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ARTICLE I.

PHILOSOPHY IN THE CHURCH.

Until within the last two centuries, the empire of philosophy, in the Christian Church, has been divided, almost exclusively, between Plato and Aristotle. A modified Platonism invaded the Church (much to its detriment,) in the second century, and maintained its ascendancy for the next three hundred years. In the disputes of the fifth century, the dialectics of Aristotle began to be studied; and during this and the two succeeding ages, each of the great Grecian leaders had his admirers and followers. From the eighth to the sixteenth centuries, the empire of Aristotle was almost universal. It was entirely so, if we except a portion of the monks, the mystics, and the early reformers. With these exceptions, the authority of the Stagirite remained unbroken, till it encountered, in the first half of the seventeenth century, the more popular systems of Bacon and Des Cartes.

In the year 1605, Lord Bacon published his Chart of the Sciences, and his new method of pursuing them. This was followed, after some years, by his *Novum Organum*; in both which he inculcated what has been called the *Inductive Philosophy*. He insisted that, in our endeavours to advance the Sciences, and more especially the Physical Sciences, our reasonings must all be grounded on *facts*, and that these must be ascertained by reiterated and well conducted experiments. This can hardly

ARTICLE IV.

CHRISTIANITY VINDICATED FROM THE CHARGE OF
FANATICISM.

There is no general charge under which it is more frequently attempted to smother Christianity, than that of fanaticism. The pre-eminent mysteriousness of the doctrines which she avows, towering far above the loftiest conception of human reason—and the inward and hidden experience of those who are brought under her power, penetrating far beneath the deepest consciousness of unregenerate men—both afford scope for the reckless and indiscriminate application of this term. The indefiniteness of the charge, moreover, facilitates the malicious or the unreflecting allegation of it, while it is rendered thereby the more difficult to be disproved. For those who rally to the defence of Christianity, are compelled to frame definitions and to make distinctions, which it is the policy of the accuser to becloud and to confound. It adds, too, no little to the grievance of this charge, that it not only prejudices the system, but throws a gratuitous and beforehand suspicion upon its advocates, as though unworthy of a hearing on their own behalf. Not only is a foregone conclusion reached before a single argument has been heard, but often the argument itself is barred a hearing, by the contempt with which his cause has attained the counsel.

It is not strange, therefore, that the ruthless cry of fanaticism, when boldly raised against the Gospel, should for a season bear it to the ground: that it should sweep away the most convincing arguments which can be addressed to the understanding, the most earnest appeals which can be made to the conscience, and the most passionate claims which can be urged upon the sympathies and affections of men. Truth has indeed little to fear eventually in the conflict with error; and Divine truth, as her whole history will show, is ever "mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." But truth, in order to this success, must gain admission to the human mind. If prejudice closes the ear against her demonstrations, error must lie secure in its fastnesses. All that truth

desires is, an open field and a revealed foe : she will prove herself immortal in every combat, and claim a decisive victory in every issue. It has, however, often been the lot of Christianity to meet with derision instead of refutation. She puts forth her claims in the most solemn and considerate tone ; but while advancing to her proofs, is met with the infuriate cry, "away with her ! what further need have we of witnesses ? behold now, we have heard her blasphemy." The very greatness of her pretensions serves often to foreclose that scrutiny which it should invite. Her proofs being ignored, she is at once convicted either of madness or folly, upon the mere face of the indictment.

A striking illustration of this is furnished in the history of the Apostle Paul. Assailed by a violent mob in the streets of Jerusalem, and in peril of his life, the Apostle is rescued and taken finally under the protection of the Roman soldiery. By his own appeal to Cæsar, he is at length sisted before a Roman tribunal, to make out his cause against Jewish accusers. His defence is little more than a lucid statement of his religious belief, and a clear showing of the correspondence between this and the original articles of the Jewish faith. These truths sounded, however, so strangely in the ear of a Pagan governor, that all investigation is forestalled. His mind closed itself against the strange and foreign doctrine of the resurrection from the dead : "understanding neither what he said, nor whereof he affirmed," and forgetful of the proprieties of his office, and of the courtesy due even to a prisoner on trial, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, thou art beside thyself ; much learning doth make thee mad." No ingenuous reader of the narrative, given in the book of Acts, can feel any other sentiment than that of admiration for the moral heroism of the great Apostle, aside from all sympathy with his religious views. He is pained at this wanton indignity put upon a man who, with unsurpassed courage and eloquence, had ventured to speak against the howlings of an enraged populace ; and who, now, with unequalled dignity and mildness, rebukes the insolence of judges who sit before him in their purple and their power. But those who believe Paul to be an inspired expounder of a Divine system, and

feel a concern that this bold calumny against the Gospel should be repelled, will not stop in simple admiration of the Apostle's heroism, but will listen with breathless attention to the defence which he shall set up against so desolating a charge. They will be apt to remember Christ's injunction and promise to His disciples, when they should be brought before Kings and rulers for His sake: "settle it in your hearts not to meditate before what ye shall answer, for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay or resist;" and in view of this, will be prone to consider Paul's reply as authenticated and patented for the use of the Church in every age. This reply evidently assumes that only two grounds exist upon which it is possible to construct and to maintain the charge of fanaticism against the Gospel; which are either *the falsity of its tenets*, or *the extravagance of its practices*. If Christianity speaks on the one hand, "the words of truth," and on the other hand, "the words of soberness," she is fairly acquitted of madness or frenzy: and she establishes a most reasonable and righteous claim upon the considerate attention of all mankind.

It only remains, then, for the Christian advocate to file the plea which is already provided to his hand. It is proposed, therefore, now, to conduct the defence of the Gospel, by simply expanding the twofold reply given by the Apostle. This article will thus naturally divide itself in two parts; the first of which will consider Christianity as a scheme of truth, and the second, as a rule of life and conduct.

In entering upon the first of these divisions, it may be expedient *in limine* to quiet the apprehensions of the reader, by disclaiming any design of treating either largely or systematically what are technically termed 'the Evidences.' We have no mental condenser which can possibly compress within the limits of a brief essay, the various and discursive subjects embraced in this department. To establish the canonicalness of the sacred books, to explain their inspiration, to track the whole line of historical testimony, to discuss the subject of miracles, and to unfold and apply the evidence of prophecy, would only carry the reader a long and fatiguing journey over

a hard and beaten path, though he should touch but the tops of the argument. Our object is rather to present a compendious and portable argument for the truth of Christianity, viewed as a system, and without entering into the explication or defence of its details. This object will be fully gained by presenting a few of the more general and obvious considerations, which are likely to occur most readily to a reflecting mind. Nor will it be a matter of regret, if these shall fall rather under the head of internal evidence—a species of evidence for which we confess a growing affection, inasmuch as it requires for its appreciation little apparatus beyond a clear and honest mind, and is thus suited to convince plain and unlettered men; and since it is the actual warranty of that implicit faith which the mass of believers repose in Christianity, as a divinely revealed system of truth.

1. The first of these broad proofs which we adduce is, that *the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion commend themselves to the moral sense of mankind so as to receive their immediate assent.* The necessary existence of God, His moral government over men, the holiness and immutability of His law, and the accountability of all intelligent creatures, are truths which must lie at the foundation of all religion. If there were no God, or if there were no intelligent beings beside Himself, the idea of religion would not be extant in the world. In the one case, there would be no object of worship; in the other, there would be no subject by whom it could be rendered. But if both exist, there must also be a law, answering to the nature of Deity, as a medium of intercourse between the two; serving as a revelation of the one, and defining the relations and duties of the other.—Now it is worthy of attention that these great principles of all religion are no sooner revealed to man than they are instantly received, and can never be discharged from his cognizance. However capable of proof by reason and argument, they are not dependent upon this proof for their reception and retention. They seem to shine by their own light, and are admitted upon the evidence they themselves afford of their own truth. Were it not so, it would be hard to see how men could be the religious beings they certainly are. This capacity for religion—this

conscious recognition of law, and sense of obligation—which is the grand characteristic distinguishing men from brutes—would cease to exist. It is not at all necessary, in order to account for the existence of religious notions among men, to fall back upon the now generally abandoned doctrine of innate ideas. It is only necessary to maintain, what none will deny, that men are endowed with those faculties necessary to constitute them moral beings; they are gifted with intellect and affections. All religious truth came at first by immediate and supernatural revelation. But there is an established congruity between the truths objectively revealed, and the mind which subjectively receives them. Dr. Chalmers very luminously distinguishes between “the power required for the discernment of a truth, and the power required for its discovery.” He says,* “a proposition which we could never have found our way to, we may, nevertheless, recognize as worthy of all credit and all acceptance, when stated and placed forward to our view. We have no light in ourselves which could lead to the disclosure of it; but when disclosed *ab extra*, there may be a light in ourselves by which to invest it in the characters of truth, and so to constrain the homage of our deep-felt convictions—not that light of evidence which could open for us a pathway to the objective, but a light of evidence struck out between the objective and the subjective—requiring, therefore, the presentation of the object by another, after which it is acknowledged and appropriated by ourselves as an article of faith.” When it is affirmed that men are, by nature, religious beings, it is not, therefore, implied that they have spontaneously originated the conceptions which they have; but only that they are constituted with such a capacity for religious impressions, that when Divine truth is revealed from Heaven, *it must be received*; and when received, is held with such tenacity as never again to be wholly dislodged from their minds. That such a congeniality is established between religious truth and the recipient mind, is proved by the fact, that those great doctrines which are the foundation of all religion, however perverted or overlaid, have never been extirpated

* Institutes of Theology, vol. 1, p. 248. Posthumous works, vol. 7.

from the world. For example: though men have "not liked to retain God in their knowledge," and have bowed down before Lords many and Gods many of their own creation, yet the great idea of a Supreme Deity has preserved its ascendancy through all the monstrous forms of human idolatry. The stupendous truth of an inspecting and controlling Providence, has imbedded itself in the mythology which consecrates every hill and grove and valley as the shrine of some local and tutelary Deity.—The supremacy of an original law, and the grim image of vindictive justice pursuing the transgressor, stand out to view in the horrible and cruel rites of the most ancient and hoary superstitions. Even the doctrines of redemption and the conversableness with men of a reconciled God, though dropped first as hints upon the human mind, have left their imperishable trace in all the traditions and legends of antiquity. They have more than kept themselves from erasure: they have passed down through all the creations of idolatry and heresy, the archetypes of those fables which constitute both the poetry and the religion of the heathen world. Dreadfully distorted through the refracting media of ignorance, prejudice and idolatry, through which they have come; scarcely cognizable any more as truth; rendered grotesque by the monstrous and silly additions which have been placed upon them: yet they exist, at once the caricature and the attestation of those fundamental truths which God at first communicated—and which no lapse of time, no darkness of Paganism, no inventions of Mythologists, and no denials of Atheists, have been able entirely to eradicate.

All this affords a strong *a priori* argument for the truth of Christianity. She engrosses these foundations of natural religion, and makes them the basis of her own more perfect system. She teaches them with greater clearness, enforces them with higher authority, and builds upon them a more enduring structure. Those truths which are more peculiarly her own, such as atonement and mediation, like the others, trace their lines with ineffaceable distinctness upon the tablet of the human mind. And can that system be spurious, whose fundamental articles men intuitively receive, as readily and as firmly as they receive the axioms of Mathematics, or the first principles

of natural science? These principles, which never become effete through age, which can neither be suppressed nor destroyed, stand forth as vouchers of the entire system which is simply developed from them.

2. A second general proof of the truth of Christianity is found in the fact, *that most of its leading doctrines are incomprehensible by human reason, and must, therefore, be above the reach of human invention.* The absolute Eternity of God, the subsistence of the Divine Essence in a threefold distinction of persons, the eternal generation of the Son, His incarnation and the union of two natures in His Mediatorial person, the personality of the Spirit and all His operations upon the hearts of men, the resurrection from the dead, and future retribution, may be singled as instances in point. Not one of these is any man able fully to explain. The longer they are pondered, the more must they be confessed "unsearchable—past finding out." They are received, however, firmly and without hesitation; received not as abstract propositions, having no concern with the life and practice of men, but as the foundation of all their conduct, and the pillars of their hope; received, too, simply upon the trust which is reposed in the testimony of Jehovah himself.—Now upon the supposition that Christianity is a revelation from God, the existence of such truths can be easily accounted for. Reason herself teaches that if the Infinite One condescends to reveal Himself to His creatures, there will be depths in this revelation altogether unfathomable by its short line. Reason staggers not at the announcement that "it is the glory of God to conceal a thing;" while faith cheerfully accedes to the facts revealed, when a Divine testimony is offered as the warrant. Neither philosophy nor religion will justify the protest of reason, founded upon its incompetency to compass the *modus* of a fact, provided the fact itself is attested by sufficient evidence. But upon the hypothesis that Christianity is an imposture, how can the existence of such mysterious doctrines be explained? If the Gospel is only "a cunningly devised fable," these essential principles are purely of human invention. Yet if so, how are they inexplicable? The law holds as true in the intellectual as in the material world, that no stream rises higher than its source:

what man invents, man surely shall be able to describe. It is easy to say religion owes its existence to priestcraft; yet this superficial explanation will not satisfy any but the most shallow and credulous of infidels. The question returns, whence came priesthood and priestcraft themselves? How sprung these strange and wonderful thoughts into the minds of those who call themselves priests? How explain the singular susceptibility in the race to ideas of this sort, that they should be immediately cognized as soon as they are distinctly unfolded from without? And how account for the extraordinary vitality of these doctrines, which refuse utterly to die out from the world, if they are only of mortal birth? It does not satisfy to go back a few links in a series, when it is so easy to overleap them all, and to demand an explanation of the very first in the entire chain; it is not enough to say that the world rests upon the back of the tortoise, while the tortoise itself rests upon——nothing!

We feel great pleasure in wresting from free-thinkers their grand argument drawn from the unfathomable mysteries of the Christian religion. We ask them to explain by what process of ratiocination did the inventor first arrive at the notion of God's social existence in a trinity of persons? From what premises did he start, and by what laws of thought was he conducted to the grand ideas of atonement and sacrifice by an incarnate Deity? What analogies or associations first suggested the cardinal doctrine of the new birth by the Holy Ghost, and by what *a priori* demonstration was the hint coined into an indubitable truth? Above all, how comes it to pass that since their first promulgation, the united reason of mankind has been equally unable to contradict and to explain them? Most surely the incomprehensible nature of these doctrines, so far from convicting Christianity of falsehood, affords the strongest conceivable presumption of its truth. They plainly do not lie within the orbit in which the human mind is appointed to move. Their home is in a higher sphere; and their existence on earth as mental phenomena, cannot be explained, unless they have been let down from the mind of God. If this be granted, then must their truth be also admitted; unless we are prepared to charge upon Him who is the truth, a wilful decep-

tion of his creatures. It strengthens, too, the argument, that these are not isolated truths, standing or falling alone; they are on the contrary thoroughly interwoven with the whole system of the gospel. The falsification of one must destroy the whole, and the verification of one must equally establish the entire scheme.

3. It is extremely pertinent to our general argument to observe now, that *the gospel is a closely compacted system; all the parts of it are homogenous and consolidated into one grand whole, being bound together by the strictest logical connexion.* This never was true, and never can be true, of any imposture. Every lie contains in itself the elements of its own refutation; and must be exceedingly short, if it does not break in two of its own weight. This lays the foundation of one of the most important processes for the elimination of truth in our courts of justice; and it rarely happens that a prevaricating witness does not, under a searching cross-examination, cancel his own depositions. At least this much may be affirmed; that no extensive and *original* system of error was ever framed, which could possibly hold together, when subjected to a rigid analysis. Like the monstrous image in the vision of the Babylonian monarch, its members are partly iron and partly clay, which no art can ever cement. The reason is obvious, truth is one. However it may lose itself in the distance of infinity, whither no human eye can ever follow it; or however wide may be the gaps which a too superficial finding has permitted to occur; it deposes as to realities which do co-exist in fact—hence its testimony can never be self-contradictory. But falsehood undertakes to speak of things which have not a substantive existence; and however in its inventions it may preserve verisimilitude in the broad, projecting features, it is hard for human wit to weave a consistent underplot which shall thoroughly line and protect the same.

Perhaps we shall be referred, in refutation of these positions, to existing systems of error, such as the Papacy, or Mahometanism. It is readily granted that these are gigantic systems, made up of many and closely homologated parts. It is freely admitted that they are both magnificent specimens of joinery, in which the pieces are dovetailed with consummate skill—as beautiful samples of Mo-

saic as human art ever furnished for the admiration of the world. But it is denied that they are *original* inventions. They were not hatched out, each from its own egg; and have not grown by inherent life to their present proportions. They are, on the contrary, from first to last, perversions of Christianity, and borrow their systematic form from this source. Exquisite skill, indeed, has been displayed in so distorting the separate features of Christianity as to be unique in their deformity, presenting the vrainsemblance of an original monster. But even this skill is inferior to that required for developing from a single conception in a human brain so symmetrical and systematic a scheme as either of these. If, then, the gospel be a fraud, so complicated and so extensive, it is impossible that it should not contradict itself—and the logical connexion of its multifarious parts, binding them into so grand and complete a whole, affords a triumphant vindication from the charge that it had its origin in the heated brain of an enthusiast.

4. Analogous to the foregoing is another general proof drawn from the fact that *this whole system is committed to writing; and this written record is authoritative, binding both as to faith and practice.* It is characteristic of fanaticism, in all its manifestations, that it lays claim to private revelations. The dreamer supposes himself to be closeted in intimate converse with Deity; and puts forth his extravagant fantasies as veritable disclosures of Infinite love and wisdom. Of course, those who are not favoured with the same high intercourse are incompetent to judge of these portentous revelations. There is no recognized standard to which they can be referred, and which shall be the test of those which are spurious. Thus fanaticism has the adroitness to lift itself not only above the shafts of criticism, but even above the most modest and reverential inquiry. It never defers to any authority aside from itself. Self-complacent in the enjoyment of its royal privilege of immediate access to the Great King, it wraps itself within the mantle of dogmatism, excommunicates at will all who question its prerogative, and revels in its own chartered licentiousness. Christianity, however, imposes precisely that restraint which fanaticism slips aside. It spreads before the world an inspired canon,

containing all that must be believed, all that must be felt, all that must be done. These authoritative scriptures invite the severest scrutiny of reason and offer to satisfy all its just demands, when it asks for their credentials. Indeed the Bible above all books has been the whetstone upon which criticism has sharpened its blade. In the school of the Gospel, no disciple is ever permitted to thrust away his text-book. He may not spin his thoughts into any propositions, nor weave his affections into any relations, upon which this record shall not sit in judgment. All articles believed, all sentiments cherished, and all actions achieved, are brought "to the law and to the testimony;" whoever abides not by their final award, becomes an excised apostate. It is obvious what a check is hereby imposed upon the wayward imagination of mankind, which a lawless fanaticism ever seeks to emancipate from control.

At first view, this circumstance may not seem to afford an "*experimentum crucis*" by which to distinguish Christianity from mere fanaticism; since so far as this argument goes, the Koran of the Arabian impostor, the *credenda* of Emanuel Swedenborg, and even the golden plates of the Mormon prophet, may be placed upon the same footing with the Bible. These, however, notwithstanding they are committed to record, are still private revelations. None but their respective authors enjoyed the gift of inspiration. There is no concurring testimony to vouch for the verity of these professed disclosures. But the Christian canon is composed of various books, written by inspired men who lived in separate countries and at distant intervals of time. The same spirit who in earlier days illuminated Moses and Job, in after years rested upon David and Solomon, upon Isaiah and Daniel. The succession of prophets was continued through Amos and Joel and others, to the close of the Old Testament record. After a suspension of four hundred years, the mantle of inspiration rested again upon Matthew and Luke, upon Peter and Paul and John. If these were all mad, then was there strange method in their madness. It is incredible that for the space of fifteen hundred years a conspiracy should have been perpetuated, and that with long intervals suspending the continuity of succession among

these impostors. If these were not impostors, but really inspired men holding separate intercourse with God, then do they vouch and verify each other. Their several books, which they have written, serve as checks upon all fanaticism in the record which they compose; precisely as this record in turn guaranties against fanaticism in those who submit to be taught and governed by its precepts. Verily "no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation; for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

5. We lay more stress upon the consideration which we next urge: that *Christianity gives exercise to every faculty of the soul, and employs them in the order in which they stood before it was disturbed by sin.* Man is known to be a moral being by the possession of certain powers which are necessary to accountability. "To moral agency belongs a moral *faculty*, or sense of good and evil, or of such thing as desert or worthiness, of praise or blame, reward or punishment; and a capacity which an agent has of being influenced by moral inducements or motives, exhibited to the view of understanding and reason, to engage to a conduct agreeable to the moral faculty."* He must, in other words, possess an understanding with which to weigh propositions, to appreciate motives, and to form judgments; he must have affections capable of being excited for or against the objects proposed to them; he must have the power of deciding between different courses of action. It would well repay the effort of the reader, if he should here pause to mark how the Gospel does practically exercise all the powers of the human soul. What employment is given to the understanding in examining the evidences of the Christian faith, in comprehending its diversified statements, in estimating the force of arguments which are intended to influence human conduct! What exercise is given to the affections, when it calls upon us to love holiness, to hate sin, to fear God, and to hope in His mercy! What scope is afforded to the actings of the will, when it is summoned to abandon former courses, to refuse the evil and to choose

* Edwards on the Will. Works. Vol. II. p. 40.

the good ! In the simple exercise of faith in the Redeemer, how are we employed in remembering past sins, and in apprehending God's infinite grace ! How do we perceive, and think, and reason, and compare ! How do we hope, and fear, and confide, and rejoice ! How is the mind put through all its complex operations, and the heart agitated by the infinite variety of its emotions !

But the Gospel, when it is made "the savour of life unto life," does not simply give intense exercise to all the faculties which distinguish man as a moral being, but employs these in that precise order in which they relatively stood before the fall. We may well suppose that man in his more perfect state, when he came fresh from the hands of his maker, would exhibit something like uniformity in the operation of his several powers. Even in a well regulated machine, there must be a due subordination of the parts: much more must this subserviency of one faculty to another be discovered in man, the last of the creatures, and made in the image of God. Before sin was introduced with its disturbing influence, the understanding, as first in exercise, was the leading or directing faculty of the soul ;* the affections, as next in use, was the moving power ; and the will discharged an executive function, carrying out into choice and subsequent action the conclusions of the mind and the desires of the heart. Immediately upon the apostacy, this beautiful arrangement is subverted. The temptations which now assail us address themselves not in the first instance to the judgment, but to the corrupt affections. When these are entangled, the understanding is carried by special pleas which are set in full battery against it. This being gained over, and the unholy alliance formed, the enslaved will does the bidding of the conspirators. "Every man is tempted," says the apostle James, "when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed ; then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin ; and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." But the Gospel, when it does its saving work upon the soul, reverses this order, going back to that which was established in man's primitive integrity. The first operation of the Holy Ghost is to enlighten the mind,

* See Owen on Indwelling Sin. Works. Vol. 13, pp. 71, 77, et alibi.

upon which He brings to bear the whole artillery of truth; He then purges the conscience, purifies the affections and subdues the will. That now is a singular imposture, which does not avail itself, for its wicked ends, of the confusion and darkness into which human nature was thrown, and which would render it a more easy prey. And more singular still, that its first office should be to repair the ruin of the soul, and restore its pristine integrity, thereby too surely defeating its own purpose of destruction.

Contrast with this the policy pursued by every scheme of fanaticism known in the history of mankind. With the uniformity of instinct, they invariably address themselves to one or other power of the soul, and always to those which have usurped an ascendancy over the reason. In some cases, the appeal is to the imagination, the most fickle and wayward of all the faculties; in other cases, the passions are enlisted. But in all cases alike, the understanding is dethroned from its seat of rule, and made subaltern to those powers which should be under its direction. Let this difference be carefully observed between Christianity and all the fanatical systems with which it is too often classed; let it be noted how they respectively seek to bring men under their control; and the contrast between the honesty of the one, and the sly craft of the other, will scarcely fail to impress a candid mind that they have no interests or features in common.

6. Similar in nature to the preceding is the last argument we offer for the truth of the Christian scheme: *that it carefully adjusts all the duties which grow out of the relations which men sustain in life.* It considers man first in his relations to God, and his religious obligations of course as supreme. It places man next in his various relations to his family, to his country, to the Church, and to the world; and specifies in their due subordination the duties of each. It provides formal precepts for his direction in all the situations and circumstances of life. Husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant, ruler and subject, all are taught their duties, and furnished with explicit rules for their guidance. The patriot, the citizen, the neighbour, the friend—all may draw from the sacred oracles rules of action which may safely be trusted. The rich and the poor, the sons of sorrow and of joy, the

wise and the ignorant—all are instructed with care in their reciprocal obligations; and precepts are afforded for the useful distribution of their sympathies and charities. Fanaticism, however, in all its forms, labors sedulously to take society apart at its joints. It brings the duties of men into perpetual collision; withdrawing some that are imperative, sinking out of view those that are important, and exalting to pre-eminence others that are subordinate. It makes one class, like Aaron's rod, swallow up all the rest. Denying or changing the relations in which men should stand to each other, it throws the world into endless strife and confusion. If, then, this be a characteristic sign of fanaticism, must not that system be acquitted of the charge, which fits man for all his duties, and regulates the same in their due proportion?

But without wiredrawing these proofs, let us here rest the defence of Christianity, so far as its truth is concerned. These general considerations, directed rather to the system taken as a unit than to the details which compose it, if they have had weight with the reader, will probably satisfy him that the first branch of Paul's famous reply to Festus is clearly substantiated. So far as the charge of fanaticism rests against the Gospel upon the alleged falsity of its tenets, it is rejoined on the Gospel's behalf that it speaks only the words of truth; and Paul may safely reclaim against the accusation of madness, though he avows himself a Christian before a heathen tribunal.

This charge is preferred against the Gospel upon another and distinct ground, viz, the alleged extravagance in the pretensions and practices of its professors; to which it is sufficient to reply that Christianity "speaks the words of soberness," as well as of truth. The Greek word *σωφροσυνη*, translated soberness, involves primarily the idea of moderation. It is compounded of two others, *σασ* and *φρον*, which indicate a sound judgment; that admirable balance of mind which enables men to strike every subject of all that is collateral and contingent, and to esteem every object according to its intrinsic value. A clear issue is, then, joined between the accusers and the advocates of Christianity; the charge is boldly tabled by the one, and is flatly denied by the other—let us attend to the replication of the parties.

There are three specifications under this general accusation: that Christians are extravagant, (1) in directing their affections too intensely or too exclusively towards God and Divine things; (2) in denying themselves to the pleasures and emoluments of this world, and living by faith of joys to come; (3) in their unwarrantable assumption of spiritual illumination and birth by the Holy Ghost, of mystical union with Christ the Redeemer, and of actual fellowship and communion with God as their father. The limits of this article, becoming narrower as we proceed, forbid any thing like a detailed reply to these specifications; and the reader as well as the writer must be content with a general answer, similar to that by which the preceding charge was met.

In relation to the first, it is instantly repelled when we consider *the infinite worthiness of the object loved*. We freely confess that the Gospel demands the whole heart for God; "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." Obedience to this first and great commandment is the aim of every sincere Christian: and his deepest grief is provoked by a conscious shortcoming in what is no less a privilege than it is a duty. But it is obvious that mere intenseness of affection is not extravagance, unless this affection travels beyond the just claims of the object upon our regard. What blasphemer is bold enough to affirm this of the ever blessed God? Is he not "infinite in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth?" Is he not "glorious in holiness and fearful in praises," and his "name excellent in all the earth?" How, then, can the love of finite creatures transcend the measure of His worth? What language can describe the infinite love and admiration with which the persons of the Godhead mutually regard each other? And while Father, Son, and Spirit are indescribably happy in their reciprocal love, as they behold the glory of the divine nature in each, shall the small measures of admiration and praise which are returned by finite beings be deemed excessive, when they are lavished upon Him who is infinite? Let us apply a practical test: who ever brought the same accusation against the angels in heaven, or against "the spirits of just men made perfect?" and why

not? Do they not love the same Being with all the intenseness of which their more enlarged faculties and their more ample knowledge render them capable? Is it replied, that in heaven, as the world of glory, God makes such discoveries of his perfections, as command this homage of the whole soul? and who will undertake to say that God may not, and will not, make as large discoveries of his glory to the faith of his people on earth, as their present nature will admit? And if these should love and adore with all the ardor of seraphim before the throne on high, why should it be deemed more extravagant or fanatical in the one case than in the other?

Again, *the love of the whole soul is due to God for the blessings of Redemption.* Benefits conferred are a true foundation for love; and even heathen moralists have denounced ingratitude as the meanest of vices. If so, the extent of the benefit should be the measure of the love with which it is requited. This principle, applied to the case before us, excludes any supposition of extravagance in the love of saints. They have been delivered from the curse of a broken law, under which they were doomed to endure eternal pains. They have been exalted to joys and glories far surpassing those which were forfeited by transgression. These blessings, too, have been procured at a sacrifice which none but Jehovah himself was able to render; and of which not even a senate of angels, deliberating in solemn congress the means of man's salvation, could have formed the faintest conception. Such benefits as these, purchased at such a cost that if creatures could have conceived, it would have been blasphemy for them to propose it, have been lavished upon men, when no antecedent necessity existed to compel the Deity to such a manifestation of power and of love. When the value of the human soul shall have been computed, or when the pains of hell and the glories of heaven shall have been weighed in even scales, or when the free and infinite grace of God shall have been measured, then will the benefits of redemption be ascertained, and the consequent gratitude of the saints may perhaps be accurately graduated. But so long as these blessings pass beyond finite comprehension, just so long will the freest and largest love bestowed upon the Redeemer be exempt from the profane charge of extravagance.

We insist further upon *the entire consistency of supreme love to God with a subordinate love for subordinate objects*. If the former were exorbitant, it would encroach upon the latter. But the very terms of our proposition render such interference an absurdity. The subordinate, while it remains such, cannot encroach upon the supreme; nor can the supreme ever *exclude*, but must always *include*, the subordinate. Christianity, however jealous for the honor of God, will not cheapen itself to be put in rivalry with the world. It does not shut its followers up in cloisters, devoting them to a cold and ironhearted asceticism. It rather places them in the world, in the midst of all its duties and affections, which it consecrates to their enjoyment. It only demands that the inferior shall be held in inferior regard, while the supreme shall command the supreme homage of the soul. They do not interfere. The moon does not cease to revolve around the earth, because she must accompany the earth in a wider circuit round the sun. The great law of gravitation, which binds satellite and primary together in a common orbit, is the necessary condition upon which that satellite performs its secondary service to its own principal. In like manner, that supreme affection for God, which holds all perfect beings to His throne, secures that common harmony in which they move and love among themselves. No subordinate object is loved aright or loved safely, until it is loved with a subordinate attachment; and no scale exists for proportioning and distributing this love, until a supreme affection for the Infinite One takes possession of the soul, which is a constant standard by which all lower love may be compared and measured.

The defence, under the second specification, is similar to that under the first. It is indeed the confession of the Christian that "the life he lives in the flesh he lives by faith of the Son of God." His greatest anxiety, for which he cheerfully undergoes the mortifying discipline inflicted by his Father, is to become weaned from the world, and to "set his affections on things above." But what is there of folly or frenzy in all this? *It is justified by the relative value of temporal and eternal things*. Even the ungodly confess that this life offers no satisfying portion to the soul. The honors, the emoluments and the pleasures of

this world are but uncertain prizes for which to set our stakes. In the great lottery of life, the wheel of destiny, in its ceaseless revolution, turns out blanks to the far greater number. Of those who start out together upon the same career, how few reach the goal! And when these efforts have been crowned with anticipated success, what care and pain are required to retain the long-sought treasures! It needs a close and miserly grip to hold fast the slippery wealth which has been the fruit of so much toil; and the wreath of fame pricks with many a concealed thorn the uneasy brow which it adorns. What successful competitor for the premiums of this world ever confessed himself happy in their possession? A secret craving after something higher and more ennobling, accompanied with the consciousness of present discontent, infuses gall into all his draughts of earthly joy. The Christian poet sings of such an one:

Thus full of titles, flattery, honor, fame,
 Beyond desire, beyond ambition full,—
 He died—he died of what? Of wretchedness.
 Drank every cup of joy, heard every trump
 Of fame; drank early, deeply drank; drank draughts
 That common millions might have quenched—then died
 Of thirst, because there was no more to drink.*

But though these earthly acquisitions filled up the measure of human hopes and wishes, they all vanish at death, and leave their poor possessor a bankrupt at the last. Can these things be put in competition with the more satisfying and enduring realities of the eternal world? And if the eye of faith sees the difference between them with far greater clearness, shall it quail before the frown of reason, which must itself confess this world poor if set over against the world to come? As to the self-denial of holding aloof from worldly pleasure, it is forgotten on the one hand that in conversion the tastes are changed, calling for a corresponding change in the objects of pursuit; and on the other hand, that all rational and lawful pleasures, though they be not religious in their nature, the Christian enjoys with as keen a relish as others. Indeed, receiving them as tokens of his Heavenly Father's covenant love, and using them in the moderation which the Gospel enjoins,

* Course of Time. Book 4.

they are more highly flavoured to his palate than to another's. He eats his meat seasoned with grace; his wine is spiced with a more exquisite enjoyment.

Observe further, that however much the saint may be weaned from this world, and however heavenly minded he may become, *no earthly duty is disallowed or displaced by the spiritual.* The reverse is true. It becomes a religious duty with a godly man to fill up the entire circle of his earthly obligations; and his conscience takes as direct cognizance of these as of any others. Let the decision of this matter be remitted to candid observers everywhere. Who discharge punctually the duties of common life—who make conscience of the obligations which rest upon parents and children, upon masters and servants, and indeed upon all the relations in society—more than those Christians who most habitually live above the world and hold communion with heaven? There can be therefore, no want of discretion, no heat of fanaticism, in the most earnest desires that are felt by the saints to be crucified to the world.

The third specification will require a more elaborate attention before it is quite disposed of. It is drawn from the pretensions of Christians founded upon their own personal experience, upon what they have felt *within themselves* of the workings of divine power and grace. We feel no disposition to abate any thing from the matter of the charge, but are willing to set forward these pretensions in the strongest terms. It is true, then, that all real Christians do profess to have enjoyed the special illumination of the Holy Ghost; who teaches them not merely by the objective presentation of truth, but by an immediate subjective influence upon the mind itself, whereby it is enabled to see divine things in their true light; "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." They do profess to have been quickened into spiritual life from a state of spiritual death, by as radical and substantive a change as that experienced by the embryo when it is born into natural life; "except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." They do rejoice in the dwelling and presence within them of the Spirit of God,

whereby they are duly sanctified as "temples of the Holy Ghost:" "but ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." They do profess to be really, though mystically, united with Christ their Redeemer and Head; a union *in law*, whereby is effected the reciprocal imputation of their sins to him for expiation, and of his righteousness to them for justification; a union *in fact*, whereby life and strength are daily communicated from Him, "of whose fulness they receive grace for grace;" and a union declared by the Saviour himself, "I am the vine, ye are the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit." They do profess further to hold constant, personal and intimate communion with God as their father, through the mediation of the Son, and by the assistance of the Spirit: "truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ."

Now against all these lofty professions, the rationalist enters the protest of his sneers. A derisive smile plays upon his face, while reading what he interprets as confessions under the indictment. Silly fools! he exclaims, to weave themselves the net with which they are to be caught. He asks for no stronger proof of fanaticism than is furnished in the language dropping from their lips. These extravagancies he regards either with scornful pity, as the gorgeous dreams of a diseased, or the insane ravings of a disordered, fancy; or else with malignant suspicion, as the arrogant and exclusive pretensions of knavish hypocrisy. He denounces them as experiences which never can be substantiated upon competent evidence, and being of such a nature that reason can form no conception of them. Let us see whether Christianity cannot lift up her calm face against this storm of rebuke and reproach: and whether she will not have the courage to hold the rationalist, in his overweening reliance upon his boasted reason, to the issues he has created.

The question before us is one simply of *fact*; and a great cloud of witnesses is at hand ready to give in their testimony. Their office is not to wrangle or explain, not to philosophize or reason; but simply to tell "what they have heard, what they have seen with their eyes, what they have looked upon, and their hands have handled, of

the word of life." The whole generation of the righteous now composing the militant Church of Christ on earth, and the whole "General Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in Heaven," stand forward to be interrogated. They depose clearly and firmly, we know there is such a thing as the new-birth, because *we ourselves* have been "quickened," who before were "dead in trespasses and sins." We know that the Holy Ghost does open the mind to the discovery of truth, because "He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into *our* hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." We know that the Holy Ghost does dwell in believers, because God "hath sent the Spirit of His Son into *our* hearts, crying, Abba, Father." We know that true believers are united to Christ, because "Christ is formed in *our* hearts, the hope of glory." We know there is spiritual fellowship between the saints and God, because "through Him (Christ) *we* have access, by one Spirit, unto the Father." Nor can the credibility of these witnesses be impugned. They are neither fools nor maniacs. In all the common avocations of life they exhibit the same forethought, the same moderation, the same judgment with others. In the expression of their religious convictions they exhibit the same coherence of thought, the same powers of reason, the same cool logic; and are always ready to "give a reason of the hope that is within them." The sincerity of their convictions is attested by the fact that upon the reality of these experiences they are willing to peril the interests of their souls—prepared to meet the tremendous decisions of the judgment day and the eternal destinies then to be awarded, upon the faith that they have actually felt all that they describe. It is a testimony corroborated likewise by the visible results which are seen to flow from what they profess to experience; a life of patience, of self-denial, of humility and of meekness; a sobriety of deportment, a devotion of soul, and an honesty of conduct, standing forth oftentimes in marked contrast with the turbulence and wickedness, lasciviousness and pride, which characterized them before the period of their sound conversion to God. It adds greatly also to the force of this testimony, that the witnesses who concur so remarkably in their depositions as to *the*

facts, should differ most widely among themselves upon the *mere science* of Christianity. They have not been bribed to give in a ready-made testimony; for their variations in opinion upon many minor points prove them to be at least independent and truthful witnesses; and the several schools into which they are divided, and the sometimes violent collisions between them, afford security against collusion and fraud among themselves. However variant their speculations may be upon the thousand questions which Christian theology propounds, there is an exact agreement in their statements of the facts of experimental religion.

Now we insist that this whole testimony shall be admitted to record; and that it shall be placed in the same scales in which evidence is weighed before human tribunals. It is the testimony of a mighty multitude, stretching from the beginning of time to the present moment; the testimony of witnesses unexceptionable for credibility, being found sober, judicious and wise in all the concerns of time; a testimony sealed with the blood of martyrs, and the diversified persecution of confessors; a testimony confirmed by lives answerable to the professions which are made; a testimony which not only bears no internal marks of collusion, but which excludes all supposition of fraud. In the name of candour and justice, how is this volume of testimony to be set aside; testimony given upon personal knowledge and experience of the facts involved? Will the prosecutor challenge the witnesses? Let him place his hand, then, upon the Lamb's book of life, and call before him every one whose name is there recorded. Beginning with those now alive upon the earth, he must challenge them in detail, one by one; for they are witnesses independent of each other, deposing not upon report, but upon their individual and experimental knowledge. He must show that all and singular, they are incompetent witnesses; either because from want of character their word is not to be received in evidence, or because from imbecility or aberration of mind they are incapable of knowing what they describe. Having disposed of these, he must next summon the generation of those who made their departure last to the world of glory; and by the same process destroy the credibility of each of these. He must thus ascend through succes-

sive generations of believers who, during six thousand years, have lived in this world of sin, until he shall arrive at the very first redeemed sinner. All the individuals, which compose this throng which no man can number, must be separately impeached. Not one shall be overlooked—not one survive this blasting arraignment; for that one, by his single testimony, will substantiate the facts he seeks to destroy. Nor is this all. He must satisfactorily account for certain prominent features in the personal history of all the saints. If he denies what they affirm, the new birth, it is incumbent upon him to explain that singular and sudden transformation of character, when they “were turned from the power of Satan unto God”—to explain how the lion came to put on the nature of the lamb—how the licentious came to be chaste; the profane, devout; the proud, humble; the lovers of pleasure, lovers of God. If he denies what they affirm, their union with Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, let him explain how these have been preserved blameless and without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation—how it is, that walking upon pitch they have kept their garments unspotted—how it is, that in the midst of temptations and snares, with earthly appetites and instincts, they have “lived soberly, righteously, and godly,” “making no provision to the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof.” If he denies what they affirm, the illumination of the Holy Ghost, let him explain how upon the mysterious doctrines of grace they have reached such unshaken certainty of their truth, that in the agonies of death, surrounded by weeping friends, when earthly ties are rending, they can chant the song of victory, and with a beam of heaven in their souls enter into its glory. Every effect must have a cause. Upon the Christian hypothesis these effects are referred to causes adequate to their production. But if the existence of these causes is denied, the objector will not surely be so unreasonable as to leave the matter without an explanation; at least, he cannot expect us to remit so far the demands of a sound philosophy, when it challenges the solution of these facts. It is needless to say that these just demands are made in vain. The herculean task of destroying thus in detail the witnesses for experimental religion has never been undertaken; nor, if attempted, could it possibly be achieved.

The rationalist must therefore take a shorter route. He will probably affirm that nothing of all this ever fell within his own experience, nor within the experience of myriads besides himself—that it is at best but the experience of a very small fragment of the great family of mankind. Granted; but shall the negative experience of one man thrust aside the positive testimony of another man? It is assumed in this, that the experiences of all men perfectly coincide; an assumption in itself positively absurd, and notoriously contradicted by observation of a thousand particulars every day of our lives. The King of Siam—to appropriate an illustration of Dr. Campbell's in reply to similar reasoning on the part of Mr. Hume—the king of Siam never saw ice; but shall he not believe the testimony of those who *have* seen it? It may be true that ice was never seen within the tropics; but how shall this disprove its existence at the poles? Testimony is given upon certain facts which lie within the *exclusive* experience of the witnesses who depose; and their testimony is set aside upon the ground that this experience is not *universal*—a thing not affirmed by the witnesses, but on the contrary explicitly denied. If Christians affirmed that all men were born again, their testimony would be contradicted by the negative experience of those who never were subjects of this great change—nay, it would be a declaration which they are incompetent to make, since, from the nature of this birth, it can be certainly known only by the immediate subjects of it. But when they simply affirm that *they themselves* have been born again, this may be true in perfect consistency with the fact that millions of other men are still spiritually dead. And the fact that some, nay, that even *one* has felt this change, clearly establishes that there is such a thing as a renovation of nature. If the rationalist should rejoin, I believe upon testimony what I never myself experienced, in all cases where an intrinsic probability exists in favour of the thing deposed, or where certain analogies afford a presumption of its truth, or when laws, whose operation I have never witnessed, exist, competent to bring it about—even this shift shall not avail him. Had he been content to occupy a neutral position, neither affirming nor denying the facts in question, his scepticism, in defiance of this vast

array of positive testimony, would still be deemed unreasonable—but we should not feel called upon to disturb the indifference in which he reposes. It is one thing, however, to doubt; and another thing, to deny. It is one thing, to be unconvinced by evidence; and another, to contravene evidence—one thing, to be sceptical, and another, to be antagonistic. The rationalist has thrown himself into the position of an assailant. He has denounced all this experience of the Christian world as spurious and fanatical. He denies the facts reported; and denies, because it is impossible they should be true. He is compelled, therefore, to make good this position. Let him understand his own posture in this controversy: Christianity affirms certain facts, and undertakes to substantiate the same by precisely that kind of evidence which facts require—the testimony of a large body of unexceptionable witnesses, who speak from personal and experimental acquaintance with them. The rationalist flouts these witnesses and rejects their testimony, upon the broad ground of its intrinsic improbability. That improbability, we admit, would justify hesitation; it might provoke a scrutiny proportionally strict; it might perhaps palliate scepticism. But it is not sufficient to exclude all testimony; it does not justify the rejection of all evidence. Before this can be tolerated, the rationalist is bound to show by a rigorous *a priori* demonstration, not its improbability merely, but its utter *impossibility*. We hold him, then, distinctly to this issue. He shall not decline it: we have pulled at our end of the rope, he shall pull at his. If it be found in the end that he “has dugged a pit into the midst whereof he has fallen himself,” he has only suffered the fate that awaits all the opposers of truth.

Upon each of these alleged facts of Christian experience, he has imposed upon himself the tremendous task of establishing the negative. How will he succeed in showing that the Holy Ghost either cannot, or does not, create the soul anew in the image of Christ? Is there any limit to His power? Did He not, at the first, create man in the image of God, in “knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness?” What is there more difficult in restoring that holiness, after it has been lost? Can he not accomplish this work, too, without contravening any of those laws of our spir-

itual economy, which were appointed and ordained by Himself? Should the ability of this Divine person to effect this change upon the human soul be admitted, can the rationalist, with all his resources of argument, prove it to be antecedently impossible that He *will* exercise that power? Admit that the wilful loss of holiness on the part of man, extinguishes all his title to this gracious interposition of the Holy Spirit; admit that this loss even creates a presumption that it will never be restored—the rationalist has undertaken to show that it is *impossible* the Spirit should purpose to restore it, and nothing short of this will satisfy us. Will he undertake to fathom the counsels of the Most High? Does he know so perfectly the ends to be answered by the moral government of God, that he can oracularly declare what is proper, and what is not proper, to be done by this infinite and free Spirit? “Who knoweth the mind of the Lord; or being his counsellor, hath taught Him?”

Try the matter, again, in relation to the Spirit's special illumination of the mind. We say nothing here of the almighty power of this Divine Agent, and of the blasphemy or folly of attempting to restrict Him in its exercise. But we call attention to the intercourse maintained between man and man, by means of words and symbols. Certain figures presented to the eye, or certain sounds addressed to the ear, put others in complete possession of the thoughts and sentiments which swell our own bosoms. Simply by the aid of these conventional signs, as the media of intercourse, we pour our whole souls into the souls of others, awakening the same thoughts and emotions in them. We are able to play upon the sympathies and affections of our fellow-men, as a skilful musician would draw sweet tones from a well-tuned instrument. The whole procedure is deeply mysterious; we know the fact abundantly well, but who can explain the manner in which the ideas we wish to convey are conducted—so to speak, telegraphed to the distant mind? If we, then, have power, by a few intervening symbols, to impress our thoughts upon other minds, what shall hinder the Almighty Spirit from impressing His thoughts upon the mind without this machinery of signs? Does the removal of the symbols so increase the mystery that it is ren-

dered thereby incredible? If it were not a matter of experience with us, would not the first report, or rather, we should say in that case, the first conception of human intercourse by means of written or spoken words, seem to be equally incredible? Are we to limit all intercourse between pure spirits, by the laws which govern the peculiar economy under which men are placed? Does the rationalist so well understand the nature of spirits, and the whole economy of their existence and intercourse, that he may safely dogmatize as he does? Simply withdraw from our conceptions the conventional signs necessary to human fellowship, and we have at once the Holy Ghost impressing truth directly and nakedly upon the mind. Only suppose Him farther to stimulate and quicken that mind enfeebled by sin, to remove the veil of darkness in which it is enshrouded, and by an immediate exercise of power to render that mind congenial with the truth, and we have made out the subjective influence of the Holy Ghost upon the natural understanding by which it is empowered with a spiritual discernment. We are far from pretending to explain the mode of any of the Spirit's operations; for we know not how he quickens the mind, nor how he puts it in unison with truth, nor how he brings this truth into contact with the mind, without the use of symbols—all this is wrapt in profoundest mystery. But we do insist that with the inexplicable phenomenon before him, of human intercourse by means of signs, and in his state of ignorance as to the nature and power of spiritual beings, it is impossible for the sceptic to demonstrate either the impossibility, or even the antecedent improbability, of a direct impression of divine truth upon the minds of men, such as the Christian professes in his special illumination by the Holy Ghost.

If the rationalist is not too much fatigued with the difficulties in which he is already entangled, we will present him with another. The Holy Scriptures expressly affirm the same truths embraced within the confessions of the Saints. Of this fact, the passages cited in preceding paragraphs furnish sufficient proof. Now, all the authority which belongs to the sacred oracles, as "given by inspiration of God," goes to accredit these particular statements made in them. Before these declarations can

be impugned, the credit of the entire canon must be destroyed. The infidel must cancel all the evidence of inspiration furnished by prophecy, all the evidence furnished by miracles, all the internal evidence furnished by its own pages, all the evidence furnished from historical testimony. Until this is done, the Bible remains the book of God, and speaks His truths. If, like the everlasting mountains which still lift their heads upon which a thousand storms have burst, the Bible is still impregnable against the assaults of infidels, then upon the same basis rest all these particular truths. Over this wall of rock must the rationalist climb—nay, this wall of rock must he first demolish, before he can touch the experience of the Church, or deny the testimony which she gives upon the faith of that experience.

This reminds us of another circumstance, which should have influence in redeeming experimental religion from the charge of fanaticism. It is that a foundation is laid for it all in the doctrines of the Bible. Take, for example, the believer's union with Christ, and his fellowship thereby with God. How shall a finite being be united with one who is infinite? How shall a depraved being be united with one who is holy? How shall an accountable being exercise his moral agency in effecting the union? The answer to the first question is found in the incarnation of the Son of God, and that work which He wrought "in the days of His flesh." He "took not upon Him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham." As incarnate, he became the covenant representative and head of all the elect, discharged their obligations to God's justice, and removed every legal obstruction to their union with himself. The answer to the second question is found in Christ's mediatorial right to bestow the Holy Spirit upon "as many as were given Him," and in that Spirit's saving work upon their hearts. According to the terms of the covenant of grace, the Son purchased the right to send the Holy Ghost; by His intercessory pleadings He sues out before the Father the recognition of this right; and then in the exercise of His royal prerogative, He deposes that Spirit who makes the sinners holy. The answer to the third question is found in the act of faith, reposed by the believer in the person, offices and work

of the Saviour. The power to believe being bestowed, and the Spirit abiding in the heart to quicken to its exercise, this power is exerted in spontaneous actings of faith in Jesus. Thus the two, who were before apart standing upon opposite poles, are brought together, and by reciprocal bonds are united: the bond of the Spirit, passing from Christ bringing the sinner to Himself; and the bond of faith, passing from the believer, appropriating and embracing the Redeemer, making them one forever.

So again, the new birth experienced by the Christian has its foundation in the whole doctrine of the Spirit. The work of regeneration and sanctification, is the concluding part of the scheme of salvation. It presupposes a large and various work that has gone before. All the offices committed in the plan of redemption to the Father and the Son must be fulfilled, before there is any basis for the Spirit's operations upon the souls of men. How exactly does this distribution of functions tally with the order of subsistence between the persons of the Godhead. The Father, who is the first person, has a function assigned to Him which is initiatory to all that follows.—The Son, who is the second person and the only begotten of the Father, discharges functions whose validity turns upon the Father's seal affixed to His commission, and His formal and public acceptance of the work done under the same. And the Holy Ghost, who is the third person and eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son, comes to the discharge of his offices upon a joint commission from the two. As He is the last in the order of subsistence, so His work completes the salvation, which is devised and executed in common by the three. There is likewise a beautiful analogy between the location of the Spirit's work in the new and spiritual creation, to that which He performed in the original and material creation. "Whereas," says Dr. Owen, "the order of operations among the distinct persons, depends upon the order of their subsistence; the concluding, completing and perfecting acts are ascribed to the Holy Ghost; hence they are also the most hidden and mysterious. The beginning of divine operations is assigned to the Father; the subsisting, establishing and upholding of all things, is as-

cribed to the Son; and the finishing of all these works is ascribed to the Holy Ghost."*

We must be content with merely suggesting hints upon a topic which admits of wide expansion. The reader will perceive, however, from what has been said, a striking correspondence between the objective in Scripture, and the subjective in experience. The doctrines of revelation constitute the mould in which all true Christian experience is run: "Ye have obeyed from the heart that form (*τυπον*) of doctrine which was delivered you." These doctrines may be compared to a seal, and the emotions and affections of Christian experience, to the impressions made by this seal upon the waxen tablet of the soul; and so perfect is this correspondence, that not a single exercise of true religious feeling can be mentioned, for which its appropriate mould may not be found in some given doctrine of the Scriptures. Now, can this coincidence be accidental? Is there not furnished here a concealed evidence of the truth and reality of Christian experience? Must not the author of the one be the author of the other? and while Christian doctrine comes from God, how can the answering exercises of the believer be deemed spurious and imaginary?

In bringing to a close this defence of experimental religion, we beg to be indulged in a single remark upon the *exclusiveness* of the pretensions which we have been considering; since it is a feature so odious to many. The charge is admitted to a certain degree. Christians do certainly lay claim to divine influences and to an elevated communion with God, which are denied to multitudes of others. It is freely conceded, also, that in this particular there is a vague resemblance between the Gospel and the systems of fanaticism which have obtained footing in the world; since fanatics of every class do assume to be, more than others, the special favorites of Heaven, and to enjoy a confidential intercourse with Deity in the abundance of their private revelations. But there is this characteristic difference between them. The exclusive pretensions of fanaticism having no foundation in truth, always exert an injurious influence upon the character

* Owen on the Holy Ghost. Edition of the Board, ch. 4.

and conduct, which cannot be detected in genuine religion. The fanatic believes himself selected from other men, to be the depositary of Heaven's secrets. This fancy naturally begets a feeling of self-consequence and pride; then contrasting himself with those who are not elevated to the same dignity and privilege, he easily passes into a haughty contempt for those less favored than himself. Wrapped in his self-complacency, he comes down from his lofty communion with a superior power, and says with haughty arrogance to the herd and rabble of mankind, "Stand by, for I am holier than ye." Jealous of his own pre-eminence, he wishes to share it with none, and riots in the selfish monopoly of his own advantages. It requires no large knowledge of the weakness and obliquity of poor human nature, to understand how these feelings give way at last to a malignant hatred of those whom at first he only despised. — Isaac Taylor, in his work on fanaticism, describes the fanatic as "not simply a misanthrope—he does not move like a venomous reptile, lurking in a crevice or winding silent through the grass, but soars in mid-heaven as a fiery-flying serpent, and looks down from on high upon whom he hates." * When were such effects ever produced by genuine Christianity? Is not its practical influence always to "cast down high thoughts," to abase the Christian in the dust before God, and to fill him with a sense of his own vileness? Is it not true that the humility of the soul is deepest in the moments of loftiest communion with God? When most it enjoys the assurance of the divine favour, it is most meek, most penitent, and most patient. Is there any disposition on the part of true Christians to monopolize all spiritual blessings? Or, is not the language always on their lips, "come with us, and we will do you good?" Is not the very essence of the Christian religion

* *Fanaticism*, p. 60. This author goes much farther than we do in making the malignant element enter into the essence of fanaticism; his definition of it being "enthusiasm inflamed by hatred." "The religion of the fanatic," in his view, "may be reduced to three capital articles, viz: 1, a deference to malignant invisible power; 2, the natural consequence of such a deference, rancorous contempt or detestation of the mass of mankind, as religiously cursed and a ominable; 3, the belief of corrupt favouritism on the part of invisible powers towards a sect or particular class of men."—P. 54.

love? Is not the first commandment, "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," and is not the second like unto it, "thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?" Is not the Church of the Redeemer charged with the high commission to extend the knowledge of salvation to all mankind? and is there not sincere grief in the hearts of the righteous that so few give heed to their cordial entreaties? We leave the reader to answer these interrogatories, and to find in that answer a refutation of the charge of fanaticism, upon the ground that Christianity is exclusive in its character, conferring its benefits by a very narrow and partial distribution.

We take our leave now of the opponents, with whom we have measured arguments, with a single admonitory word. Christianity is not, at this time of day, to be laughed out of countenance. Of all the enemies who assail her, she has least of fear and most of pity for scoffers; who can so far let down their own self-respect, as to mock at her truths, and to scout her testimony. She would regard it, too, as the easiest of all her achievements, to turn the tables upon her foes, to convict of the most reckless fanaticism those who admit there is a God, yet live as atheists; who admit they have a soul, yet live only for the body; who admit this world to be an empty show, yet are engrossed with its baubles; who admit an eternity to come, yet make no provisions for its awful retributions. Let this caution suffice; lest she should become an accuser instead of an apologist. Those who are arraigned before her tribunal, never escape through the meshes of a defective logic.