noted replies to Tindal?

VII. What was the aim of the "Boyle Lecture?" What topics did it discuss? What foreign writers influenced English thought? What did Locke assert as to matter? Who followed him? What was Dodwell's aim? How did the phrase "indiscernibility" of consciousness come into the discussion? What other lines of discussion converged to the issue met in Butler's "Analogy?" What was the bearing of Locke's rejection of innate ideas upon the accepted view of a Law of Nature? What two tendencies were soon manifest, and by whom were they represented? Who followed Shaftesbury in the main? What was Dr. Clarke's view? What posthumous work of Cudworth substantially agreed with it? Who accepted Clarke's view? What was said as to resolving all motives into self-interest? Were Balguy's views accepted without opposition? Who called them in question? How is virtue defined in Law's edition of "King on Evil?" What was the position of Grove? What other writer agreed with him in the main? What was peculiar to Wollaston's speculations? How was he criticised? To what discussion has the chapter on Necessity in Butler's "Analogy," special reference? What was the fate of the political phase of the controversy originating with Hobbes? What lent impulse to the development of "Cambridge Platonism?" Did this produce a reaction? What were the different views as to the foundation of moral obligation? What other lines of discussion converged in the "Analogy?"

VIII. What recent writers have expressed their high appreciation of Butler's "Analogy?" To whom does Dr. Chalmers compare Butler? What does Professor Farrar say of the "Analogy?" What is Butler's aim in it? Is his argument for the future life

positive or negative mainly? Why? What is the argument, in substance? What evidence have we that a system of administration by rewards and punishments is established here? Can the course of Nature be ascribed to anything but the Author of Nature? What facts go to show a system of rewards and penalties? Do present events excite apprehension of penalties yet to come? How is it seen that the government of the Author of Nature is moral? Are the proper rewards of virtue possible to vice? What apparent exceptions are there to the rule of equal distribution of rewards and penalties here? Are these exceptions inconsistent with a moral system? How can we explain the fact that gratifying results sometimes follow evil deeds? How do civil and domestic government bear upon vice? What reason may be given for the unequal distribution of happiness or misery, apart from personal desert? How do virtue and vice stand related to the divine administration? What would be the ultimate condition of a perfectly virtuous state? Can we suppose the Author of Nature indifferent to virtue and vice? What shows that the notion of a moral scheme of government is natural? From what may we infer that the present is a state of probation? How is it seen that we are on trial now? Is this consistent with goodness? Can we know why we are in such a state of probation as the present? Can a happy condition be ensured here without provision? What can we do to secure it? What is the effect of habit? How are we qualified for the duties of life? Is the discipline requisite to the present state the same in kind with that which we must suppose requisite for the future life? What will future happiness require as conditional to it? What security can we have against the constant liability to go astray? How can evil be successfully resisted? What accompanies the progress of this resistance? What circumstances here encourage resistance? What is to be said to the objection that here our powers may be overtasked? What to Shaftesbury's objection that there is no merit in obedience enforced by hope or fear? May present affliction be necessary? Why? Under God's natural government are we made at once what we were designed to become? What is the inference from this? What is left to our choice? Can character be displayed and known without probation? Does the objection of the fatalist destroy the proof of an intelligent governor of the world? Supposing the theory of necessity true, must it apply to the present life? Does it apply? What would be the effect of the practical application of this theory? Are we treated as free? What is the testimony of consciousness? Is necessity consistent with merit or demerit? Does experience justify our assumption of the theory of human freedom? Is it a fact that reward and penalty are meted out as if men were free? What does the general acceptance of natural religion among men show as to its introduction among them? How does this acceptance consist with necessity?

If there is a moral government, on what sort of a scale must it be constructed? What is requisite in order to offer valid objection to any one feature of it? Can we prove that more good or less evil might have resulted from a different constitution of things? Do we find means operating contrary to our expectations? Are general laws best? What effect would direct interpositions to hinder their operation have? Is moral obligation affected by our failing to discern all the results of complying with, or rejecting it?

As reasonable beings, can we regard without concern our relation to the present state as one of probation? By what is the importance of Christianity evidenced? Does Butler place moral and positive duties in contrast? What course is best when they are supposed to come in conflict? Can we reason from analogy against a revelation? Can we against its mode? Can we against its limited publication? Can we against incomplete evidences of it? Do we have demonstrative evidence to act upon in daily life? What essays does Butler append to his "Analogy?"

IX. How was the "Analogy" related to the age in which it was written? What gives it permanent value? Is its value to us the same precisely that it was to Butler's contemporaries? What is to be said of his commencing his "Analogy" with the argument for a future life? What disadvantages does this method have? What is the better and true method, if we wish to construct the scheme of the Moral System? What leading truth did Butler assume, that we may not assume now? Where does the proof of this properly come in? What other peculiarity of Butler's work is unsatisfactory to us? If we are to apprehend the moral system properly, what course must we take? To what does Professor Farrar attribute the real secret of the power of the "Analogy?" To what remarkable work of science does he compare it? In what respect is he superior to most of his predecessors? How had they discussed the Moral System? How are the different features of the Moral System related to one another? Illustrate this. What is the effect on the entire argument of establishing each position separately? What is the excellence, and what the defect of the "Analogy?" What merit must be conceded to it? What is pre-requisite to a proper presentation of the Moral System?

THE MORAL SYSTEM.

I. What is Science? What should any science do? How many sciences are possible? Among these, what position does that of the Moral System hold? How is its paramount importance manifest? In the sphere of universal knowledge, what is the place of the Moral System? How is the importance of each science to be estimated? What do all the sciences testify as to man? Which among them all must take the precedence, and why? Is there a manifest order of subordination in nature? To what do all point upward! What kindred subordination is there in the constitution of man's nature? What is supreme in it? As the result, what is the great question for man to consider? Why cannot the existence of a moral sphere be denied? How is this shown by the miseries of the world? What resources have we at command for the investigation of the Moral System?

II. What method must be adopted to obtain a comprehensive view of the facts of the Moral System? Why? What is the simplest and broadest classification? What is the threefold constitution of human nature? Will excess or defect in one part affect all? 1. What relation must the body and its appetites sustain to the mind? If this relation is violated, what is the result? 2. How is the intellect affected by passionate excess? 3, 4, 5. How does physical indulgence affect reason and conscience? 6. How

is neglect of educating the intellect visited with retribution on other parts of our nature ? 7. What is the relation of intellectual culture to moral development ?

III. In what three relations does man stand to the material universe ? 1. What disciplinary result follows from the relations of his physical nature to it ? 2. How does the intellect come in contact with the external world, and with what results ? 3. How is the intellect affected by this ? How the taste ? Is there anything directly moral in this ? 4. What remains to be done after knowledge of the material world has been acquired ? 5. In doing this, what are the moral results ? How have the highest virtues been nurtured ? 6. To what are we disciplined by the fixed order of the material universe ? How is this seen ? What other relation beside that of apparent antagonism, does the material universe sustain to man ? 2. How does this tend to draw forth and stimulate the powers of mind and body ? 3. What necessities, having moral results, are imposed, through the relation of the body specifically to the external world ? As a result, what must his whole life become ? On what is his physical well-being conditioned ?

IV. What are man's relations to social life ? Do they impose moral restraints ? 1. What point must be established to create a presumption that the discipline and results of social life will be legitimately on the side of virtue ? In cases of collision between society and the individual, which, as a general rule, is right ? What is the moral relation of society, *as organized*, to the individual ? Is social organization, considered as a structure, virtuous in itself ? 2. What is requisite if society is to be permanently maintained ? What will this require ? How are these rules essentially moral ? 3. How will the common self-interest hold in check individual selfishness ? Give an illustration of this in a case when selfishness is universal. 4. Can society be organized without recognizing the principles of equal justice ? What moral qualities are requisite, if men are to combine and act together ? How must the law deal with a lack of these qualities ? What proportion must penalties bear to crimes ? Would this be true among wicked men associated together ? Could a thoroughly vicious state of society among men continue to exist ? Why not ? 5. What necessity is absolute in all social organizations ? What was the remark of Fisher Ames ? How is the truth of this obvious ? 6. How does social organization, considered in itself, stand related to virtue ? Is there an analogy between the difficulty of ignoring physical, and that of ignoring moral laws ? What analogy is there between the law of gravitation in physics, and that of mutual confidence in society ? 7. What is the effect of diverse vicious elements in individual character ? How do they affect each other ? What is their effect in society ? Has this often been illustrated ? What contrast to this is presented by virtuous qualities among men ? 8. How do the ends that the virtuous and the vicious respectively have in view, contrast in their practicability, and why ?

V. 1. In case of injustice, is it at the option of the State to pass it by unnoticed ? Is punishment certain ? What can the offender not escape ? 2. What may be said over against the fact that judges may be bribed or overawed ? 3. In dealing with the crim-

judges may be bribed or overawed? 3. In dealing with the criminal, what is the rule as to the position occupied by the forces of the State? 4. What is the operation of domestic government in the moral sphere? What does a care of the child's welfare imply on the part of the parent as to recognizing moral distinctions, and making the training moral? What is the action of natural affection, even in some cases where the parent is vicious? 5. What moral element is found in academic training and associations? 6. How does social influence train the mind to the recognition of law? Where is the moral element in this? 7. How does social influence impress a sense of individual responsibility and duty? Does it operate as a restraint on vice? Will evil men exercise a restraint upon one another? How? How are vices made disreputable? What is necessarily the character of those acts which society must applaud? What is the effect of this applause? 8. How does social influence operate to produce acts of liberality and generosity? 9. Is patriotism developed by social influence? Is it a virtue? 10. What problems to be solved does society present? What is the result of the effort to solve them? What illustrations of this that history presents, may be mentioned? Does this show that society is naturally on the side of virtue? 11. What political questions, implying the study of ethics, does society occasion? In what form have answers to these questions been given? What conclusion as to the nature of vice results from the study of national well-being? 12. What social science shows that the just and the expedient correspond in human affairs? What moral lessons are enforced by industrial and commercial transactions? How is virtue essential to commercial credit? How does every mercantile exchange involve a moral element? 13. To what virtues do the inequalities of social life give rise? In what way? 14. What class has the readiest claim to social sympathy? What will usually be the experience of the good man in time of calamity? PAGE 104

VI. What additional element tends to vindicate right and expose wrong? How does Butler represent the advantages of an upright government? What would be the experience of a government disregarding the rights of its subjects, and its duties to other states? Why is the contract more striking between the two states after a series of years? 1. What analogy does Bishop Butler draw between virtue and reason? Are there cases where time alone will secure the ends of justice? What are they? What contrast is there between the prospects of leagues of vice and of virtuous alliances? How is this explained? Have martyrs and criminals alike illustrated this? How? Can the machinery of justice operate effectively without some delay? How is a mistaken national policy exposed? How have the cruelties and intolerant usages of the past been abolished? 2. What is the contrast between the earlier and later results of vice? How is it with virtue? 3. What would be the natural effect of giving evil deeds time to expose their own proper results? 4. With sufficient time to operate, what must we infer would be the result of tendencies which we now discern around us? Can we properly judge of retributive forces and tendencies without taking time indefinitely extended into our calculation? PAGE 115

VII. How is it manifest that man is subject to moral discipline?

How that he was designed to be ? Does it make any difference, so far as the assertion that man has a moral nature is concerned, whether we make conscience a single faculty, or resolve it into others ? What position does the power it represents hold to other faculties ? How is this illustrated by the poets ? Is their intuition entitled to respect ? What does consciousness testify as to the inward check exercised over the soul ? Is this check due to any mercenary consideration ? Can conscience be permanently disregarded ? Can its power be finally suppressed ? What states of mind are conditioned on its ascendancy ? What is the result when its power is suspended ? How far does it go to prove a moral system ? How extensive is its sphere ? 1. What is its relation to a sense of responsibility ? 2. How is the power of conscience evoked in our social relations ? 3. What is its effect upon the minds of the good or the evil ? What is the proper effect of the approval of the conscience ? 4. What is the result, in cases of exceptional activity of conscience, on the mind of the guilty ? What terms used by the ancient poets illustrate their sense of this ? What have men cheerfully endured with an approving conscience ? 5. How is it that social judgments on wrong-doing are formed ? What are the penalties of these judgments ? What are their rewards ? How can we explain it that some actions appear beautiful, and others repulsive ? What is the general character of these respectively ? How is this illustrated in history ? In poetry ? Are good deeds admired by good men only ? What does this indicate ? What is the most distinctive and characteristic feature of the Moral System ? In what marked ways does it operate ? What conclusions, evidencing a moral system, flow from the fact of man's moral nature ? With what evident design is that nature framed and constituted ? What facts of its experience show a moral system in operation ? PAGE 121

VIII. Are we so constituted as to feel that a moral system *should* exist ? In what cases do we find special satisfaction in historic accounts of noted men ? If this does not prove a moral system, what does it prove ? To what is this mutual adaptation of the moral sense and the experience of fitting results, analogous in the physical sphere ? What leading objection is urged to a moral system ? 1. What is the first reply to this ? 2. What second reply may be made ? 3. What third reply ? What does the very idea of Probation imply ? 4. What fourth reply may be given ? What English poet notices this ? How is this explained without prejudice to the Moral System ? PAGE 131

IX. Does the Moral System indicate design ? In what way ? What is the alternative of denying the Moral System an intelligent author ? What is gained by this ? Supposing the system to have no intelligent author, does it operate to encourage the hope of impunity to evil ? Can the order of the Moral System be resolved into, or fully explained by "the nature of things ?" How does the fact of our physical structure and moral constitution conflict with any such explanation ? Are there elements of our being, essential to retribution, that might have been omitted ? Would the nature of things necessarily prevent such an omission ? How wide is the range of adaptation manifest in the Moral System ? What would be the logical result to the Moral System and to human responsibility, in making all depend upon a necessity in the

nature of things? What must we admit then? What will the Moral System reveal as to its Author? 1. If it is framed to favor justice, what is the necessary inference? 2. What will benevolence, in the broad sense, include? What evidence have we of this in the Moral System? What benevolent provisions are seen in connection with pain and its uses? 3. How does the Moral System give evidence of wisdom? PAGE 136

X. What is the scope of Bishop Butler's argument for the future life? What term expresses its defects? With what postulate does his negative argument start? How does this apply, supposing conscious being to be indivisible? Can death be supposed to be a greater change to the conscious being than those changes which it has survived? What do the facts of experience show as to the relation which the body sustains to mind? What inference will this warrant, in case the body is dissolved? Can we define identity? Does it continue independent of the changes in the body? How extensive are these changes? Whose reasoning does Bishop Butler endorse in asserting the indivisibility of consciousness? With what is Butler's negative argument burdened? 1. Is there anything in the circumstances of our being to suggest naturally to us a future life? What? What weight is this suggestion entitled to? 2. Have we capacities apparently adapted to a broader sphere than the present? What is the significance of rudimentary organs, which are evidently designed for a sphere not yet attained in the case of the animal? 3. Are they prophetic? Are we surrounded by what are regarded as emblems of immortality? Do they prove anything? Does man's sensitiveness to their suggestions prove anything? PAGE 142

XI. 1. Must we assume that the same wisdom that framed the Moral System, subjected man to it? How will this create a presumption of a future life? Can the divine wisdom be vindicated on the assumption that man's existence ends with death? Why not? 2. What would the idea of God's goodness logically warrant us to infer in regard to hopes in man suggested by nature? What would have to be charged upon the divine goodness, if man is placed in a limitless field, to perish without the opportunity to explore it? How is the idea of annihilation necessarily regarded? Is the gift of powers that make us sensitive to it consistent with goodness, if there be no future life? 3. Can the justice of God be vindicated while future retribution is denied? Does the present state bear marks of being a complete system in itself? What would be the effect upon virtue and innocence of the denial of future awards? 1. How does the doctrine of a future life accord with the relation of the spirit to a perishable body? What analogy is there between the body and the husks of the grain? 2. Starting with material things and the images of them, toward what do the processes of education conduct the soul? How is this seen in the process of intellectual training, from childhood on? Illustrate this. 3. How does the doctrine of a future life harmonize with the necessities of civil justice? PAGE 148

XII. What judgment must we form of the present life, in view of the soul's immortality? What is meant by a state of probation? What is the mutual relation of the two doctrines of a future life and of probation? 1. In what relation, simply as preceding it,

must the present state stand to the future? From what does this result? 2. From what do we derive a strong confirmatory presumption that the present is a state of probation? What is the difference between moral system and moral government? How can we explain what is sometimes objected to as an incongruity in the Moral System? What would be the effect, if retribution always followed without delay upon transgression? Is the Moral System actually modified? How far? 3. Are the elements of probation met with in actual experience? Can it be evaded or avoided? How extensively does it prevail? How is it illustrated in education? 4. What illustrations may be given of actual moral probation now going on? Is there a manifest analogy between childhood, as related to manhood, and present existence, as related to the future? 5. Can the supposition that this analogy is interrupted by death, be regarded as probable? Why improbable? 6. Must we consider probation as a process that has an end in view? 7. Why may we not suppose the entire future existence to be like the present, probationary? 8. Why is death assumed to be the normal limit of probation? 9. Can we answer fully the question why man is placed in a state of probation? What reasons for it can be given? May a distinction be made between created and acquired holiness? 10. What is the effect of the successful endurance of probation? 11. If the future is a social state, on what will the security of its peace and happiness largely depend? What other reasons for probation may be given? . PAGE 157

XIII. Can a full answer be given to the question why probation has been made so severe? If we cannot answer the question, must we admit the fact? What is the fact? 1. What is the first reason that may be given for this state of things implying severity of trial? 2. How can the severity of trial which originates in ancestral crime or neglect be explained in consistency with divine wisdom and goodness? 3. What evidence is there that man is in a degenerate or fallen state? What twofold aggravation of the severity of probation results? 4. What important lesson is this permission of the severity of trial calculated to teach? 5. How is it seen that, severe as temptation may be, there is no absolute necessity of yielding to it? 6. What fact forbids us to despair of the final triumph of those who may be subjected to severe trial? 7. What may be said of the results of probation sometimes when most severe? Is its severity always to be regretted? 8. What light is thrown on this subject by the history of past struggles and endurance? 9. When severity of trial is made an objection to divine benevolence, what must first be considered? What is the correct view of benevolence as a divine attribute? 10. Are objections against the reason of a fact valid against the fact? What is the notorious fact as to the frequent result of probation, visible by us? 11. If the present brief period of existence produces results so surprising, must we suppose their effect to continue hereafter? What is the bearing of analogy on this point? .

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XIV. What is necessary in a future state, if the unequal allotments of the present are to be rectified? 1. Must we suppose the introduction of any new elements, beyond what we have knowledge of now, in order to secure retribution? Why not? May there be new positive elements introduced? 2. What can we say

of the machinery of distributive justice now at work? What evidences do we see in man's physical and moral constitution that reveal retributive design here on earth? Is there anything that may be regarded as posthumous penalty under the present system? When do retributive forces begin to operate? How is this seen? 3. In case there is no self-betrayal on the part of the guilty, what risks of detection does he incur? 4. To what are we to ascribe the good man's failure to meet his due reward, and the wicked his due penalty here? Is it because of the natural tendencies of things, or because those tendencies are temporarily arrested? What would be the result if life here were indefinitely prolonged? 5. What may we infer from this that would go far toward insuring retribution? 6. What alone would interfere with the continued operation of retributive forces in the future life? What must we assume would remain in the future just as at present? 7. Is it to be supposed that the loss of physical sensibility, with the dissolution of the body, would seriously detract from the fearfulness of retribution? Why not? 8. What light does analogy throw on the continuance of future retribution? Has penalty here a reforming power to any considerable extent? What is the usual character of repentance under penalty? 9. How must we suppose the prospect of the rewards of the good to be affected by relief from subjection to physical conditions and hardships? 10. To what conclusion are we brought by the foregoing considerations?

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XV. In a field so vast and complex as that of the Moral System, what is to be expected? In what do the difficulties we meet, consist? 1. How must a certain class of difficulties—such as the vindication of human freedom and of the divine goodness—be met? 2. What proportion do the facts we know bear to those we do not know? If the latter could be known, what difficulty would remain? 3. What would be requisite to justify us in criticising certain aspects of probation? Is human probation to be judged as an isolated fact or system? 4. What relation does the sphere of our observation bear to that of the scheme to which probation must be supposed to belong? 5. What illustration of our incompetence to criticise the Moral System is found in connection with human mechanism? Is this an adequate analogy? 6. Can we suppose our Moral System to be a detached fragment? What is the inference then? What has become already of many objections that have been brought against the wisdom and goodness of God in creation? 7. What problems in the sphere of Probation and the Moral System, does history present, and how may we suppose them to be solved? 8. What analogy, illustrative of this point, do we find in the planetary system? What in the sphere of art?

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XVI. What will follow from our ascribing the order of the moral constitution of things to a supreme intelligence? Must man's creation have been with reference to some end to be gained by it? 1. By what process do we investigate the design manifest in the constitution of things? 2. Where is design most strikingly manifest? What must we assume to be the design in man's creation? From what class of the results of probation, should we select the materials that evidence its design? 3. How do we proceed in the study of a human mechanism, to find out what it was meant to

produce? Can we discern this better from the inferior results of probation? On what ground can we decide what is the better? What phrase of the ancient philosophers expresses their ideal of perfect manhood? 4. If the attainment of this is rare, does it affect our argument? Why not? 5. Can the scheme for perfecting man's nature be limited in its scope merely to individuals? How has the idea of the progress of the race been regarded? 6. What objection may be urged against the assumption that the moral perfection of man and of the race, is the designed end of the Moral System? What reply may be made to the assertion that man is necessarily a drudge? Is the necessity of toil inconsistent with moral progress? What is the ministry or use of toil? 7. Does history force us to conclude against the possibility of the moral progress of the race? Have enthusiastic minds been disappointed in their cherished plans? Why do we not conclude that those plans are merely romantic dreams? Have past failures, however repeated or disastrous, led to their abandonment? 8. What view are we to take of progress in the past? 9. Is it essential to the argument to determine to what causes progress has been due? Why not? What are we, then, to conclude? 10. What are the circumstances of the Moral System, in which we ask what will be the probable course of divine procedure? 11. Why must we suppose the Moral System, after apparent failure, to be continued? From the continuance of the system, after apparent failure, what are we to infer? What is the conclusion forced upon us in regard to the powers of reason, from the survey of ancient learning and philosophy? 12. How will this conclusion be modified by looking at the condition of less cultured nations?

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XVII. On what ground might it be asserted that, with time and opportunity, man might attain the end of his creation without divine aid? 1. How is this objection to be met? What evidence is there that the moral and religious status of the race at a very early period was higher than in later times? 2. What are the facts as to China, Egypt, and other ancient nations? 3. By what two theories may this be accounted for? Does either theory relieve the difficulty? Why not? 4. What is the inference if the earlier Theism was reasoned out? What is admitted if this Theism was by means of an original revelation? 5. What is necessary to account for the advance actually made by some portions of the race? When do we find the purest Theism? How early do we find a marked religious degeneracy in progress? How widely does the evil extend? Is it arrested by progress in art and intellectual culture? What was the moral condition of the Roman empire at the height of its grandeur? 6. Did Heathenism give evidence of any power to lift itself out of its degraded state? 7. Is the permitted continuance of such a condition of things credible? What is more incredible? 8. In what is the only ground for hope? Can reason discover any resource? Has self-recovery of nations from moral degradation ever occurred, without foreign help? 9. What expectation does the continuance of the race in such circumstances, encourage us to cherish? How can the partial and local progress of the race morally, be explained? How the original Theism? How the Jewish Theism? How was the progress of decay in the old Roman world arrested? 10. Is there any analogy for this in the natural government of the world?

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XVIII. If a divine interposition is to take place, what form must it assume? 1. Why? 2. With what must a re-statement of the lost truth be accompanied? 3. Must there be some provision to perpetuate the truth or its influence? 4. Can reason teach us beforehand, how such a revelation must be made? 5. What answer has been given to the question, has a revelation been made? What do the various professed revelations that we meet with in the past, indicate? Is there any among them that can plausibly be represented as a rival of Christianity in its claims to respect? 6. What does the Old Testament assert as the explanation of Jewish Theism? 7. What support of the claims of the New Testament is found in the changes it effected? What was the character of these changes? 8. What may be said of the triumphs it has achieved? What presumption does this warrant? What strengthens this presumption? 9. What may be said of the documents on which Christianity is based? Do they leave the impression of unity of aim? Could there have been a conspiracy on the part of their authors? 10. What internal congruity do the doctrines of Christianity manifest? What are the principal of these doctrines? Has any one Biblical writer claimed the honor of originating Christianity? 11. How do the motives of Christianity compare in moral power with those with which it has come in conflict? 12. In what are we to look for the secret of the power of the Bible? Will style or poetic beauty explain it? What, then, must be conceded with regard to it? PAGE 202

XIX. 1. What is one main objection to revelation? What detracts from the force of this objection? Is the difficulty in the repetition of what is miraculous? In what then? What do we constantly meet in the sphere of human experience? Does it make any difference in the result, whether we call this will-force natural or supernatural? Why not? Does the doctrine of a Divine Providence, as taught in the Scriptures, harmonize with what we must infer concerning it, from the study of the Moral System? Why must we consider Providence as universal? 3. How does history illustrate an overruling providence? 4. What is implied in the doctrine of "human depravity?" What testimony in human experience confirms it? What necessity occasioned by this depravity is man conscious of, and how has he sought to meet it? Is there anything in human experience strictly analogous to what, in the Scriptures, is represented as the Atoning Sacrifice of Christ? Is the principle of it—vicarious suffering for the benefit of others—without human analogies? 6. What is understood by the phrase, "Original Sin?" What approach, in experience with which we are familiar, have we to an analogy of it? Do the facts of the Moral System throw light upon the Scripture doctrine of the necessity of "regeneration?" What moral changes do we have knowledge of, somewhat analogous to it? 7. What features of the Moral System in operation, correspond to the system revealed in the Scriptures? 8. How do the Moral System, and the teachings of the Scriptures, stand related severally to the theory of necessity? 9. How does the extent of the Moral System, as contemplated by reason, compare with its extent as set forth by revelation? 10. What do the Moral System and the Scriptures alike testify as to the frequent results of probation? 11. What may be said of many of the objections urged against Revelation? PAGE 208

XX. On what evidence does the existence of the Moral System rest? In what way does this system indicate design? What may we infer from the character of a system that reveals design? What attributes of God do we infer from the Moral System? On what grounds do we infer a future life? On what grounds do we infer that the present state is probationary? On what grounds do we assert that man, left to himself here, fails as a rule to attain the proper end of his being? On what grounds do we feel warranted to anticipate divine interposition? On what grounds do we assert that interposition has taken place? What is the effect of establishing each new position as we advance? What is the result as to the position which the Moral System must take in the realm of science? To what cheering view are we led by the study of the Moral System? What necessity does the existence of the Moral System impose upon man? PAGE 215

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