THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST, VOLUME 1.

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE

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TITLE PAGE

The Kingdom of Christ or Hints to a Quaker Respecting the Principles, Constitution, and Ordinances of the Catholic Church

By Frederick Denison Maurice, M.A.

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> What is now to be done? Must Truth be for ever in the dark, and the world for ever be divided, and societies disturbed, and governments weakened, and our spirits debauched with error and the uncertain opinions and the pedantry of talking men? Certainly there is a way to cure all this evil, and the wise Governor of the world hath not been wanting in so necessary a matter as to lead us into all truth. But the way hath not yet been hit upon, and yet I have told you all the ways of man, and his imaginations, in order to Truth and Peace; and you see these will not do; we can find no rest for the soles of our feet, amidst all the waters of contention and disputations, and little artifices of divided schools….. We have examined all ways but one, all but God's way. Let us, having missed all the others, try this. —Bishop. Taylor, Via Intelligentia.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

(Prefixed to the Second Edition, 1842.)

THIS work appeared originally[1] in the form of Letters to a Member of the Society of Friends. It was suggested by a controversy which was dividing the Quaker Society. Its main object was to inquire whether an acknowledgment of the spiritual principles, which were professed by the Quaker body, involved the rejection of Christian ordinances, or whether one did not necessarily imply the other. This question was almost identical with another. The Quakers had sought to establish a spiritual kingdom in the world. Did not such a Kingdom exist already, and were not these ordinances the expression of it?

Among many minor but serious mistakes in my treatment of this subject, I found that there was one which had tended to make my purpose unintelligible. The early Quakers affirmed, that the Spiritual Kingdom was defined by no national boundaries. But the Quaker Society has, in fact, existed only in England and in America. As I wished to shew the Quaker to whom I wrote that there was a spiritual body in which he himself might find a home, when the Quaker sect no longer afforded him one, I naturally alluded, in every Letter, to the English Church—speaking of her sacraments, ministers, forms of worship, &c. It seemed, therefore, to many, that I was composing an apology for this Church. But if so, how, it was asked, had I fulfilled my promise of shewing the Quakers that there was a Church Universal, such as they had dreamed of?

I found that my book had been much more read by members of my own communion than by Quakers. Some of my friends, therefore, naturally suggested, that in any new edition I should convert it into a Treatise on the Church, leaving out all reference to the sect, for the

[1] In the year 1838.

sake of which it had been written. This advice I could not take. If I have been able to suggest any thought to a Churchman which he will not find far better set before him in a hundred other books, I owe it to the circumstances which induced me to attempt a comparison between our own position and that of those who seem to be at the greatest distance from us. Moreover, it is obvious, from what I have just said, that if I lost sight of the Quakers. I should abandon one means of repairing the error which I have committed. By following out their line of thought, we may have a good hope of learning how men of earnest minds have been brought to feel that they need a Catholic Church, and not merely a National Church.

But though I cannot cease to connect my hints with the principles of the Quakers, I find that I am almost obliged to omit any allusion to the particular controversy which led me to address them. For that controversy appears to be at an end, and the Society is much more likely to perish by a slow decay, than by a sudden convulsion. Owing to this circumstance, and to others of a more private nature, the form of Letters, which I originally adopted, is no longer applicable. I have been induced, therefore, to rewrite and reconstruct my book; and thus I hope to remove, in some degree, the fault of which I have spoken. I have endeavoured also to remove some of the more gross and palpable errors, which I discovered in it myself, or which were pointed out to me by others. Enough, I doubt not, remain; and in the additions which I have made, others may have been introduced. It will never, I hope, be regarded as anything but a collection of Hints, which, if they lead the reader into deeper thought and greater reverence, may soon be the means of making him far wiser than his instructor.

The following Dialogue will explain how the subject of the whole book is connected with the history of the Quaker body. The conversation is, as to its form, an imaginary one; but I have often expressed the same sentiments in intercourse with members of the Society, and the Quaker's description of the trials, to which a thoughtful man who

has found a sectarian position no longer tenable is exposed from within and without, may, I believe, be regarded as an "ower true tale."[2]

[2]My readers are of course aware, that the Archbishop of Dublin has lately published a work entitled, "The Kingdom of Christ Delineated." From a feeling of respect to so distinguished an author, as well as on selfish grounds, I should have been disposed to change my title as soon as I knew that it had been so appropriated. But it will be seen that the description of the book is very closely connected with the intention of it, and that the present edition answers more strictly to the name than the former did. I am, therefore, obliged to retain it.

DEDICATION

To the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, Stanley Grove, Chelsea.

My Dear Mr. Coleridge,

In a note to your volume on the Scriptural character of the English Church, you have alluded to the first edition of these Hints. Your object was to correct one of my many inaccuracies, and this service, which was itself a very kind one, you made more acceptable, by the approbation which you expressed of my general design. Under any circumstances I must have valued such a recognition from one who had bestowed so much serious and intelligent consideration upon the subject of which I had treated; I was still more pleased with it, because there were qualities in your work which might have made me fear that you would be less tolerant of mine. Your scholarlike tone and careful English style, were strikingly contrasted with the crudeness and hastiness which were visible in every part of my Letters to a Quaker. Nevertheless, I found with great delight, that neither you nor the accomplished Editor of Mr. Coleridge's works had been hindered by these defects from taking an interest in my thoughts, or from recognizing in them one among a thousand indications of the influence which your father's writings are exercising over the mind of this generation.

Every one who has felt this influence must, I think, be anxious to acknowledge it. You may well be surprised therefore, that in a book of some length I should have referred to it so seldom. Twenty years ago you might have attributed such an omission to a cowardly and dishonourable dread of being associated with an unpopular name. But at the time I wrote, the basest man could not have been affected by such a motive as this, for the different English parties which, during Mr. Coleridge's lifetime, had only differed in the degrees of their dislike to him, were scrambling for a share of his opinions. It seemed

to me that the only danger of another reaction lay in the ambition of his admirers to make him responsible for their statements of his views or their inferences from them. To this evil I wished not to be accessory. I had never enjoyed the privilege of intercourse with him. I had no means therefore of correcting the impressions of him which I had derived from his works. I was of course liable to the greatest mistakes of judgment in my interpretation of these, as well as to the moral temptation of perverting them to my own purposes. I thought it better therefore, to seem even to myself ungrateful and a plagiarist, than to incur the risk of abusing his name to the support of sentiments which he might have disapproved, and perhaps, of hindering some from profiting by his wisdom, because I had taught them to connect it with my follies.

This caution, however, was of little avail. The only two reviews which, so far as I know, bestowed any attention upon my book,—the one treating it with extreme kindness, the other with unbounded contempt,—brought my name into flattering but most undeserved juxtaposition with Mr. Coleridge's. And I could not help fancying that one of these critics would have been well pleased that its readers should have attributed to the master the monstrous absurdity, self-sufficiency, love of priestcraft, hatred of the rights of conscience, preference of Fathers and Councils to Scripture, which were affirmed to be characteristic of the disciple. Every person, I conceive, who has been thus spoken of, should be ready to explain, as well as he can, how far the charge is true, that he has derived his method of thought from his supposed teacher, and if it be true, to what extent that teacher is answerable for his application of the method. Such an explanation I am anxious to make now for the relief of my own mind, and that I may rescue your father's memory from any injury which I may have done it. I might have addressed my confession to many dear friends who are admirers of his writings; but I would rather make it to one of his family, first, because I rejoice to think that those who have most profited by what he has taught them, do not and cannot form a school,

and because it is most desirable that the English public, with its party notions and tendencies, should not suppose that they form one; and secondly, because my feeling towards him—though, as I have said, not founded upon any personal acquaintance in the ordinary sense of the word—is yet so strictly and vividly personal, that I cannot bear to think of him chiefly as a writer of books, and that I am always delighted to connect him with any human representative.

There are persons who can feel no affection for a book unless they can associate it with a living man. I am not sure whether I labour under this incapacity, but I own that the books of Mr. Coleridge are mainly interesting to me as the biography of one who passed through the struggles of the age to which we are succeeding, and who was able, after great effort and much sorrow, to discover a resting-place. His juvenile poems which exhibit him to us when he was seeking in Unitarianism a refuge from the flatness and the falsehood of a mere State Christianity: the fierce and magnificent ode in which he sees the old European world of convention and oppression falling to pieces, and rejoices in the sight; the noble recantation of his hopes from republican ascendency; his ode to Despondency, embodying so perfectly the feelings of a man who, after the disappointment of all practical hopes, had sought in meditation for deliverance and rest, and then on returning to the actual world had found its glory departed and his capacities of enjoyment dead;—these poems have always seemed to me so intensely and painfully real, and so expressive of what thousands of minds in different measures must have been experiencing, that I do not suppose I have ever done justice to any of them, merely as a work of art. I do not think there is anything inconsistent in this acknowledgment with the belief that in him, as in every great poet, the exercise of the creative faculty implied self-forgetfulness, and the power of passing beyond the region of personal experience. No one can utter the thoughts of other men as well as his own, can be in any degree the spokesman of his time, to whom this quality does not belong. But it consists, I should imagine, nearly always with much of

inward suffering. The person who enters most into what a number of others are experiencing, does, in the strictest and liveliest sense, experience it himself. On these points, however, I have no right to speak, and if I speak ignorantly, you must remember, that I merely pretend to tell you what my own impressions have been, not to make them a standard for other readers. Your father's greater poems, such as the Ancient Mariner, and Christabel, seem undoubtedly to belong to the region of the pure imagination. But I question whether I should be as much interested as I am even in these, if I did not discover in them many veins and fibres which seem to me to connect them with his personal being; if they did not help me to read more clearly the history of his mind, and therein the history of our time.

And as I have never learnt to separate his poetical genius from himself, so I fear I have been as little able to appreciate him formally and abstractedly in the character of a philosopher. In his "Friend" I seem to discover the very same man whom I had known amidst the storms of the revolutionary period. Nor do I find him less impatient of mere rules and decrees than he was then; only the impatience has taken a new form. He has been convinced that society is a reality, that it would not become at all more real by being unmade and reconstructed, and therefore he has begun to inquire what are the grounds of its reality, and how we may be preserved from making it into a fiction and a falsehood. That this inquiry is complete and satisfactory I do not affirm, I rejoice to think that it is not; I believe, if it had been more complete, it would not be half so profitable as it has been and is likely to be for generations to come. Its merit is, that it is an inquiry, that it shews us what we have to seek for, and that it puts us into a way of seeking. Hence it was and is particularly offensive to more than one class of persons. The mere Destructive complains, that it recognizes the worth of that which ought to be swept away. The mere Conservative is indignant, because it will not assume existing rules and opinions as an ultimate basis, but aims at discovering their meaning and their foundation. The man of Compro-

mises is most bitter, because it assumes that the statesman has some other law of conduct than that of sailing with the wind. The mere Englishman is angry to find the common topics of the day, taxes, libels, bombardments of Copenhagen, not treated of as they are treated in his favourite journals. The man of Abstractions cannot understand what such topics have to do with a scientific book. This combination of enemies, with the advantage which each derives from being able to speak of the book as "neither one thing nor the other," is quite sufficient to explain any measure of unpopularity which it may have met with. To account for the power which it has exerted in spite of these disadvantages, and many others of an outward kind which I need not hint at in writing to you; to explain how a book, which is said to be utterly unpractical, has wrought a change in men's minds upon the most practical subjects, how a book, which is said to have no sympathy with the moving spirit of this age, should have affected the most thoughtful of our young men; this is a work of greater difficulty, which I hope that some of our Reviewers will one day undertake. I am not attempting to solve any such problems, but am merely accounting for its influence upon my own mind, an influence mainly owing to those very peculiarities which seem to have impaired or destroyed its worth in the opinions of wiser people. For this, at least, I am thankful, that this book, so far from diminishing my interest in those which treat of the same subject, or tempting me to set Mr. Coleridge up as the one teacher upon it, has enabled me to honour others of the most different kind, belonging to our own and to former times, which I otherwise should not have understood, and might, through ignorance and self-conceit, have undervalued; above all, to reverence the facts of history, and to believe that the least perversion of them, for the sake of getting a moral from them, is at once a folly and a sin.

And it seems to me that I have found help of a similar kind to this in a different department of thought from that still more irregular work, the Biographia Literaria. If a young man in this age is much tormented by the puzzles of Society, and the innumerable systems

by which men have sought to get rid of them, he is haunted almost as much by the different problems of Criticism, by a sense of the connexion between his own life and the books which he reads, by theories about the nature and meaning of this connexion, by authoritative dogmas respecting the worth or worthlessness of particular poems and paintings, by paradoxical rebellions against these dogmas, by questions as to the authority of antiquity and the distinct province of our time, by attempts to discover some permanent laws of art, by indignant assertions of its independence of all laws. A person cannot have observed himself or his contemporaries with any attention, nay, he can scarcely read over the rude statement of these difficulties which I have just made, without feeling how intricately they are involved with our thoughts upon some of the very highest subjects. To say that we do not need to understand ourselves upon these critical questions, that it is of no importance to have principles in reference to them, is merely to say that we ought not to meddle with them at all. A person who is not brought into contact with such topics is certainly not bound to think about them; if he be, he will find the absence of thought respecting them a more serious impediment to him in matters directly concerning his personal life than he may at first suppose. Now, if anyone reads Mr. Coleridge's literary life, taking him to be a great poet, and therefore able to supply the principles of his art ready made and fit for immediate use and exportation, he will, I should think, be much disappointed. I cannot discover here, more than in his political work, a system. I have lately heard that there is one, and that it has been taken whole and alive out of the works of a great German author. But I am speaking only of what I saw there myself, and I am bound to say that it escaped my notice. I seemed to see a writer, who was feeling his way into the apprehension of many questions which had puzzled me, explaining to me his own progress out of the belief that all things are dependent upon association, into the acknowledgment of something with which they are associated; into a discovery that there is a keynote to the harmony. I learnt from him, by practical illustrations,

how one may enter into the spirit of a living or a departed author, without assuming to be his judge; how one may come to know what he means without imputing to him our meanings. I learnt that beauty is neither an accidental nor an artificial thing, that it is to be sought out as something which is both in nature and in the mind of man, and which, by God's law, binds us to nature. But all this comes out in a natural experimental method, by those tests and trials in which a man may be greatly assisted by the previous successes or failures of another, just as Faraday may be assisted by Davy, but which he cannot adopt from another, and which we cannot adopt from him, except by catching his spirit of investigation and applying it to new facts.

The "Aids to Reflection" is a book of a different character from either of these, and it is one to which I feel myself under much more deep and solemn obligations. But the obligation is of the same kind. If I require a politician or a critic who has indeed worked his own way through the region in which he pretends to act as my guide, I certainly should be most dissatisfied with one who undertook to write moral and spiritual aphorisms, without proving that he was himself engaged in the conflict with an evil nature and a reluctant will, and that he had received the truths of which he would make me a partaker, not at second hand, but as the needful supports of his own being. I do not know any book which ever brought to me more clear tokens and evidences of this kind than the one of which I am speaking. I have heard it described both by admirers and objectors as one which deals with religion philosophically. In whatever sense that assertion may be true, and in a very important sense I believe it is quite true, I can testify that it was most helpful in delivering me from a number of philosophical phrases and generalisations, which I believe attach themselves to the truths of the Creed, even in the minds of many who think that they receive Christianity with a most childlike spirit —most helpful in enabling me to perceive that the deepest principles of all are those which the Peasant is as capable of apprehending and entering into as the Schoolman. I value and love his philosophy mainly

because it has led me to this discovery, and to the practical conclusion, that those who are called to the work of teaching must cultivate and exercise their understandings, in order that they may discriminate between that which is factitious and accidental, or belongs to our artificial habits of thought, and that which is fixed and eternal, which belongs to man as man, and which God will open the eyes of every humble man to perceive. I have learnt in this way the preciousness of the simple Creeds of antiquity; the inward witness which a gospel of facts possesses, and which a gospel of notions must always want; how the most awful and absolute truths, which notions displace or obscure, are involved in facts, and through facts may be entertained and embraced by those who do not possess the faculty for comparing notions, and have a blessed incapacity of resting in them.

It is inevitable that the person who first applies this principle to religious questions, should sometimes be involved in the obscurity from which he is seeking to deliver us. Any one who begins the work of encountering notions and theories, will himself be accounted the greatest notionalist and theorist. To get rid of crudities and confusions, he will sometimes be obliged to adopt or invent a nomenclature. His rigid adherence to this will be called pedantry; his followers repeating his words, instead of carrying the meaning of them into their studies and their life, will deserve the charge; his enemies will have a plausible pretence for saying that he has made simple truths complex by his way of handling them. The "Aids to Reflection" have been exposed to all these misfortunes. Nevertheless, I have heard them generally denounced as unintelligible by persons whom I had the greatest difficulty in understanding, who were continually perplexing me with hard words to which I could find nothing answering among actual things, and with the strangest attempts to explain mysteries by those events and circumstances which were to me most mysterious, and which, as they lay nearest to me, it was most important for my practical life that I should know the meaning of. On the other hand, I have heard the simplest, most childlike men and women express an almost rapturous

thankfulness for having been permitted to read this book, and so to understand their own hearts and their Bibles, and the connexion between the one and the other, more clearly. It is a book, I believe, which has given offence, and will always give offence to many, not for its theories, but for its essentially practical character. Its manly denunciation of the sentimental school must be painful to many in our day who have practically adopted the Rousseau cant, though they have changed a little the words that express it; who praise men for being good, though they do the most monstrously evil acts, and account it a vulgar worship of decency to say, that one who is the slave of his own passions, and enslaves others to them, may not be a very right and true man notwithstanding. And yet those who do really exalt decency above inward truth and conformity to a high standard, will not at all the more own Mr. Coleridge for an ally because the school which pretends to oppose them reject him. The whole object of his book is to draw us from the study of mere worldly and external morality, to that which concerns the heart and the inner man. But here, again, he is so unfortunate, that those who have turned "heart-religion" into a phrase—who substitute the feelings and experiences of their minds for the laws to which those feelings and experiences may, if rightly used, conduct us—will be sure to regard him as peculiarly their enemy. So that if there were no persons in the land who did not belong to one or other of these classes, if there were not many who have tried them all, and are weary of them all, it would indeed be very difficult to understand how it is that this volume has found its way into so many studies, and has gained access to so many hearts.

The idea of the first "Lay Sermon," that the Bible is the Statesman's Manual, is less developed, I think, than any of those to which I have alluded hitherto. But the bare announcement of it has been of more value to me than any lengthened exposition that I know of. There is no topic which has more engaged my attention in these volumes than the national history of the Bible, but I have said very little indeed of which that thought was not the germ.

The little book upon Church and State you will suppose, from the title and character of these volumes, that I am likely to have studied still more attentively. And indeed, if you watch me closely, you will discover, I doubt not, many more thoughts which I have stolen from it than I am at all aware of, though I think I am conscious of superabundant obligations. It seems to me that the doctrine which I have endeavoured to bring out in what I have said respecting the relations between Church and State, is nothing but an expansion of Mr. Coleridge's remark respecting the opposition and necessary harmony of Law and Religion, though in this, as in many other cases, I have departed from his phraseology, and have even adopted one which he might not be inclined to sanction.

The robberies which I have confessed are such in the truest sense; they are conscious and deliberate robberies. If any one had chanced to discover in my book twenty or thirty pages which he could trace to some English or foreign author, I should think his common sense, though he might allow no scope for charity, would induce him to hesitate before he imputed to me a wilful fraud. It is so much more likely that I should mistake what has been for years mixed with my own compositions for one of them, than that I should take such a very stupid and blundering way of earning a reputation, which a few years must destroy altogether, that a court of justice, on the mere ground of evidence, would be inclined, I should suppose, to take the tolerant side. If it had any hesitation, the reason would be, that an insignificant author might do many things with impunity, which a writer of eminence, who had enemies in every direction, would be a madman to venture upon; or else it would be from a feeling of this kind, that, if I had merely forgotten myself, I should have had some vague wandering impression of having read a similar passage somewhere else, and, therefore, that I should, being honest, have at least thrown out some hint, though it might not be exactly the right one, as to the place whence I might have derived it, thus making my reader anxious to see what had been said by the writer to whom I referred: if I did

that, of course all suspicion of evil design would vanish immediately from the mind of anyone who was capable of judging, or did not industriously pervert his judgment for the purpose of making me out to be an offender. But the use I have made of your father's writings is of entirely a different kind from this. I could not be convicted of it by a mere collating of paragraphs, and, therefore, if I were anxious to conceal it, I should be really, and not apparently, dishonest. And this is not the less true because it is also true that the main subject of my book is one which (so far as I know) he has not distinctly treated of, that the thoughts which he has scattered respecting it, though deeply interesting, are not always satisfactory to me, that I have, therefore, very commonly found myself without his guidance, and that I have sometimes wilfully deserted it. I shall not fulfil the purpose of this letter, if I do not shew how these two apparently opposite statements are reconciled.

No man, I think, will ever be of much use to his generation, who does not apply himself mainly to the questions which are occupying those who belong to it. An antiquary, I daresay, leads a much easier and quieter life than one who interferes with his contemporaries, and takes part in their speculations. But his quietness is his reward: those who seek another, must be content to part with it. Oftentimes, I doubt not, every man is tempted to repose in some little nook or dell of thought, where other men will not molest him, because he does not molest them; but those to whom any work is assigned are soon driven, by a power which they cannot resist, out of such retirement into the dusty highways of ordinary business and disputation. This, it seems to me, was your father's peculiar merit and honour. The subjects to which he addressed himself were not those to which he would have been inclined, either by his poetical or his metaphysical tendencies. But they were exactly the questions of the time: exactly those which other men were discussing in the spirit of the time. And as we who belong to a younger generation have inherited these questions, we inherit also the wisdom which dealt with them. But there are, it seems to me, questions

which we have not inherited—questions which belong more expressly to us than they did to our immediate predecessors. These, I suspect, we must humbly study for ourselves, though the difference will be very great to us, whether we invent a way of investigation for ourselves, or try to walk in a path which better men who have been before us have with great labour cleared of its rubbish, and by footmarks and signposts have made known to us.

One of the questions to which I allude is that which your father was led, I believe by the soundest wisdom, to banish, in a great measure, from his consideration, after the events of the French Revolution had taught him the unspeakable importance of a distinct National life. I mean the question whether there be a Universal Society for man as man. I have stated some reasons in these volumes why I think every one in this day must be more or less consciously occupied with this inquiry; why no other topics, however important, can prevent it from taking nearly the most prominent place in our minds. There is another question belonging apparently to a different region of thought, yet I believe touching at more points than one upon this: how all thoughts, schemes, systems, speculations, may contribute their quota to some one which shall be larger and deeper than any of them. If I am indebted to your father on one account more than another, it is for shewing me a way out of the dreadful vagueness and ambition which such a scheme as this involves, for leading me not, merely to say, but to feel, that a knowledge of The Being is the object after which we are to strive, and that all pursuit of Unity without this is the pursuit of a phantom. But at the same time I cannot help believing that there is a right meaning hid under this desire; that it will haunt us till we find what it is; that we cannot merely denounce or resist this inclination in ourselves or in others; that we shall do far more good, yea, perhaps the very good which we are meant in this age to accomplish, if we steadily apply ourselves to the consideration of it. Again, there is a question which thrusts itself before us continually, and which is the mover of more party feelings just at this time than any other, respecting

the reception of those doctrines which are expressed in old Creeds, and which concern the nature of God himself: whether these are to be taken upon trust from the early ages, or whether we are to look upon them as matters for our own inquiry, to be acknowledged only so far as they accord with what seems to us either the declaration of Scripture or the verdict of reason. In preparing for the consideration of this great subject, I have felt, with many others, that Mr. Coleridge's help has been invaluable to us. Nearly every thoughtful writer of the day would have taught us, that the highest truths are those which lie beyond the limits of Experience, that the essential principles of the Reason are those which cannot be proved by syllogisms, that the evidence for them is the impossibility of admitting that which does fall under the law of experience, unless we recognize them as its foundation; nay, the impossibility of believing that we ourselves are, or that anything is, except upon these terms. The atheism of Hume has driven men to these blessed discoveries, and though it was your father's honour that he asserted them to an age and a nation which had not yet discovered the need of them, he certainly did not pretend, and no one should pretend, that he was the first reviver or expositor of them. But the application of these principles to Theology, I believe, we owe mainly to him. The power of perceiving that by the very law of the Reason the knowledge of God must be given to it; that the moment it attempts to create its Maker, it denies itself; the conviction that the most opposite kind of Unity to that which Unitarianism dreams of is necessary, if the demands of the reason are to be satisfied—I must acknowledge, that I received from him, if I would not prove myself ungrateful to the highest Teacher, who might certainly have chosen another instrument for communicating His mercies, but who has been pleased in very many cases, as I know, to make use of this one. This instruction, I say, seems to me a most precious preparation for the inquiry which belongs more strictly to our age, but still it is only a preparation. I cannot help feeling, while I read the profound, and, to a theological student invaluable, hints respecting the doctrine of the Trinity, which

occur in Mr. Coleridge's writings: "This is not enough. If the reason be, as he said it was, expressly the human faculty, belonging to rich and poor alike—not merely those personal truths which belong to each individual's state and condition, but this highest truth, which he presents to us as demanding the highest efforts of thought and abstraction, must belong to the very humblest man; must be a sacred part of his inheritance; must in some way or other be capable of being presented to him." Any one who has entertained this thought will find that this theological subject very soon becomes involved with the other two of which I was speaking. The hope that some day

> "Wisdom may teach her lore
> In the low huts of them that toil and groan,"

must wax much brighter, if we can really believe that the deepest lore is the most universal. The hope that diverse sides of thought may some day be brought into reconciliation, may begin to disconnect itself with the dreary vision of a comprehensive System, from which all life is excluded, if the central Unity be that of the living Being.

But how can such a dream ever be realized? To me the promise of its realization came in sounds which belong to our nursery, in the words in which our infants are baptized. Here, it seemed to me, lay the assurance that this truth belongs to no esoteric region; that it is one of those all-embracing mysteries which is about us at every moment, which is gradually drawing us into itself, and which becomes ours most truly when we attain most of the privilege of men by becoming most like little children. Thus I was led to consider the meaning of this ordinance of Baptism as a key to the nature of ordinances generally. I found that they had been much prized by Luther, and by the most earnest of those who, like him, regarded Christianity almost exclusively in its reference to their own personal life. They felt the extreme danger of substituting their belief for the object of it, and so destroying the reality of both. Their testimony was of the highest practical value, and it was abundantly confirmed to me by the expe-

rience of those who had rejected ordinances for the sake of attaining to a more spiritual state of mind. Still I could not discover how one contemplating the subject from their point of view, could ultimately escape from the conclusion which the disciples of the Reformers have so generally adopted, that he who first entertains a reverence for inward Truth, and then acquires a reverence for outward Signs, begins in the spirit and is made perfect in the flesh. And I could entirely sympathize with the feeling of Mr. Coleridge, that those who for the sake of exalting Ordinances turn them into Charms, are not making a harmless addition to that which was before sufficient, but are actually destroying its meaning and reality. But supposing them to be signs to the Race—signs of the existence of that universal body which we were inquiring after, they become invested with a very different importance. They become indispensable in a higher sense than those dream of, who seem to value them chiefly as means of exclusion; they are the very voice in which God speaks to His creatures; the very witness that their fellowship with each other rests on their fellowship with Him, and both upon the mystery of His Being; the very means by which we are meant to rise to the enjoyment of the highest blessings which He has bestowed upon us. In this way there rose up before me the idea of a Church Universal, not built upon human inventions or human faith, but upon the very nature of God himself, and upon the union which He has formed with His creatures: a Church revealed to man as a fixed and eternal reality by means which infinite wisdom had itself devised. The tokens and witnesses of such a Church, it seemed to me, must be Divine, but the feeling of its necessity, apprehensions of the different sides and aspects of it, must, if it be a reality, be found in all the different schemes which express human thought and feeling. No amalgamation of these can create a real harmony, but each may find its highest meaning in that harmony which God has created, and of which He is Himself the centre.

These are the leading thoughts which in this book I have been trying to express, and you will therefore understand what I mean when

I say that I may have uttered innumerable sentiments for which your father would not have chosen to be responsible, even while I have wished to study and apply the lessons which he has taught me. He would, I conclude, not have agreed with me in my views respecting Baptism, he would probably have thought that I over-exalted the Ministry, he would not have acquiesced in every one of my statements respecting the Eucharist, he would have judged me wrong in some of my opinions respecting the Scriptures. Upon all these subjects I have deviated from what I think would have been his judgment, without losing the least of my reverence and affection for his memory, perhaps without approximating nearer than he did to the sentiments of any one of the parties which divide the Church. I am sure that I should not have had courage to differ from them or him, if he had not assisted me to believe that Truth is above both, most of all above myself and my own petty notions and apprehensions, that it is worthy to be sought after and loved above all things, and that He who is Truth, is ready, if we will obey Him, to guide us into it.

I have been so much occupied with a subject which I am sure must be interesting to you above all others, that I have left myself no time to express as I should wish my gratitude for your personal kindness, and for the advantage which I have received from my opportunities of intercourse with you. But I cannot conclude without wishing you God-speed in the noble undertaking in which you are engaged. If you are permitted to raise up a body of wise and thoughtful teachers out of our trading classes, you will do more for the Church than all the persons together who are writing treatises about it. Proportionate, however, to the importance and the novelty of the work will be the trials and the discouragements attending it. In these I trust you will be sustained by the highest consolations which a Christian man and a Christian priest can experience. But there are times in which you will need lower helps also, if they be but of the right kind. I can scarcely think of any which will be more cheering to you than the recollection that you are carrying into effect principles which were years ago urged upon our

countrymen by your father, and that you are doing what in you lies to prove, that one who has been called a theorist and a dreamer, was in truth labouring to procure the most practical benefits for his country and for mankind.

Believe me, My dear Mr. Coleridge, Yours very sincerely, F. Maurice.

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INTRODUCTORY DIALOGUE WITH A QUAKER

Quaker. Are you serious in saying that you do not wish me to forsake the Society in which I have been educated?

Author. I did not say that. I hope that you will not forsake the principles in which you have been educated.

Q. You mean those general principles of morality and that common Christianity, which you and I have been alike taught to revere?

A. No; that is not my meaning. Whatever those general principles and common doctrines may be I do not believe that you will retain them, unless you retain also those which are proper to Quakerism.

Q. What can that imply, except that I ought to continue in the Society?

A. I can answer that question better, if you will tell me what are your present inducements to leave it.

Q. The story is a long one. I am afraid you will not hear me to the end of it. I think I was first startled by a contradiction which I remarked between the profession and the practices of our members.

A. You may make many changes before you find a body in which the same observation will not force itself upon you.

Q. I am quite aware of it; and I hope I have common sense enough not to part with any serious conviction, because hypocrites may feign to possess it, or a good man may hold it with a feeble grasp. That was not my difficulty. The contradiction I noticed seemed to me to infect all the arrangements, nay, in some degree, the very constitution of our Society. We are witnesses for spirituality; I feel as if we were rank formalists.

A. Corruption may have crept into your system; but why judge of it by its present appearances? Is there no possibility of reformation?

Q. For a long time I believed there was. I said to myself, I will study the writings of the early Quakers. I shall find in them that higher and purer spirit which seems to have departed from us.

A. Were you disappointed?

Q. I thought not. The writers I studied manifested deep earnestness, courage, self-denial, an intense conviction that what they said was true, a readiness to live and die that others might hear it.

A. You concluded, therefore, that your Society had a sound foundation to rest upon?

Q. If I had been convinced of that, I do not think I should have despaired of its present state. But here lay my perplexity. Since I had read the Scriptures diligently and had known something of my own heart, the statements which I heard from our Quaker ministers respecting human depravity, the grace of God, the redemption by Christ, had seemed to me for the most part vague and unsatisfactory. Still the doctrines upon these subjects, which are ordinarily, and I think rightly, called Evangelical, are recognised among us; by some they are brought out prominently. On the contrary, by those older Quakers, whom on some grounds I felt so much disposed to admire, these doctrines are far less distinctly exhibited; other Christians seem to be blamed for attaching importance to them; sometimes expressions are used which are almost incompatible with the belief of them.

A. Did you think that they substituted some notions of their own for these doctrines?

Q. I reluctantly adopted that suspicion, and this it is which makes me wonder that you should talk about my retaining the principles of Quakerism. These principles are, it seems to me, in opposition to what I suppose you consider the leading tenets of the Gospel.

A. How did you arrive at that persuasion?

Q. I was led to it by the workings of my own mind, and then it was confirmed to me by the testimony of two persons, who in many of their views were at variance.

A. Who were these?

Q. The first was an Independent dissenter. He expressed strong admiration of the language and conduct of Fox and Penn on many occasions. He said indeed that he could not join them in objecting to all pecuniary provision for ministers, in their dislike of baptism and in several points of that kind; but that he heartily wished the energy which they displayed in denouncing ecclesiastical superstitions and oppressions would communicate itself to English dissenters.

A. Surely this was most complimentary language.

Q. But when he came to speak of Fox's theological tenets, he adopted an entirely different tone. He described him as a mystic, ignorant of the truths of the Gospel, the proclaimer of theories which utterly subverted them. The same opinion was maintained, if possible, with more earnestness by a clergyman of your Church, who was present at the time. Much, he said, as he disliked the indecorous and violent language of Fox respecting the Established Church, he considered his doctrine of an Inward Light immeasurably more dangerous than such language could ever be. It was utterly incompatible with the Bible, and with the experience of every true Christian.

A. You remember perhaps some of the arguments by which your two friends defended these positions?

Q. I do not think their arguments made so much impression upon my mind as the clear and settled persuasion which they both alike entertained, that if Fox were right, the Bible must be wrong. You may smile at my confession that I attached weight to such assertions, when I cannot recall the evidence which was produced for them; but I know very well, that assertions which proceed from deep conviction do often affect me more than elaborate and logical proofs.

A. The case is the same with me. I shall not, therefore, ridicule your acknowledgment.

Q. I am glad to hear it; for I do not find that ridicule in general acts profitably upon my mind. These two gentlemen, the dissenter and the evangelical clergyman, after they had impressed me very strongly by

their serious objections, thought it expedient to indulge their humour at the expense of our founders and their mystical notions.

A. When they had entered the castle, they were naturally anxious to dismantle it.

Q. They took away more defences from me than perhaps they meant. While they were with me, I felt as if I were bound to say something in behalf of feelings and thoughts which from my childhood I had held sacred, even though they might be deserting me. When I was left alone, I found that I had indeed supported my Quakerism inadequately; but I had perceived rents and hollows in their system, of which I was not previously aware. Their wit succeeded in shaking my reverence at once for my own faith, and for that which I had hoped would have been a substitute for it.

A. A melancholy state of mind indeed, as all who have known it can testify.

Q. While I was under the influence of these feelings, I read two Unitarian books, one written by an Englishman of the last century, one by an American of the present.

A. The former at least did not treat your mystic feelings with more indulgence than your evangelical friends had shown towards them.

Q. No; but he taught me that it was possible to throw quite as good ridicule upon the Calvinistical doctrine, as they and he were agreed in throwing upon mine. The value of his critical remarks and discoveries I was not able to appreciate; but he said enough to convince me that Scripture has been often strained to make out a case in favour of the opinions which he attacked, and that the number of positive texts in their favour was far smaller than I had fancied. Moreover, his views of the character of God and his feelings respecting his fellow-creatures accorded better with the testimony of my conscience, than those which I had been wont to hear from the members of any sect except my own.

A. The impression he left upon your mind then was on the whole pleasing?

Q. By no means. My feeling, when I laid down the book, was one of utter coldness and dreariness. The very idea of a spiritual world and of a spiritual life seemed to be wanting in it; materialism was the ultimate point to which all its speculations were tending, if it were not the basis of them.

A. But that was not the case, I should think, with the American.

Q. No; he was a person of a very different temper. Some of his statements were not unlike those which I have met with in Fox and Penn. His mind was more comprehensive than theirs; more capable of taking interest in ordinary affairs and general literature, but scarcely less morally exalted—I was at times inclined to say—scarcely less spiritual.

A. You could acquiesce comfortably in his religious scheme?

Q. I almost fancied that I could; there was something so very capacious and engaging in it. But just as I had finished the book I fell ill, and before I recovered I received news of the death of one of my oldest and dearest friends. Then all my interest both in the Englishman and the American vanished; I think I disliked the last most, because his promises were the fairest.

A. But did not you say you had traced a fine vein of humanity and spirituality in him?

Q. I thought so; but let him be as humane or as spiritual as he would, he was not personal. There was nothing in him from which a soul, struggling with life and death, could derive the least help. He was evidently meant for sunshine and gala days. Then I recollected the words of my evangelical friends, and the doctrines which they had set before me. They seemed to me in that moment all important. I bitterly accused myself for having thought them narrow and hard. What had I to do with large views about men's happiness or the character of God? My own individual soul was at war, and he who could show me a way of peace for it was the friend I wanted. With other matters it seemed now that I had no right to trouble myself.

A. On your recovery you probably sought the advice of the Independent dissenter whom you named?

Q. On some accounts I desired rather to have another interview with the clergyman who had spoken so strongly against Fox and mysticism; but just at that time he left the neighbourhood. His successor in the parish was, I heard, an author; so I purchased his books before I ventured to call upon him.

A. Did they encourage you to expect assistance from him?

Q. I thought I had been shaken enough before by my own discoveries, and by the words of my different counsellors; but it seems not: these books were to upset me altogether.

A. How! You encountered a sceptic in the disguise of a clergyman?

Q. Oh, no; he was the most vehement enemy of all scepticism. He said doctrines had been delivered in the earliest ages of Christianity, which it behoved us to receive with a simple uninquiring faith; that the blessings of salvation were connected with our submission to a certain system which had been ordained by God; that in the evangelical teaching this system had been almost entirely forgotten, or treated as if it were merely a point of external arrangement; that that teaching spoke of a period of conversion in which men passed from death unto life, while the Church and Scripture referred this wonderful change to baptism.

A. You did not believe these statements; why then did they affect you so powerfully?

Q. Partly perhaps because they were uttered with that strong and deep conviction which I have confessed does always act most strongly upon me, especially if it be supported, as I know in the case of this clergyman it is, by the testimony of a laborious and self-denying life. But yet I think there was another cause. A person, who has suffered severely from religious struggles, has an inward sighing after rest which no one else can know. Bruised, beaten, humbled, he cannot help listening to anyone who tells him that he has been all wrong; he has been so tormented by his own miserable experiments and failures, that

he must rejoice to hear that he ought to give them up altogether. After many struggles therefore with my pride and my modesty, the shame of uttering my feelings and the pain of hiding them, I thought I would state my difficulties to the new clergyman.

A. He can scarcely have looked for a proselyte from such a quarter.

Q. He evidently did not desire one; and as I had been used to meet persons who spared no pains to bring me over to their ways of thinking, the change was so far rather agreeable. But besides this he evidently did not understand me; nay, if I was not mistaken, he thought it would be a wrong thing to understand me. I daresay that I stammered and spoke incoherently when I tried to tell him the thoughts that were in my mind. One cannot speak quite so clearly about one's self as about the weather and the crops, and indeed he made so many efforts to turn the conversation to those subjects, and fixed such steady clear cold eyes upon me when I asked him for information upon any others, that I certainly did not exhibit less embarrassment at the close than at the beginning of our interview.

A. How did he show that he misunderstood you?

Q. You know how I was educated—to look upon all forms and ordinances as sinful. Such thoughts had grown with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. But of late I have repeatedly felt as if these forms might be desirable; nay, as if there were something in me which needed them. It was on this point especially that I wished to speak to Mr. I knew that there were many things which it might not be right that he should teach me at present; but I thought that a person, who looked upon forms as most important to our moral life, might have removed some of the difficulties which clouded my mind in reference to them, or at least have interpreted some of those desires and longings, which, in spite of my prejudices, I had conceived for them. But this wish he seemed to consider irreverent and presumptuous. "I can enter," he said, "into no explanations with you; you are not in a state to understand explanations; you have one plain duty to perform—submit to the ordinances of Christ's Church, confess the

sins of your fathers in withdrawing from it, and your own in continuing the schism; receive Christian Baptism; then I shall be happy to instruct you." "I am much inclined to take this course," I replied. "but I feel some difficulties and scruples which I do not know how to overcome." "Sir," he said, "the case may be stated very shortly to you. The Fathers of the Church, the Saints and Martyrs of the first five centuries, the Greek Church, the Romish Church, the English Church, all agree that Baptism is the one only door by which we can enter into Christ's fold, and therefore into everlasting life. An ignorant mechanic in the 17th century said that there was some other door—you have chosen to disbelieve the whole Catholic Church, and to follow the mechanic. Is this a safe proceeding? If a speculation in cloth or wool were proposed to you, and a hundred competent judges said it would be your ruin —one person, totally unacquainted with the trade, said that it might turn out well—would you not think yourself mad to venture upon it? Will you put your chances of salvation upon a still greater risk?" With these words he wished me good morning.

A. How did this argument affect your mind?

Q. You will wonder at me, perhaps—I wonder at myself when I consider how very consistent and plausible it seems—but I never felt less moved by any words in my life: I am wrong—they did produce an effect upon me—they almost counter-balanced the impression which had been made upon my mind before, in favour of your Church and its ordinances.

A. How could that be?

Q. Reverence was what I looked for above all things in this clergyman. He had talked of the sin of irreverence in his book, and my heart had felt the truth of his words. He said it was his reverence which hindered him from speaking to me on the subject of his faith. And yet he could teach me to calculate about eternal life as if it were a matter of merchandise! He spoke not to that in me which was looking above the earth, but to my earthly selfish nature, not to that in me which was ready to submit to anything or bear anything for the sake of doing

God's will and attaining a knowledge of Him, but to all my proud, contentious, disputatious feelings. He did not address me as a creature capable of reverence, though he accused me of irreverence; nay, he taught me to connect a lower, more grovelling, notion of Christianity than I had ever done while under the most irreverent of my teachers.

A. You felt, then, that you should be more right in continuing a Quaker?

Q. No, I did not feel that; my mind was in the most wretched contradiction. But I said to myself, I am urged to forsake the body in which I have lived, and my fathers have lived: I am to turn away from those who first taught me to revere the operations of my own spirit, and to tremble at the name of God; I am to break all the bonds of old affection and sympathy: and why? because there are higher objects and interests for which even these must be sacrificed? because I must leave father and mother for the sake of Christ? no, because it is the safer, the more politic, course; because it is likely, upon a balance of probabilities, that I shall be in less danger of suffering a selfish loss here, or hereafter, if I take it. Magnify the loss to me as you will; heap up the epithets infinite, eternal, as you may—this is a question of principle not of degree, and when I set principle at nought, I believe these words, great and terrible as they sound, lose all their meaning to me.

A. You must not commit the unfairness of supposing that the clergyman with whom you spoke really attached no higher and more spiritual idea to the words than that which he seems to have conveyed to you; he probably meant to use an argumentum ad hominem.

Q. I fully understood that. The conviction I formed from some parts of his book was, and still is, that he had a very high and spiritual apprehension of things. I knew he would think me unfit to be admitted to his arcana, nor did I claim such an honour. But from the little I have read about the Catechumens in the primitive Church, I fancied that they were not taught something wholly different in kind from that

which they learnt after their baptism.[3] I did not know that they were reasoned with upon those selfish motives which it must have been the object of their after initiation to cure them of. But be that as it may, an argumentum ad hominem is meant, I suppose, to produce conviction of some kind or other; else it is merely a gratuitous insult to the person against whom it is directed. Now I cannot conceive anyone on whom this kind of argument would produce conviction. It assumes him to whom it appeals to care for nothing but profit and loss. A person who does care for nothing but profit and loss would merely smile at the attempt to awaken his fears about an unseen and future blessing; his whole mind is wrapt up in the things that are passing around him. Your wisdom, therefore, consists in ignoring the existence of that which might listen to you, and in addressing yourself to that which has no ears.

A. Well, but if this be an error, it is not peculiar to one or another school among us. In a commercial country we are all more or less inclined to act, think, and argue upon such maxims as these.

Q. I do not think the clergyman I speak of would be very grateful to you for telling him he had adopted his notions from a commercial age. But I was not bringing it as a charge against a school—I was only telling you my own story.

A. It is a sad and eventful one—but you have not finished it?

Q. The next incident will surprise you most of all. I have scarcely courage to confess that during the last two months I have had frequent and not unpleasant interviews with a Romish priest.

A. The argument about safety is so established and habitual a one among the members of his Church, that I think he cannot have been more agreeable to you than the English clergyman.

Q. He has rarely, if ever, resorted to it—possibly he may have guessed from something I said to him the first time we met, that it was not one which was likely to have any great weight with me. So far from

[3]See Note A.

denouncing any of my former thoughts and opinions, he has taken pains to show me how many points of sympathy there are between us.

A. Of sympathy—between a Romanist and a Quaker!

Q. "I find," he says, "in the writings of the early Quakers, the most earnest longings after a universal Church. Is it wonderful that they should have felt such longings? That which is called the English Church—the only one they knew of—is limited to a particular locality, subjected to the yoke of a national sovereign, tied down by national laws and customs. Depend upon it, my friend, your founders were right: that is not Christ's Church which is not universal."

A. How did you answer that?

Q. I said that our Quaker system was by its very nature spiritual, and that his Church seemed to me to be opposed to spirituality. "Opposed to spirituality!" he exclaimed; "and where will you find so many men and women of a high spirituality, so many men and women who resembled your own in their love of mystical contemplation—as among us? Has not Thomas à Kempis been always a favourite with your friends? And is not the 'Imitation of Christ,' par excellence, the book of Catholic devotion?" "These," I said, "were individuals—but the system?" "Well," he continued; "the system—look, if you please, at that. What is your great complaint against the English system? Is it not that the mouths of men are shut who are urged by the Spirit to speak God's word? Can you bring that charge against us? Look at our friars, taken from the humblest classes, recognised the moment they discover a real inward vocation, adopted at once as our teachers though they have no one worldly qualification to recommend them. Do you not find fault with your English authorities because they forbid one whole sex to act as the handmaids of Christ and of His flock? It is very true we do not adopt your notion that women may speak in the churches; we adhere more strictly to the words of Scripture than to suffer such a practice: but the feeling which has led you to lift your voices in behalf of their rights and duties meets with every encouragement among us Catholics. We rejoice to see women devoting themselves to the service

of the Church: we bestow upon them all help and honour while they are living: we account them saints when they die." Another point of agreement he discovered between us. "What is the great moving spring and centre of action to which all your writers refer? Surely it is love. They believe that though faith and hope be great Christian graces, the greatest of all is charity. That is the very principle for which we are contending. The Protestants wish to substitute faith for love. We say—as your friends have also said—that we will not."

A. Do you find that these arguments have brought your mind to greater quietness and satisfaction?

Q. Quietness and satisfaction! The words seem to me as if they were spoken in a dream. No indeed! I am as far from quietness and satisfaction as any poor mortal ever was. If ever the thought of joining the Romish Church do present itself, it comes to me as the fearful dream of something to which I may be driven—as a last hopeless alternative. And just as often it seems to me that I may become a St. Simonian or a Socialist. These systems, too, have their attractions; they address themselves to wants in me which I think must be satisfied—and yet, perhaps, they never are to be satisfied. Oftentimes I wish above all things for a potion that would put me to sleep.

A. To sleep, my friend—perchance to dream.

Q. I know it well; this broken fever-sleep is worse than being awake.

A. Need I now answer the question which you asked me at the beginning of our conversation—what I meant by wishing you to keep your Quaker principles, though you might leave the Quaker Society?

Q. Indeed you must; I am as much in the dark about the possibility of such a distinction as ever.

A. Your first objection to Quakerism arose from the feeling that it was not acting out its original idea.

Q. And my second from the feeling that that idea was a false one.

A. Let us consider. Did you really discover that idea to be a false one, or some other to be true?

Q. I found, or thought I found, certain great doctrines laid down in Scripture—doctrines most important to my own being—and of these the early Quakers seemed to take only a very passing notice, if they did not reject them altogether.

A. I do not doubt that you discovered these doctrines in Scripture, or that you found them practically important, or that the early Quakers comparatively neglected them. What I doubt is, whether you ascertained those doctrines of which the Quakers did take notice to be unimportant, unscriptural, or inconsistent with the others.

Q. I certainly thought they were.

A. Yes, and to that judgment of yours, formed, perhaps, upon very hasty and insufficient evidence, you attached the same sacredness as to the witness of your heart and conscience, and of Scripture with your heart and conscience, that those doctrines of which your evangelical friends spoke were needful to you.

Q. Is that a practical distinction?

A. It is one which you have yourself recognised in the most emphatic manner. Did not you say that while the dissenting minister and the evangelical clergyman were maintaining their own positions, they made the deepest impression upon you? And did not you say that when they began to ridicule the mystical opinions, they created the most vehement reaction in your mind against that which you had been previously inclined to adopt?

Q. I certainly said so.

A. Well! and in that confession, I think I can find an explanation of all your subsequent experience. You parted too suddenly with something which God meant you to keep, and all the bewilderment and restlessness you have since suffered has been the necessary and appointed punishment of that error.

Q. If it be so, it is an error which I cannot retrieve. The Evangelical, the Unitarian, the English clergyman, the Romanist, may have left me nothing to fill the void in my mind, but they have effectually despoiled me of what was there before. They have not convinced me that there

is a standing-place in any of their systems, but they have made me certain that I have none in my own.

A. Alas! it is thus that men—benevolent men, honest men—holy men, trifle with that which is most awful and sacred in the minds of their brethren! But they suffer as much evil as they inflict.

Q. In what way?

A. They turn the truths which they hold in their inmost hearts, and which God has given them to defend, into negations and contradictions; they oblige themselves to resort to insufficient proofs and false assumptions in support of these truths, because they have wilfully rejected the evidence of them which God was supplying in the wants and cravings of their fellow men; they encourage infidelity under the name of faith; they form parties when they mean to proclaim principles which would make parties impossible; they set up theories and systems based upon private judgments and individual conceits, when they are professing by some way or other to lead us on to permanent truths which belong to all and are necessary for all; they create new divisions by the very efforts which they make to promote unity; they invent lines and landmarks of their own, but the grand everlasting distinctions which God has established escape them altogether.

Q. But why declaim against an evil which seems so deeply rooted in human nature, that the efforts of six thousand years to eradicate it have proved abortive?

A. Why, indeed; if I did not believe that God has provided a complete and effectual witness against this evil, which is, as you say, so rooted in our selfish natures; if I did not see that this witness had prevailed to make itself heard in every age above all the clamours and distractions which were seeking to drown its voice: if I were not convinced that the world would have been torn in pieces by its individual factions, if there had not been this bond of peace and fellowship in the midst of it; if I were not sure that peace is meant to drive out war, good evil, light darkness; if I could not recognise more abundant proofs of this glorious fact in our own day than in any previous one; if

it did not seem to me that all sects and factions, religious, political, or philosophical, were bearing testimonies, sometimes mute, sometimes noisy, occasionally hopeful, oftener reluctant, to the presence of that Church Universal, which is at once to justify their truths, explain the causes of their opposition, and destroy their existence.

Q. But the difficulty is that these factions have been in the Church Universal itself—assign whatever meaning you please to that phrase.

A. That is just the very point I was asserting. I said there was a sect spirit, a spirit which laboured to set up individual whims, opinions, and judgments in each of us; in us of the English Church, as well as in the Romanist, the foreign Protestant, the Quaker, the Evangelical Dissenter, or the Unitarian. The question is whether we do not all in our hearts and consciences feel and know that this sect spirit is a vile, accursed, devilish spirit; whether, if we do know this, these same hearts and consciences do not testify that it is not meant to rule the world; whether if that testimony be true, we are not bound to inquire what is to rule the world instead of it.

Q. And that inquiry you think I may even yet enter upon with some hope?

A. The early Quakers testified that there was a Kingdom of Christ in the world, and that it would subdue all kingdoms to itself. Are you willing to inquire with me into the grounds upon which they make this assertion; to consider whether those grounds be tenable; and whether the Quaker system be or be not the realisation of the Quaker idea? Shall we then inquire into the principles of those religious bodies who wish you to reject Quakerism; asking whether these also may not be sound and true, and whether they have not been depraved and degraded by certain negative notions to which they have been appended; whether the systems which have been invented to express them do really express them or no? Supposing our conclusions on this last point should not be satisfactory, shall we then proceed to consider the assertion of the Romanist—that there is a Catholic Church which existed before all these systems, and which is derived from a higher

authority than all of them? If he should be able to make this assertion good, we may then inquire whether the Romish system be this Church or the disease of it; whether that system have exalted the ordinances of the Church which its supporters acknowledge and revere, or have degraded them and deprived them of their significance; whether this Church Catholic be in contradiction to those ideas which the Quakers and the other Protestant bodies hold, or whether it be the legitimate and perfect realisation of them. We cannot complete this investigation without examining that point upon which your Romanist friend discovered so close a resemblance between your views and his; the point, I mean, whether a national society and a universal society be in their natures contradictory and incompatible; or whether they have been only made so by certain notions which interfere with the universality of the spiritual body as well as with the distinctness of the national body. When we have arrived at some conclusion upon this matter, we shall be in a condition to speak of our position in England; to inquire if there be a Catholic Church here or not, and if there be, under what circumstances it exists, what are its dangers and evils, whether these dangers and evils are reasons for our living in separation from it or for uniting ourselves more closely to it.

Q. I am ready to hear what you have to say on these subjects, though I cannot pretend that I look for any great discoveries.

A. I rejoice that you do not. If we begin with the expectation of great results our pride will be rewarded with disappointment, and we shall add one more scheme to those which were so fair in appearance, and which have proved so abortive: if we desire to walk humbly along the path which God has marked out for us, rejecting no light, however feeble, which He vouchsafes, and trusting in Him to guide us to the perfect day, I do not think that His promise to wayfaring men will be unfulfilled to us.

PART I. ON THE PRINCIPLES OF THE QUAKERS AND OF THE OTHER RELIGIOUS BODIES WHICH HAVE ARISEN SINCE THE REFORMATION, AND ON THE SYSTEMS TO WHICH THEY HAVE GIVEN BIRTH

Chapter I. Quakerism

Section I. On the Positive Doctrines of the Quakers

The Indwelling Word—The Spiritual Kingdom—Spiritual Influences

In Mr. Gurney's work on the religious peculiarities of the Society of Friends, we are told that the doctrine "which lies at the root of all their particular views and practices, is that of the perceptible influence and guidance of the Spirit of truth." This author maintains in a previous passage that "a measure of the influence of the Spirit is bestowed upon all men whereby they are enlightened, and may be saved." But it is obvious that he does not look upon this principle as in any degree so important or so characteristic of the Quakers, as the other. I do not see how a mere theory respecting the condition of the world generally can ever seem so important to any man, as a principle which concerns his own conduct and responsibility. But I question whether the old Quakers would have stated the latter doctrine precisely in the terms which Mr. Gurney has used; I think they would have given it a much more practical form and signification, and that by doing so they would

have exhibited the relative position and value of these two portions of their creed very differently.

Anyone who reads Fox's Journal will find that he adhered most literally and practically to a belief in perceptible impressions and influences. His whole conduct was regulated by the conviction, that he was commanded to do certain acts and utter certain words; wherever he went, whomsoever he denounced, whatever tone or manner he gave to his discourses, he believed undoubtedly that he was obeying a divine instigation. But, however strange this conviction may seem in our days (and some of the results of it would seem strange to the Quakers themselves), no one who is at all acquainted with the history of the period between 1645 and 1660 will fancy that Fox or his disciples were in this particular distinguished from a number of other religious men. There were hundreds, perhaps I might say thousands, in Cromwell's army who lived and acted as much under this belief, and who followed it out as consistently, as any Quaker could possibly do. Fox himself was frequently brought into collision with such men. He speaks, again and again, of a body of Ranters who gave him much trouble, on this very ground that they all believed themselves under perceptible spiritual influences. And in one very remarkable passage of his Diary, he says that a convert of his, Justice Hotham, told him, that he (Fox) had been raised up to utter a principle which discomfited these Ranters, and that but for this principle they would have overrun the whole land and destroyed it.

I. This principle, and not the doctrine respecting perceptible influences, must then, one would think, have been the central one of Primitive Quakerism. Nay, a really earnest Quaker would have been willing that the truth and value of his spiritual impressions should be tried by their conformity to it or disagreement with it.[4] What then was this principle? William Penn, in his preface to Fox's Journal, expresses

[4]In one case this remark was strikingly verified. James Naylor, whose strange doings at Bristol are recorded in our ordinary English histories, acknowledged that he had been deceived by a false spirit or by the fleshly workings of his own mind. Yet he proclaimed his faith in Fox's principle to the last, and looked upon his errors as the consequence of a departure from it.

it in the following words: "They were directed to the light of Jesus Christ within them as the seed and leaven of the kingdom of God; near all, because in all, and God's talent to all. A faithful and true witness and just monitor in every bosom, the gift and grace of God to life and salvation, that appears to all, though few regard it." (Page ix.) This, he says (page xix.), was "their fundamental principle, the corner-stone of their fabric, and, to speak eminently and properly, their characteristic or main distinguishing point or principle;" this principle of "the light of Christ within, as God's gift for man's salvation, is the root of the goodly tree of doctrines, that grew and branched out of it."

That this doctrine was the ground of Fox's teaching every page of his Diary proves. It might be a conviction, that he was sensibly led by the Spirit, which induced him to break forth in this or that steeple-house, or to attack this or that Independent, Baptist, Presbyterian, or "Common-Prayer man." But, when he did speak, the words he uttered were, "Brother, there is a light within thee: resist it and thou art miserable; follow it and thou art happy." And he again and again expresses his assurance that these were the words which produced a real moral effect upon his hearers; that whatever else he said was valuable only as it arose out of them, or tended to illustrate and enforce them. He believes that he spoke to something which was in those to whom he spoke, and that, being there, it answered his appeal.

It was not from the teachers or popular books of the day that Fox learnt this doctrine. The language in which he describes his early life is remarkably unlike that which we meet with in Puritan biographies. "At eleven years of age," he says, "he knew pureness and righteousness;" while he was a child he was taught how to walk to be kept pure; when he grew up and "was put to a man that was a shoemaker by trade, and that dealt in wool, and used grazing, and sold cattle, and a great deal passed through his hands, he never wronged man or woman, for the Lord's power was over him to preserve him… people had generally a love to him for his honesty and innocency." The conflicts of mind, which he describes afterwards, had no relation to

any of the controversies, religious or political, by which England was then torn asunder. Of Prelacy or Covenant, King or Parliament, he knew nothing. The awful question, What am I?—what have I to do in this strange confused world? occupied his soul. It is one which must be new to each man, though thousands may have been vexed with it before him. Those whom Fox consulted about it afforded him little help; he withdrew from the society of his fellow-creatures, and studied his Bible. Even that seemed not to tell him the secret which he wanted to know: one thing however he learnt; there was in him that which shrank from this inquiry, and would fain forget it altogether, and there was that in him which would have no rest till he found the answer to it. Now, was not this in itself a great discovery? Did it not show him (in part at least), what kind of being he was? He had desires which drew him down to things which he saw, and tasted, and handled; he had desires which aspired after something with which his senses and appetites had nothing to do. And was there not another discovery contained in this? They were actual earthly objects which attracted him towards themselves; his nature inclined him to them, yet, when he obeyed that nature, he seemed to lose what was most real in him. Must there not be a counter-attraction, a power as real as any of those things which he beheld, raising him out of them, urging him to seek something above himself, a real substantial good? Must not that power be in truth greater, though the contrary might seem to be the case, than all which were resisting it? Could he not obey that higher influence, and, by obeying it, obtain life and peace? He felt that he could; that he was meant to do so. The light was stronger than the darkness. He was privileged to dwell in it.

But was this light, then, afforded only to George Fox the shoemaker? How could this be? Did it not witness to him, that whenever he was setting up himself he was resisting it, not following it; when he was obeying his selfish inclinations, he knew that he was flying from this great teacher; when he desired to be led by it he knew that he was a man? Surely, then, this must be a light vouchsafed to him, because

he was a man; it must be "a light which lighteneth every man who cometh into the world." A terrible majority might be striving against it, but their very strivings proclaimed the truth; the kind of misery which men experienced showed the happiness which was intended for them.

When he arrived at this conviction, the Bible seemed to him a new book altogether. From first to last it witnessed to him of that invisible good which men are to seek after, and against the visible idolatries which are drawing them away from it. The lives of the patriarchs, of Moses, of the prophets, were the lives of men who were following the light, the teacher of their hearts, the Lord of righteousness, and were resisting the evil inclinations and appetites which would make them the slaves and worshippers of outward things. On the other hand, all the records of the sins of the Jewish nation, or of heathen nations, were records of revolts from this mysterious guide and teacher, by men who chose darkness rather than light, the outward and apparent good rather than the real and inward. As might be expected, the darkness became continually more gross in each individual who gave himself up to it, and the light brighter and clearer in each one who steadily pursued it. And so it had been in each new period—greater blindness and sensuality, greater and more immediate illumination: Jews and Gentiles becoming more estranged from Him who was yet revealing Himself to them both; holy prophets holding more wonderful converse than their fathers had done with the Word of God rising more above outward emblems and institutions, obeying more implicitly his inward suggestions. Such, or nearly such, was the form in which the Old Testament history seems to have presented itself to Fox; and therefore the words at the beginning of the Gospel of St. John appeared to him to stand in the most natural connection with all the records to which they refer. And St. Paul's declarations, in the first and second of Romans, that the Gentiles knew God, but glorified Him not as God, and liked not to retain Him in their knowledge; and that the Gentiles as well as the Jews, if they sought for glory and honour and immortality, would obtain eternal life; while the Jews as well as

the Gentiles, if they were contentious and obeyed not the truth but obeyed unrighteousness, would have tribulation and wrath—far from containing a puzzle, which it required critical ingenuity to surmount, appeared to him the simple announcement of a truth with which all the rest of Scripture was in agreement.

II. But how was the condition of men affected by the appearance of our Lord in human flesh? This was a question which probably did not at first present itself to Fox; but by degrees he and the other Quakers found an answer to it. Men having foregone their spiritual privileges and given themselves up to the flesh, were not indeed forsaken by their heavenly Teacher, but they could not be treated as spiritual. By outward emblems and images, the elements of the world, they were trained: to the Jews was given a direct intimation of the nature and purpose of their discipline; the Gentiles, through a thicker film of sense, and with fewer helps to penetrate it, might yet, if they would, discover their invisible guide. But these were preparations for a clearer day. Christ, the Living Word, the Universal Light, appeared to men, and showed in His own person what processes He was carrying on in the hearts of all; subduing the flesh, keeping Himself separate from the world, submitting to death. This manifestation was the signal for the commencement of a new dispensation; sensible emblems were no longer to intercept man's view of his Lord; national distinctions were to be abolished; men might be treated as belonging to a higher state than that which they lost in Adam; they might attain a perfection which did not exist in Adam.

The Scriptural testimonies to this doctrine seemed to them most numerous. Stripped of the fantastical covering in which they were sometimes enveloped, few readers will think that they received a forced or unnatural construction. The announcement by the Prophets of a dispensation which should have these two characteristics above all others—spirituality and universality; the evident annulling, in the Sermon on the Mount, of rules and maxims which had been previously current and the substitution of a spiritual principle for them;

our Lord's constant declaration that He came to establish a kingdom, and that that kingdom was to be within us; the announcement of the Evangelists that His parables were the discovery of mysteries which had been hidden from the foundation of the world; His own words that He would yet show His disciples more plainly of the Father; the language of the Epistle to the Galatians, affirming that a spiritual covenant had succeeded to the formal Jewish covenant; the language of the Epistle to the Ephesians, affirming that an economy hidden from ages and generations was then made known to His Holy Apostles by the Spirit; the exhortations in the Philippians and the Hebrews to press onwards to perfection—exhortations evidently grounded upon the new position into which those who were addressed had been brought: these are only specimens of the evidence which every page of the New Testament seemed to the Quakers to contain of the doctrine that our Lord came to bring in a universal Light, to establish a perfectly spiritual Kingdom, and to encourage men to seek a perfectly spiritual Life.

III. It is implied in the very idea of this constitution, that men are brought under a directly divine government or influence. Those who yield themselves to the light, and become members of the spiritual kingdom, recognise this influence in all their acts. They will not move without it; they will be ready to move anywhere at its bidding. The sacrifice of all personal inclinations, energies, will, in short self-annihilation in its highest form, is their duty and their privilege; so they become fit to utter the divine voice, and prompt to perform the divine will.

In support of this doctrine the Quakers would plead the words of John the Baptist, announcing the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire as the great promise of the new covenant; the ignorance of the Apostles till they received the gift from on high; the silence and waiting that were enjoined upon them till it arrived; the whole tenor of the Apostolic history, shewing that the first ministers of Christ believed themselves to be acting under an immediate inspiration, and to be

incapable of acting without it; the principle so often asserted, and everywhere implied, that the kingdom was to be everlasting, and that those who first witnessed its establishment were to be patterns and precedents of all who succeeded them.

Section II. Objections to the Quaker Theology Considered

I am far from saying that the early Quakers acknowledged no theological principles except these three. In a sense they admitted most of the doctrines which other men embody in creeds or articles. But these three principles determined that sense; these had been realised in their minds; the rest hung loosely about them, and at one time might be heartily recognised, at one time almost rejected, as they seemed to square with the primary truths or to contradict them. These three doctrines, then, may be said to constitute the positive theology of the Quakers; from these their system has been deduced. Before I inquire what that system is, and how far it is legitimately connected with the principles of which I have spoken, I may state in a few words why I cannot join some conspicuous opponents of Quakerism in denouncing these principles—why I believe them to be either truths or hints of truths which are most vital and important.

I. There are three objections usually taken against Fox's doctrine of the Inward Light or the Indwelling Word. First, it is said to be mystical; secondly, it is said to be unscriptural; thirdly, it is said to be unsupported by fact, or by any authority, save that of an ignorant mechanic and his credulous disciples.

1. I shall not evade the first charge, by saying that the word mystical may mean anything, everything, or nothing; that it may be applied - has been applied - against the most recognised principles in physics as well as in morals; that if mystical and mysterious mean the same thing, all science is mystical. I will at once give the word a sense which may be a legitimate sense, which at all events is a common one. The tendency to invest certain feelings, consciousnesses, temperaments of individual men with the sacredness which belongs only to such truths

as are of universal character, and may be brought to a universal test, is often designated by the name Mysticism; it is unquestionably one to which religious men in all ages have been prone; and I do not know any records which contain more frequent instances of it than those of the early Quakers. But the question is, whether, if this be the definition of mysticism—and I know no definition which distinctly condemns it except this—the doctrine we are considering be not essentially unmystical, nay, whether we might not almost venture to call it emphatically the antagonist principle to mysticism. For surely it disclaims, more vehemently than almost any, exclusive appropriation; it submits itself more directly than most to a universal test. Fox did not say, "This light is mine;" he said, "It is yours as much as mine: it is with you; and in the healthiest, truest, soberest states of your mind, you know that it is with you." This principle stood out, then, in marked contrast to those peculiar experiences and interpretations upon which he often laid so much stress; attesting its difference from them by the effects which it produced, and obtaining at least some sanction in its being forced upon the conviction of men whose characteristic infirmities would have led them to an entirely different conclusion.

2. The notion that the doctrine is unscriptural has derived support, partly from the opinion that Fox and his followers habitually disparaged the Scriptures, partly from his own confession that he knew the doctrine before he saw it in the Bible, though afterwards he learnt how to support it from the Bible. How far the general charge against them is true I may consider presently; that it does not affect this particular case is evident from the appeal which they make not to a few isolated texts merely, but to the whole tenor and context of the inspired volume, in defence of their position. Neither can I see in Fox's account of the mode by which he arrived at an apprehension of this principle anything different from the statements which are common in writers who are the most opposed to him; that, after they were spiritually awakened, the Bible, which had been a dead letter to them, seemed to be full of meaning to them, the only wonder being that they had not

perceived it before—language which I believe is very simple, reasonable, and accordant with the experience of most earnest men, no wise derogatory to the Bible, and not at all incompatible with the belief that the study of it may have been one of the principal instruments whereby that capacity which makes its words comprehensible was called forth. And surely no considerations about the course of thought which another man has followed, need hinder us from inquiring whether the view which he takes of a book do throw a light upon it, and render the contents of it more coherent and intelligible. I have stated a few of the reasons which have led others, and, I acknowledge, compel me, to believe that the denial of Fox's doctrine makes the scheme, the spirit, and the letter of Scripture alike perplexing. If it were necessary to add further proofs, I should find them in the violent and tortuous expedients to which critics have resorted for the sake, as they profess, of escaping from the extravagances and absurdities of mystical interpretation. When, for instance,[5] I hear a grave, learned, and (so far as hostility to Socinianism is a title to that name) orthodox interpreter, suggesting that ὁ λόγος in the first verse of the Gospel of St. John means only ὁ λεγόμενος (the person talked of promised), supporting the gloss by the question of John's disciples, Σὺ εἶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος; and treating the two phrases as equivalent; when I find such an opinion as this adopted by respectable scholars, as a convenient refuge from mysticism—I am constrained to think that I am not likely to preserve my respect for the letter of the inspired volume more uncorrupted, or my apprehension of what is reasonable in human language more clear, by determining not to believe that the Word of God before He came in the flesh was the light which lightened all men—a principle as much confirmed to me by the evidence of profane as of sacred history.

3. I speak of this evidence, for I believe that the third objection to this doctrine is quite as untenable as the other two. It has been said, and I think justly, that if Fox's assertion respecting the light which

[5]See Note B.

the heathens possessed were well founded, there would be very clear indications of the fact in the records of their acts and thoughts. Such indications, it is added, would not be contained in a few fine sayings, scattered here and there amidst heaps of evil and offensive matter; they could not be gathered from the works of a rhetorician like Seneca, who lived after the advent of Christ, and might have availed himself of some Christian notions; they ought to be something different from the mere notions about immortality, and an indestructible part of our nature, which have been floating in the minds of civilised and savage men, and which acquired a sort of argumentative consistency but no practical influence in the minds of the Roman Stoics and Academicians; they cannot be drawn from the mere denials of the polytheistic creeds into which some of the Greek philosophers were led, and which issued only in an atheistic or at best in a pantheistic theory: even the instance of a man practically, and with some steadiness, recognising a standard of right, would not be satisfactory if it should appear that his thoughts, and those of all heathens who preceded or followed him, were moving in directly opposite lines. I fully admit the justice of these maxims and I take them for my guide when I state the reasons which induce me to think that Fox, though he knew nothing about the men of the old world, was right in the judgment which he formed respecting them.

In the best and most recent works[6] on Greek philosophy its history is divided into the periods before and after Socrates. That this arrangement is the true and natural one, I think everyone will admit, who has compared it with older methods, and has observed what light it throws upon the growth and sequence of speculations which had been regarded as independent of each other. Yet there would seem at first sight to be insuperable objections to it: Socrates left no books; the difficulty of ascertaining which of his disciples reported his opinions most correctly, what his opinions were, nay, whether he had any, has

[6]In that by Ritter for example.

been a subject of frequent complaint; all the interest of his doctrine has been said to be contained in his life. How is it then possible that he should be a centre to the theories and systems of his countrymen?

The answer seems to me to be this: Whatever difference there may be in the accounts of him which have been delivered to us, they all testify—the satirical one by the comedian of Athens, as clearly as the narratives of Xenophon and Plato[7]—that he saw in the life of man the struggle between two principles, one tending downwards, one upwards; one belonging to the earth, one claiming fellowship with something pure and divine. Those who suppose him to be a mere ironist or sceptic cannot deny that whatever his words do not mean, they do mean this; those who are most inclined to reduce his thoughts and those of all other men to a system, must yet admit that this doctrine lay at the basis of his system, and that it is one which must find a more complete exposition in a man's acts, or in his familiar intercourse with persons of different tempers and pursuits, than it can ever find in a formal treatise. Accordingly, it seems not strange that one observer should be struck chiefly with the efforts which he made, in the discipline of his own mind and in that which he recommended to his scholars, to overcome sensual inclinations, and to raise his spirit, by all means, the traditions and faith of his country among the rest, to higher and purer apprehensions: that another should have been shocked by the tendency, which such attempts to deliver himself and others from the worship of outward things must have had, to weaken his and their respect for the gods of his country: that another, of deeper and more earnest meditation, should have perceived, in the conviction which governed his master's life, distinct and personal as it appeared, the hint of a method by which men might be led out of their vagueness, their superstitions, and their unbelief, into the pursuit of permanent truth; by which also the imperfect hints, crude generalisations, and seemingly contradictory discoveries of previous thinkers might be interpreted,

[7]See Note C.

quickened, and reconciled. This last notion may easily have occurred to anyone who felt how he himself, and noticed how other young men of the day, were compelled to acknowledge Socrates as the interpreter of the feelings which were at work confusedly within them, and of the objects at which they were blindly aiming. It makes itself good to us by the experiment to which I alluded; we are able, by taking Socrates as our guide, to understand what the Greeks, for many generations before and after his time, were in different directions pursuing. But if so, we must admit that while the worth and peculiarity of the life of Socrates consisted in this, that he pursued stedfastly, of course amidst many inconsistencies, a pure and invisible good, and sought to overcome the obstacles in himself and in the world which hindered him from apprehending it, this characteristic does not separate him from the thinkers of the old world, or entitle us to view him as a prodigy; but rather enables us to see, what we otherwise should not have seen so clearly, that the like struggle was going forward consciously in every better and truer man—unconsciously, in all. Such, I believe, is the witness which the records of Greek philosophy bear in favour of Fox's doctrine.

It may, however, be said that this testimony is not complete; for that whereas Fox uniformly spoke of a personal teacher of men, the doctrine of Socrates goes no further than to the acknowledgment of a search or appetite in man after a supreme good which need not be personal, or if personal, may not necessarily have originated these desires, or even have taken any interest in them.

I believe no one who attends carefully to the language of Socrates, or of his greater pupil, will suppose that he doubted whether the longings and movements of his spirit had a divine source and were subject to a divine impulse or no. His deep conviction that he was under the guidance of an attending dæmon, the continual reference which he makes to traditional stories, his firm faith in divine interpositions and judgments, are proofs that he was not merely seeking to apprehend "The Being," but also acknowledging often, if not habitually, that a

Being had first taken cognisance of him. I admit, however, that the remark has a certain degree of force; I admit that so far as Socrates was simply a philosopher (in the sublimest sense of that word), so far he was acting merely as the seeker after what is true and good, not as the receiver of an influence from it. His high merit was, that he acknowledged the need of something besides philosophy in order that he might realise the meaning of philosophy; a very peculiar merit, indeed, setting him and Plato at an immeasurable distance from those who followed, and from most of those who preceded them; but still, perhaps, the very merit which makes him of such importance as the interpreter of other schools. Be that as it may, there is one fact which is well worthy of notice in reference to this point. So soon as a Jew was able to study and understand the writings of the Greek philosophers, the defect which is complained of was supplied. Philo recognised all the cries of the wiser heathen after light and wisdom and truth, as genuine indications of the feelings which the writings of the prophets had prepared him to expect would be in all men, and as produced by the teaching and inspiration of the Divine Word. So much has been written of late respecting the general purpose and character of his writings, that I need not multiply words. A few are given in a note, merely as specimens of a tone of thinking which could not have been so habitual in one man, if it had not been adopted by many.[8]

Some modern critics have maintained, that the study of Philo is the proper introduction to the study of the Fathers. I do not mean to discuss the truth or limits of that proposition. The ground of it is unquestionably the discovery of a close resemblance between the language of one class of the Fathers, those who lived in Alexandria before the period of the Arian controversy, and that of Philo respecting the Divine Word.[9] This resemblance has generally been acknowledged; any inconvenient inferences from it being avoided, by describing these Fathers in particular, and often the Fathers in general, as the

[8]See Note D.

[9]See Note E.

Platonizing doctors, who mingled the pure truths of Christianity with Gentile Philosophy. It is very difficult to encounter such phrases, for this reason, that they are phrases merely. Those Fathers who were brought into immediate contact with the Philosophers, told them, as they believed on the authority of Scripture, that the Divine Word had been speaking to the conscience and reason of men in all ages, and by various acts of discipline had been urging them to turn from their idols and seek Him. They affirmed, that whenever any man had exhibited any kindly or affectionate feeling, any earnest zeal for truth, this Invisible Guide had inspired him with it. They showed no mercy to the fables of Paganism or to the conceits of philosophers; they merely declared that all error was the forsaking of God's guidance—all sincere and good thoughts the obeying it.

The question, whether in using this language they rendered more honour to mere human wit and judgment, than the persons who attribute to these alone all that was generous and true in the acts or feelings of heathens, I leave to the understandings of my readers: the question whether it is wise or decorous to attack men, whom I may venture, I suppose, without offence, to call pious and venerable, not by showing wherein they contradicted Scripture, but by affixing to them the nickname of Platonizing—I leave to the consciences of those who are in the habit of using such language. One thing at least is evident, that Fox, the shoemaker of the 17th century, was not the first person who understood the verses at the beginning of St. John's Gospel in a literal, not a metaphorical sense. Before I quit this part of my subject, I must take leave to remark, that the kind of charge which is brought against the Fathers who adopted this doctrine shows very clearly whence the main objection to it has been derived. We are told, and sometimes in a very solemn manner, to beware how we corrupt the simplicity of the Gospel by philosophy and vain deceit. Perhaps the caution may be less applicable to Fox and the Quakers, than to some others; for he hated Greek and Philosophy most cordially, and his followers have in general retained this part of his opinions with

great fidelity; still, it is an important caution, which those to whom it is offered should receive gratefully, and for which they cannot show their value in any way so effectually as by returning it. I believe that anyone, who is at the pains to investigate the origin of his own opinions, will discover that neither reverence for Scripture, nor a great love for simplicity, but precisely the addiction—I must call it, the slavish addiction—to a certain system of philosophy which established itself in this country about the time of the Revolution, is consciously or unconsciously the cause of his dislike to a principle which has been recognised by the humblest and most ignorant men, as well as by the most profound. Ever since the position was adopted as a new and surprising truth (which previous thinkers had looked upon as one of the most plausible, most natural, and most degrading forms of error), that there is no knowledge but that which comes to us through the senses, the idea of a communion between the Divine Word and the heart and conscience and reason of men has been of course rejected. The subject will often recur in the course of our inquiries.

II. I need say very little about the two other main articles of the Quaker faith; first, because the principle of them is contained in that which we have been examining, and secondly, because they are admitted to a certain extent, and under some conditions, by nearly all Christians. The proposition, for instance, that Christ came to establish a spiritual kingdom, a kingdom not of this world, different from the Jewish, in being less carnal and more spiritual, is constantly proclaimed by those English dissenters who are most inclined to denounce Fox's primary tenet as unscriptural and false. Only they think that he pushed this truth to an extreme. They think the kingdom is spiritual but not quite so spiritual as he fancied. So also with reference to the gift of the Spirit and the subordination of man's powers and utterances to His government—they believe that what Fox said was true up to a certain point, but that there is great danger of going beyond that point. I shall have opportunities of examining the plea for these restrictions hereafter. At present, I will only say that, far from thinking that the

Quakers have carried their principles to an excess, I believe all their errors have arisen from the narrow imperfect and earthly notions which they entertain respecting the nature of a spiritual kingdom, and from the low estimate which they have formed of that transcendent gift which God bestowed upon His creatures when His Holy Spirit came down to dwell among them. My meaning will appear more clearly when I have spoken of the negative articles of Quaker Theology.

Section III. The Quaker System

1. It is not difficult to imagine in what way the principle of an inward light must have affected the mind of a man educated as Fox was, provided he were perfectly earnest and sincere. I have spoken of his doctrine—unquestionably it was his doctrine, for it was that which he taught wherever he went; if I had called it a dogma I should perhaps have described very exactly that which it has become to modern Quakers; but assuredly neither word would have seemed to him the correct one. He had actually discovered a law to which he himself was subject—to which every other man was subject; would anyone tell him that this was a mere notion like those about justification, sanctification, final perseverance, and so forth, which he had heard proclaimed from the pulpits of the day? The language of the preachers and of the books might be about something which concerned him and all men; but he had discovered the very thing itself; he had a fact to proclaim, not a theory or a system. From the very first therefore he began to denounce dogmas and formulas as corrupting and misleading. The young mechanic told the preachers, who had been trained in all the distinctions and divisions, which the Westminster Assembly with such infinite labour and discussion had wrought out, that they knew nothing about the matter they were talking of. Those who had silenced their brethren for their want of spiritual knowledge were rebuked, and sometimes silenced (by the voice of a man, not the vote of a trying Committee), for the self-same sin. But if formulas were evil things, could forms be better? Here were men professing outward acts and

ceremonies, and between these and the Christian life they said or signified that there was an intimate connexion. Strange, almost incredible blindness! Did not the Christian life consist in following an inward Guide, an invisible Teacher, in eschewing that which was visible and sensible? What could these outward things have to do with that? The argument was irresistible. It was a main part of Fox's vocation to bear witness against such idolatries.

2. Possibly the thought may sometimes have occurred to one who studied the Old Testament diligently, that forms had been in the olden time the very testimonies for this light, the very means by which the Jews were warned against sensual worship; that they were converted by those Jews into excuses for the indulgence of a natural idolatry; but yet that being God's appointed protests against it, and the means which He had devised for delivering men from it, they were actually appealed to, from age to age, by the prophets who were raised up to tell the people of their sins; these prophets being in fact far more diligent observers of the forms than the sensualists and the hypocrites whom they denounced for neglecting their meaning. I say, such a thought as this may have glanced into the mind of Fox, and with it the reflection, that possibly a method which was good once might be good still. But he was able to silence such suggestions, or to dismiss them as proceeding from an evil source, by the second doctrine of which I spoke. Till the appearance of Christ this might be true; but He came to establish a Spiritual and Universal Dispensation. A spiritual dispensation; therefore outward institutions, like that of circumcision, like that of a passover, like that of a priesthood, like that of an outward sacrificial worship, like that of particularly sacred seasons, are abolished. But are not Baptism, the Eucharist, a Ministry appointed by imposition of hands, and divided into three permanent orders, Liturgies, the observance of Fasts and Festivals, equally visible and outward? On what plea then have you substituted one set of ceremonies for another, when you profess to be members of a spiritual kingdom?

Moreover, the dispensation is to be universal as well as spiritual. National distinctions, therefore, are no more; they belong to the economy of the world. War has been the fruit of these; under a spiritual and universal dispensation, war is a sin. Nations have always, the Jewish nation as much as the rest, invoked God as the witness of their ordinary transactions; Oaths are forbidden under the new dispensation. Nations have generally made a provision for the ministers of religion, and regarded them as parts of the commonwealth. Such arrangements are altogether inconsistent with a spiritual and universal dispensation.

3. As the Quakers turned away with disgust from all confessions whatsoever, it was not likely they would distinguish between the dogmatic articles which were drawn up in later ages of the Church, and the creeds which had been adopted in its infancy. At all events, even the simplest of these creeds was objectionable to them, because it directs our thoughts to the outward acts and events of our Lord's life upon earth, rather than to His presence in the heart. It was a more difficult question how they should regard the Scriptures. These recorded actual events, and appeared to have an outward character. Yet the Bible was the only book of which Fox and several of his brethren knew anything. In it he had found the strongest confirmation of all that he believed. The language, therefore, of the Quakers became more tinctured with the phraseology of Scripture than that of any sect; while, nevertheless, they described it in language which the members of no other sect would have ventured to use. The reading of it was said to be rather a luxury than necessity to the believer, and nothing was more important than that he should derive his knowledge from the inward teacher, not from the outward book. No doubt warnings about the danger of trusting in the letter, and still more about the impossibility of finding a meaning in it without help of another kind, had been common in the writings of learned doctors before, and even since, the Reformation. But it was evident that they acquired a new and much stronger meaning among the Quakers. That meaning was deduced from the

doctrine concerning Spiritual Influences. He only was a true teacher who had been called by the inward voice; he was only teaching rightly at any moment when he was obeying that voice. How then, they argued, can he be at the same time subject to the dominion of a book? He may read it, and passages in it might be brought to his mind; but he will only apply them properly when he feels in the position of those who wrote the book; speaking by the same inspiration which actuated them. The book may be the best of all books, but it must be valuable as an instrument, not strictly as an authority. Such seems to have been their practical conclusion, though the words in which it was expressed might often vary.

It seemed to follow still more obviously, from this belief of an immediate spiritual influence, that preparatory studies for the work of the ministry were unlawful and faithless. Studies as such might not be positively forbidden, but as the teachers were in some sense the standards of thinking and feeling, it was impossible that a sense of the inexpediency, if not the sinfulness, of any high mental cultivation should not have diffused itself among the disciples generally.

A body asserting the positive doctrines, and having the negative characteristics I have described, gradually formed itself, and assumed to itself the name of The Society of Friends. This Society, its members believed, was called into existence to exhibit the features of that kingdom which Christ came into the world to establish. Without wishing to be uncharitable, or denying that there might be good men who did not belong to it, yet they practically looked upon it as the Church of God on earth—the witness against the world. They were, therefore, to keep themselves entirely from the habits of this world, from its varying fashions, from its amusements, and, as far as might be, from its phraseology. With these, the so-called Christian body had become defiled; nay, the very devices by which it had seemed to assert its existence were themselves earthly and sensual, bearing no testimony whatever to the distinction between the light and darkness, to the spirituality and universality of the kingdom, and to the presence of the Spirit.

Section IV. On the Practical Working of the Quaker System

We are now to inquire whether this body has fulfilled the office to which its founders believed that it was divinely appointed. Let us see what evidence is admissible in this case, and how much it will prove. Quakers are agreed with us in believing that one of the characteristics of a divine Church is permanency. It was never intended to last only for a generation; on the contrary, it exists to testify against a changing, capricious world. Neither we then, nor they, are entitled to plead the ordinary law of decay in human bodies, as an excuse for the Church failing to perform the functions to which it has been appointed. Both of us must suppose that this tendency has been foreseen by Him whose handiwork the Church is, and that in some way or other its effects have been counteracted. The peculiarity of the Quakers is, that they suppose permanent institutions, permanent symbols, which man may misinterpret from time to time, but which continue to testify, in spite of his misinterpretations and against them, are not the remedy or even one of the remedies which has been provided against this danger. The condition of a spiritual body, according to them, is, that it rests in the faith, the purity, the vitality of its individual members. This being the case, it must, I conceive, be admitted, that all confessions by them of degeneracy from an older standard are very startling. They can intimate little less than this, that the constitution or kingdom which God has set up in the world, has been overcome and crushed by the world's kingdom which is opposed to it. Yet such confessions are most numerous in the writings, not of one but of all the different divisions of Quakers in the present day. They take different forms according to the views of the persons who make them; but in one form or other they may be traced everywhere. Still I am far from thinking that such evidence as this, however much it may excite the anxious inquiries of Quakers, could be sufficient of itself to prove, either to them or to us, that the experiment had failed. The indications of that fact should be very palpable; they should not rest upon the feelings or observations of any particular persons, however impartial or even however prejudiced

in favour of the system, and they should be clearly and obviously connected with the form and order of the Society; otherwise I think they ought not to be produced, at least for the purpose of disturbing the confidence of anyone who still cleaves to it.

1. One such indication must, I think, suggest itself to every thoughtful person. All, said the Quakers, who are not walking in the divine light, who do not recognise the presence and the guidance of an invisible teacher, are of the world. The pure and holy company, the Church, the Society of Friends, must consist of all who are led by the Spirit to perceive their connection with the invisible Guide, and to follow Him whithersoever He may lead them. Seeing that there was no body of men answering to this description, such a body must be formed; and all who did not attach themselves to it must in practice be treated as belonging to the world. Thus far all seems easy. One might fancy there was a little exclusiveness; that a few persons were treated as aliens, who might possibly be citizens of the household of God; but this could not be helped. There was need of a palpable distinction between the true men and the false. If the distinction were not perfect, it was at least good so far as it went; and faithful men must expect that the Spirit of God would, in due time, bring all to see that this was the Society to which they should belong. But soon a difficulty arose, for which the founders of the Society seem to have made no provision. Children are born to the members of it. What are these? Friends or world-citizens? The consistent answer would have been, "They are of the world; they are not consciously following the light; till they do so, it is a mere dream and contradiction to reckon them in the Society." But feeling, and, as I believe, conscience, gave a different answer. They said, these must by all means belong to the Society; if not, it is a sin to have been agents in giving them existence. The only resource was to use all possible means for separating these children, outwardly at least, from the surrounding world. The parents would then feel that they had done their best, and they would think as little as possible of the falsehood which lay at the root of the whole proceeding. But

it is only for a certain time that any falsehood can be hidden. This one is now making itself palpable. The younger Quakers look about, and ask themselves what it means that they are kept from the world? If the world means those who do not walk in the light, there is a world within the Society as well as without it. Would not their fathers have been right to exclude the idea of consanguinity from the Society altogether? For it is evident that between the law by which human society is propagated, and the law which governs this body, there is no connecting link. The heavenly kingdom has nothing to do with earthly relationships. Unless the body could be continually recruited by conversions from the ranks of the world, it seems as if it could never escape from the penalty of constantly violating the very distinction for which its presence was meant to be the abiding testimony.

2. But the Quaker Society was to be the witness for the existence of a Universal Kingdom. In this faith Penn went forth and preached to the Indians. He was satisfied that they had in them a sense of right and wrong, that the Word was speaking to them as well as to other men. I believe the results of his very interesting mission show how true the conviction was which encouraged him to undertake it. But what else do they prove? Did the settlement of Pennsylvania become the nucleus of a great missionary society? Did it attract to itself the aboriginal Indians and the English settlers? It grew up into a colony of prosperous traders, maintaining a very creditable position in the States, distinguished by certain badges of dress and manners from the neighbouring people, increasing according to the ordinary rate of increase in the population, indifferent beyond the rest of the sects to missionary enterprises. I speak of America, because it cannot be said that the system has not been fairly tried there. But whether you look at Quakerism in that country in which it flourished by persecution, or in that where it had the greatest opportunities for expansion, I ask what witness has it borne for universality, what signs does it make to prove that it is the universal kingdom which was to be set up on earth?

Perhaps it may be said that the philanthropy of the Quakers is a testimony to that feeling of fellowship with the whole human race, which their principles of a universal light and a universal kingdom were likely to foster. I am very far indeed from wishing to deny the existence of this philanthropy, or to detract from its merits. I can have no motive to do so, for I inwardly and heartily subscribe the doctrine which is supposed, and I think rightly, to be the only ground of sympathy with man as man. I have no doubt that it is that principle, or the tradition of it, which has brought forth whatever has been sound and good in the feelings of the Quakers for their white and black brethren. But the question which we are now considering is, How far is the Quaker system a witness on behalf of that principle? and to this question, I fancy, the mode in which the benevolence of Quakers, in late years especially, has displayed itself, is a most striking and conclusive answer. For the moment that they began to do anything besides bearing individual testimonies, the moment they attempted to perform some general, social, organic acts on behalf of their fellow creatures, that moment they found it necessary to fraternise with the members of other societies. They became members of societies for distributing the Bible, societies for emancipating the negroes, societies for promoting universal peace. Assuredly Fox and Penn would have done no such thing. They would have said: 'Our Society being raised up and constituted by God Himself to be the witness for what is spiritual and universal against that which is earthly and national, is the Bible society, the emancipation society, the peace society; we know of no other—there can be no other." The notion of uniting with the world for the sake of promoting spiritual objects would have seemed to them most monstrous; and yet their followers have adopted this method as the only one they know of for carrying out the Quaker principles.

3. Among the benevolent projects of this day, there is none which has interested the Quakers more than the progress of education; they have been almost the founders of the British and Foreign School

Society, and its greatest supporters. The present is not the opportunity for discussing any point connected with this subject in which I may differ from them. I refer to their exemplary zeal in reference to it for the purpose of noticing how much it clashes with the Quaker system, so far as that system puts forward an assertion of the doctrine of spiritual influences. The Quaker minister speaks only when an immediate perceptible impression determines him that he ought to speak. To prepare for his work, to receive any regular appointment to it, to be paid for it, is incompatible with the spiritual nature of the function. But the Quaker teacher, or the teacher whom the Quaker supports in a school, must have a formal appointment, must prepare regular lessons, must receive a regular salary. It follows either that the spiritual minister is not appointed to educate, or that education is not spiritual. If education be as important as the Society of Friends and as I think that it is, what testimony is borne here to the spiritual economy, or to the spiritual influences which go forth that men may be able to administer that economy? Education, which is to have so mighty an influence upon society, is to be conducted upon principles precisely the reverse of those which are proclaimed to be the only spiritual principles.

"But the Quakers," it is said, "have borne a more consistent testimony than others against the habits and maxims of the world." I do not mean, at present, to inquire what precise meaning we ought to attach to this word world—I take the signification which it bears among religious people generally, and the Society of Friends especially. Now the world, in their sense, though it may be built upon one common evil principle, assumes many shapes and appearances; and it must be admitted, I think, that the body which is raised up to protest against it at any particular period, or in any particular locality, ought to bear witness mainly against the form or appearance which is most characteristic of that time or locality. A society which should testify against gladiatorial exhibitions in the nineteenth century, or against cannibalism in Europe, might be entitled to the praise of

great prudence, but could scarcely allege any strong evidence of a divine vocation. The position of the Quakers has been exclusively or almost exclusively in Great Britain and the United States of America during the period between the Civil Wars and the reign of Queen Victoria. I ask any plain person to tell me what he thinks has been the characteristic sin of these two countries during this time especially. That there have been persons, a large body of persons in each, who have been devoting themselves to amusements of one kind or other, and have made them the end of life, I do not doubt; but assuredly no one, comparing England and America with France or Italy, would affirm that the pursuit of pleasure has been the especial sin of us and our Transatlantic children; least of all, that it has been the especial sin of that part of our respective populations with which the Quakers are brought into contact, and whose evils therefore, they ought most to have denounced. Again, it is indisputable that a certain number of persons have pursued literature and mental cultivation as the end of life, and have, for the sake of it, overlooked higher and more universal ends. But certainly this has not been our chief infirmity; other European nations have been far more tempted by it. One deep radical disease has been infecting our two countries, and during the last two centuries has been entering deeper and deeper into our constitution, till it has now nearly reached the vitals of both. Will not everyone say that it has been money-getting? How, then, has the Society of Friends borne witness by its habits and constitution against this sin? It says, indeed, that no portion of the wealth of the body is to be set apart for the support of its ministers; that their subsistence is to be entirely precarious. This may be construed into a proof that money has nothing to do with that which is spiritual. But I confess I do not see how this testimony is to act upon the world, when they find that Friends—believing all amusements, and many branches of mental cultivation, to be necessarily evil, to be actually incapable of being sanctified to a good purpose—believe that the acquisition of wealth is not only a safe and lawful thing, but is to be emphatically, and by the

very nature of the community, the business of everyone who enters it. A Society, the members of which are, to all outward appearance —its ministers as well as others—principally occupied in trade, nay, which till lately had a fear of being occupied in anything else, is to be the witness against a world, which has for its most characteristic, most irreligious distinction, the worship of mammon.

But has the existence of such a body as the Society of Friends had no influence at all in inducing men to believe that the heart and spirit of men are intended to converse with holy and invisible things? I hope that it has had this effect. I cannot believe that any system is permitted to exist which is not working some good; possibly there are minds (out of the Society I mean; of course, there must have been many in it) to whom Quakerism has suggested thoughts which nothing else would have suggested. But yet it seems to me that the positive witness which it has borne in favour of spirituality is of the most equivocal kind. I am afraid if the majority of Quakers were asked wherein the peculiar spirituality of their body consisted, they would answer: "In our not baptizing, not keeping an outward feast, not offering up prepared prayers, not having an outwardly ordained ministry." And unquestionably this answer would express very much the feeling which the sight of such a Society communicates to indifferent persons who behold it from a distance. A man of the world, who thinks the ordinances of the Church troublesome or unmeaning, observes, perhaps, to himself now and then, that the Quakers contrive to dispense with these ordinances; and yet are a very religious and thriving people. But at another time he will be equally struck with the observation, that though they have none of these indications, they have others which seem to him not less outward and visible. They have no fixed forms of prayer, but they have a fixed form of dress; they have rejected sacraments, but they retain a peculiar kind of language. Surely a man who is inquiring with some confusion what spiritual Christianity means, must be somewhat puzzled when he is told: Those are the marks of a formal earthly body; these of one essentially spiritual and divine.

It may be supposed that these are mere accidents of the Quaker profession, which show what a tendency to formalism there is in the human mind, but which may be laid aside by those who understand the true objects of the Society. There cannot be a greater mistake. The younger Quakers are probably very impatient of these restrictions; but it is not because they have an insight into any essential principles; on the contrary, indifference to the outward badges is very generally accompanied by indifference to the ideas on which Quakerism rests, or by an attachment to them only as far as they are opposed to something else. All the older and more earnest members of the Society maintain, and I believe on the most just and philosophical grounds, that these peculiarities, unimportant as they may seem, cannot be safely abandoned; that the very existence of Quakerism is involved in their preservation. They assert, it seems to me with equal truth, that every relaxation of the rules which the first Quakers laid down respecting amusements, or literary pursuits, tends to make the existence of the body less intelligible; nay, tends to a directly immoral result, by exhibiting all restraints upon self-indulgence as hard and unnecessary burdens, which are to be avoided as far as prudence and the opinions of others will permit.

I do not venture to predict how rapid may be the process of decay in a body which exhibits these symptoms. At present Quakerism is threatened from without on two sides—on the Evangelical side, and on the Unitarian. Here in England the younger Quakers desire, in general, to be more like those who profess what are called the doctrines of the Reformation; in America they have been powerfully attracted in the opposite direction. It is quite possible that these feelings may not lead to any great secessions from the Society, besides those which they have caused already. But one or other of these influences will be henceforth predominant; Quakerism will have less and less a basis of its own. All its grand pretensions are at an end; its greatest defenders speak of it now not as the Church or Kingdom of God, but as the best of the sects which compose the religious world. Such language can

never satisfy those who retain any of the old Quaker spirit. They must believe that there is a spiritual kingdom somewhere; if they cannot find it in the Society of Friends, they will look for it in those opposing systems of which I have spoken. Let us inquire what prospect they have of being rewarded for their search.

Chapter II. Pure Protestantism

Section I. The Leading Principles of the Reformation

Justification by Faith—Election—The Written Word—Authority of National Sovereigns

1. The inward struggles of Martin Luther were at least as terrible as those of George Fox, and they have left far more remarkable testimonies of themselves in the history of Europe. For as the character of Quakerism was determined by the conflicts in the mind of the Drayton shoemaker, so the character of the Reformation is interpreted by those which tormented the Monk of Wittenberg.

In some respects there was a resemblance between them. Anyone who reads attentively the first document which Luther put forth against the sale of indulgences, must perceive how deeply and inwardly he had realised the conviction, that he was a twofold being; that there was in him that which required to be crushed and destroyed; that there was that in him which was meant to enjoy life and peace and freedom. A man could hardly have arrived at such a conviction, or at least have been able to express it in such language, who had not experienced much of what Fox describes. But yet the history of their minds was altogether different; nay, the contrast is as remarkable as we can expect to find in the lives of two men, both equally sincere and brave.

Of a light speaking to his conscience, and warning him of the evil he had done, and of the temptations within and without which were tempting him to forsake it. Luther knew as much as any Quaker could have told him. But the thought of such a light, instead of giving

him peace, was the cause of all his tumult and confusion. It spoke to him of a Being of absolute power and wisdom and righteousness, between whom and himself there was no sympathy. It bade him seek, by all means, to be reconciled to that Being, and account all trials and sufferings light, if so be they might but give a promise, now or hereafter, of such a blessing. But it told him also of a strict, irreversible law, from which there could be no departure, no dispensation; and the recollection of which made every effort to heal the breach between him and his Maker a new witness to him that it was perpetual. Then came the dream of a possible deliverance from the curse of this law, brought to him in words which he had heard from his infancy, but to which till then he had been unable to attach any meaning. He had been told of a Mediator between the Creator and His creatures; of His having offered a sacrifice for men: of their being united with or grafted into Him; of their possessing a righteousness in Him which they had not in themselves. These words, or words like these, had been uttered again and again by doctors and schoolmen whom he had studied. But they had been mixed with the strangest perplexities about cases of conscience; the effects, kinds, and degrees of repentance; the distinction of mortal and venial sins; the nature and the mode of justification. And if there were such scholastic obstructions to a man's escape from that which he felt and knew to be a state of evil, there were still more monstrous practical obstructions which seemed to destroy all intercourse between the soul of man and his Deliverer. The sops which were given to the conscience by indulgences, the unfulfilled promises held out to it by penances which really tormented the spirit more than the flesh, all the notions of intervening mediators, beseeching for the removal of the curse which had been already borne by Him who alone could bear it, and who alone could fully sympathise with the miseries of those for whom He suffered, were so many bandages and fetters upon the human soul; making it content with the sin that it loved, or hopeless of real deliverance from the sin which it loathed. It was the Bible which set Luther's mind free from the perplexities of the

scholastic logic. It was by help of the creeds and sacraments of the Church that he was able to disengage himself from the intricate web of papal inventions. The written word of God seemed to him, from beginning to end, to be witnessing that a man is justified by faith; no school phrases being used to express the idea, but every act of affiance in a Divine Person who had revealed Himself to man as the object of his trust and confidence being an exemplification of it. He could thus see the meaning of St. Paul's assertion, that Abraham was justified by faith. He trusted in God's promise and word, and that made him a godly and righteous man. All the Psalms, in like manner, were nothing but acts of faith and affiance, whereby a man, crushed down with all kinds of evils, inward and outward, rose up and claimed that relation to God which His covenant had given him, and shook off the sins into which he had fallen through forgetting it. Still these, properly speaking, were acts of trust in a Mediator; they were recognitions of one to whom the suppliant himself was related, who was a bond between him and the absolute God, in whom alone he could dare to call upon Him. Therefore all these justifications were foretastes and anticipations of that justification which the Son of God made for all who would trust in Him, when, having offered up His body as a sacrifice, He rose again from the dead. To announce this work as accomplished; to tell men that they became righteous by believing it, and so entering into union with their Lord and Master—this was, Luther believed, the great end of St. Paul's life. He believed also that it was his own appointed office. It was the business of the preacher in every age to tell men this truth simply, using the direct personal language of the Bible, instead of the formal and dogmatic language of the schools. But not the man only was bearing witness of this principle. The Creed was preaching it, the Sacraments were preaching it, and the truly instructed doctor would find in these the deepest wisdom, and would labour that they might carry that home practically and in effect to men, which he could only utter in words. This, it seems to me, is Lutheranism according to Luther; and in this Lutheranism lies the germ of all the doctrines

which peculiarly belong to the Reformation, though it might be the work of other minds than his distinctly to evolve them.

2. The principal of these is that which Luther proclaimed with so much vehemence in his controversy with Erasmus, but which yet, it is quite evident, could not have been as habitually present to his mind as it was to that of the Genevan Reformer, John Calvin. The idea of an object to which a man might look, and in which he might rest, took precedence of all others in the heart and reason of Luther. Unless when he were driven to it by some dogma like that of Erasmus, which seemed to him to threaten the revival of all Papal contrivances for the reconciliation of man, he troubled himself little about the origin of those feelings and acts, whereby a man apprehends Him who offers himself to his faith and hope. It is clear, however, not only from this treatise[10] of Luther, but from the very character of his doctrine, that this question must suggest itself, and that it must receive some such solution as he and Calvin found for it. The idea of an absolute will, with which man must be brought into reconciliation by a Mediator, lay at the base of all Luther's thoughts. Any man, fixedly meditating upon those thoughts and the results to which they had led, must have asked himself: But who devised this whole scheme of reconciliation and redemption? Who is it that leads men to avail themselves of it? Who is it that determines the operations of their minds, and the consequences to which they shall lead? Such questions had at all times occupied the schools. Augustine, who appeared to have determined them in the same way as Calvin, had ever been regarded as one of their highest oracles. The difference was the same in this case as in the last: the principle that man is to look up to God as the direct source of his acts, and thoughts, and purposes, was presented to the faith of men in the real language of Scripture, and not to the understandings of men in the abstract language of the schools. Those who apprehended their relation to Christ were to speak of themselves as the elect people of

[10]De Servo Arbitrio.

God, just as Samuel, or David, or the Israelites did, and to believe that they would have been miserable and accursed if God had not elected them. They were not to trouble themselves with questions about the will, or to seek any other reason for their blessedness than that it was God's good pleasure to give it them. On the other hand, this belief was to be the conclusive barrier against all impostures of Romish priests, those impostures being attempts to persuade men that they must seek by their own efforts to win a position, which ought to be received as the gift of God. This, I think, is the Calvinistic side of Protestantism. To some it may appear that I have given to it, as well as to the doctrine of justification, too little of a scholastic character; that I have spoken of it too much as something that opposed itself to the logical systems of the previous age, whereas Calvin as well as Melanchthon and some of the German Reformers, were remarkable for their devotion to logic. Nevertheless, I believe that I am right. How the scholastic tendencies of the Reformation afterward developed themselves, I may have occasion to explain presently. Here I will only remark that the Reformers who had been trained by the schoolmen would of course preserve many of their characteristics; that men with a strong bias for dialectics may often be those who are led to feel most strongly the want of what is practical and popular, and to seek out a practical and popular language; and that, in fact, those who have commented most, either in the way of praise or blame, upon the scholastic qualities which appear in the controversial writings of the Reformers, have yet always contended also that the Reformation itself was an appeal to the feelings and sympathies of common men.

3. If then the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith be the first, and the doctrine of election, as formally asserted by Calvin, the second, I think most persons will agree with me in considering a certain peculiar estimate of the Scriptures the third characteristic of Reformation theology. But there are one or two questions connected with this point. No one acquainted with the writings of the Reformers would say that they were more scrupulous in their treatment of their

Canon of Scripture than the doctors who preceded them. Luther's language about the Epistle of St. James and the book of Revelation, though it may have been retracted in his later days, would be conclusive against such an opinion, even if there were nothing similar in the writings of his contemporaries. Neither can it be said that either Luther or Calvin regarded the Bible as a book from which persons without any previous initiation would, as a matter of course, derive light and teaching. They rather looked upon it as a divine witness to men already engaged in a conscious struggle with their evil nature, respecting the character of that struggle, and the means whereby they could obtain deliverance out of it. Such at least, I conceive, was the view most present to the mind of the German Reformer; the Bible was especially the preacher's book, out of which he was to tell men how those of the same flesh and blood with themselves had fought the battle with the world and the flesh and the devil before them, and what manner of strength and help God had vouchsafed them in it. At the same time, it was a fixed and permanent authority, which mounted above all the notions and experiences of particular minds, and enabled them, even in defiance of such notions and experiences, to discover solid grounds of peace and comfort. It is manifest then that veneration for the Bible, high place as it held in Luther's mind, was subordinate to his zeal in asserting the doctrine of Justification. He looked upon the Bible mainly as the witness for that doctrine, and because it was such a witness he loved it with all his heart, and would have given up his life that men might in their own language hear what it said. The same, though in a less degree, must have been true of Calvin; the Bible was the witness to him of the divine Election; on that account mainly it was precious to him, and no diligence that could be employed in studying and expounding it were thrown away. But if the Scripture were valuable as the announcement of one or other of these great ideas or principles, was it not in itself a great idea or principle that there was such a book as a Bible, a book speaking directly to the conscience of men, a fixed and permanent utterance of the divine will?

To some (I should think to Zwingli) this seemed the cardinal idea of the Reformation, to which other ideas were subordinate. At all events there was a body which gradually began to be separated by important peculiarities from the other Reformers; and of this body, faith in the Scriptures, with a less distinct reference to the principles taught in them, seems to have been the most striking positive characteristic.

4. These three principles seem to me, in the strictest sense, positive principles. They are not the less so because they were brought forth in opposition to certain popular notions and current practices. On the contrary, here lies the very test and proof of their positive character. There were a number of abominations prevalent when Luther appeared, which Romanists not only now but then abhorred. Some of them were corrected or mitigated at the Council of Trent; some of them disappeared when the infidel temper of Leo and the Roman court of that day gave place to the more earnest spirit of the succeeding popes. But great as this disgust may have been, evident as it was that the disgust had reached to the people of the different countries in Christendom, and that a class had arisen in them which was disposed to assert a position independent alike of the hierarchy and of the aristocracy, it was still a question—a very solemn question—with the wiser and better men, how far it was possible to remedy, or safe to denounce, even the most crying abuses. The building is tottering; ought we to touch it under the pretence of repairing it? This was a question which Sir Thomas More, and other men as good as he, may have asked themselves, and for which it may have been out of their power to find a theoretical answer, though they did practically answer it by sitting still. Were they wrong? I would not dare to say so. It seems to me, that looking upon these corruptions merely as the excess of something that was good, they were clearly right. Nay, even if they felt, as I make no doubt they did feel, that the loss of faith was, in some most important sense, the cause of these superstitions—still more of the contrivances to make them profitable—yet if they could not perceive that there was some great truth hidden or contradicted

by these portions of the popular system, they would evidently have been committing the great hazard—if we ought not rather to call it the sin—of taking away something which had a certain hold upon the affections of men without giving them any substitute for it. Which argument must have acquired a great confirmation in the minds of those men who had wisdom and opportunity to remark what kind of change had been taking place in the mind of Europe, and what kind of cravings those were which threatened the Church. The feeling —I do not belong merely to a great Christendom, I have a distinct individual position—was evidently that which had developed itself in the members of the new class; which made them eager to grasp at novelties, ready to follow particular guides, but impatient of systematic authority. The wise observers, in some countries, might be able to perceive that this feeling was connected with another, which they could allow to be more wholesome and more worthy of encouragement. The tradesman, German or English, along with his Hussite or Lollardite notions, had a sense of belonging to a particular soil, and speaking a particular language, which was often far less strong in the nobleman. But this conviction interfered as much as the other with submission to Church authority, and with an affection for Church ordinances. It gave rise to strange questionings about the dominion of the Roman Bishop, to stories about the spirit with which kings and emperors in former days had resisted him, to a dislike of the universal language. Was it not clear then that the age had a violent inclination towards infidelity and irreverence; that every acknowledgment of an error which had been sanctioned or tolerated by Churchmen, tended to make this inclination irresistible; and that the only duty of men, who wished well to the preservation of society, nay, of truth, was to uphold, as well as they could, the entire system?

It seems to me that the Reformers were led by God's Providence to find the only escape which was possible out of this fearful dilemma. They were led to perceive that certain great moral principles, involved in the very idea of a relation between God and His creatures, say

rather that the belief in that relation itself—were outraged by the existing Roman system. The abuses of that system were not excesses; they were essentially evil; they had their root in a great denial and unbelief. They set at naught great facts concerning man and concerning God—facts which had been announced by an express revelation from heaven. Here was a standing-point; and I do maintain, and would earnestly press the assertion—that Protestantism has a standing-point of its own; that it is not merely condemnatory, merely negative; and that so far as it keeps within its own proper and appointed province, it denounces and condemns only that which is itself negative, and which sets at naught something that is needful for the life and being of man.

To the question, what that something is, and what therefore is the appointed province of Protestantism, I have already indicated what seems to me the true answer. The feeling which was most strongly awake at the time Luther appeared, was the feeling in each man that he was an individual man, not merely one of a mass. Luther did not create this thought; it was there. He struggled with it in himself, and would fain have overcome it; but it was too strong for him. He was obliged to find some interpretation of it; he was not at peace till he found one, which told him that the only safe, free, true position of a man, is not a position of rebellion, but of allegiance; a position involving the subjection of the whole soul to a righteous and divine government. The clue which led him out of the perplexities of his own mind was that which thousands besides him needed; they received it and rejoiced. To say that he was a minister of sedition, or that he raised up ministers of sedition, is easy, because it is easy to misrepresent history, and to attribute the evil consequences of certain states of mind to those who were God's instruments in preventing them from being universal. But those who look steadily and impartially at the facts, not wishing (and I think I have shown that I have no wish) to represent them to the disadvantage of those who opposed Protestantism, will, I believe, be more and more convinced, that the Reformers did not

call forth the rebellious activity of the period in which they lived, but when it was seeking a refuge in infidelity, taught it to find one in faith.

The three principles of which I have spoken contained the religious satisfaction of that sense of an individual position which the men of the sixteenth century were experiencing. I have hinted that closely connected with this, was another—the sense of a distinct national position. The fourth principle of Protestantism was the recognition of this feeling also as true, and as having a religious basis. The protest against the usurpation of the Bishop of Rome was not mainly grounded upon the idea of its interference with the prerogatives of Christ over the whole Church. I do not say that this idea may not have been often put forward by the Reformers; I do not say that it may not have frequently dawned upon them as the principle which the Papal usurpation invaded. But I do not think it was constantly present to their minds, that it was ever fully developed in them, or that when they used language which implied it, that language conveyed precisely the same meaning to them which it conveys to us.

They may also have alluded, in terms of displeasure or even reprobation, to the assumption by one bishop of an authority over others; but I cannot persuade myself that this was a sin which would have induced them to reject the Papal authority. Their contempt of it arose, as they became more and more convinced that that was true and necessary which an infallible wisdom had pronounced to be erroneous and mischievous, and as they observed how it had interfered with the power and functions of the National Sovereigns. By many links the peculiar theology of the Reformation was connected with the assertion of the dignity of this office and of the national distinctness which it represents; one is very obvious. The Reformers had resorted to the Scriptures not merely for their authority, but for their practical character. But that practical character is especially exhibited in the Old Testament, and in the Old Testament every truth is brought out in relation to the events of a national history. Their own time interpreted

the Scriptures to the Reformers, and the Scriptures in turn interpreted their own time.

Section II. Objections to the Principles of the Reformation Considered

I HAVE already noticed one primary objection against all these doctrines, one which, according to my judgment, would be fatal to them; that they are merely negative—merely the contradiction of that faith which Romanists hold.

But there are also particular objections against each of them which it is necessary to examine.

I. 1. One charge which is brought against the Lutheran doctrine of justification by faith, belongs especially and characteristically to the Quakers. It is said that justification by faith either means the same thing as the doctrine of the Indwelling Word, or, if it mean something different, that one of them is false. Hither (it is contended) the light dwelt with men or it did not: if it did, the following that light is justification; if it did not, the whole doctrine of Fox (which I have defended) is untenable. Men must be justified by the agreement of their minds with a certain inward principle, or by certain outward acts done on their behalf. To say that a man is in his right state with himself and before God when he subjects himself to the Indwelling Word, and that a man is justified in consequence of certain acts which Christ performed as his representative, is impossible. Now I readily admit that the temper of mind, which leads a man vehemently to assert one of these doctrines, is not the same temper of mind which leads him to assert the other; nay, that these tempers are not very often found co-existing in any great strength. The Quaker and the Mystic (to use that word in an indifferent sense, not in the evil sense which I gave to it in my first chapter) habitually contemplate a divine presence in the heart; they associate that presence, very probably, with the life of our Lord; but if they do so, consciously or unconsciously they affix an import to His acts and words which is different from their obvious

historical import. The Lutheran habitually contemplates a Divine Person, having a real distinct life; rejoices that He entered into ordinary human relations and circumstances; realises his own connection with Him through those relations and circumstances. Unquestionably anyone who has observed himself, and knows how very different were the feelings which at different times of his life have attracted him in these two directions, will not be slow to confess that Quakerism and Lutheranism have something in their nature which is even curiously antipathetic. But I fancy the same observation will equally incline him to the opinion that each of these doctrines is the complement of the other, and that in spite of their apparent opposition, neither can exist in any real strength if the other be denied.

To explain what I mean, let us consider what were the actual wants and anxieties of the men in the old world, who experienced the struggle between the light and darkness of which Fox has spoken. Must not such thoughts as these have been continually present to their minds: Here are two powers struggling within me, one good, one evil; sometimes one prevails, sometimes the other; sometimes the darkness seems about to be scattered, sometimes the light seems almost quenched: but I, who am I, in the midst of all this awful struggle? Do I belong to the light, or to the darkness? Of which have I a right to call myself the child now; of which shall I be the child for ever? The consciousness of evil, of rebellion against a power continually exerting itself for my good, testifies against me; my belief in the graciousness, in the mightiness of the Being who is on my side, speaks in my favour: but then, what awful outward facts seem to corroborate the former conclusion! All the outward sicknesses, sorrows, troubles of the world, seem to be lifting up their voice to condemn me,—to be proving that my unseen Friend is either not omnipotent, or that His forbearance with my often repeated disobedience will at last have a limit;—and what is that limit? May not Death at last decide this struggle? May he not be God's permitted minister, to decide it against me? These thoughts do not imply the least unbelief in a future state; that was not

the anxious question of the heathen, as all their mythology proves: but it was, What shall I be, in that state? Some ethereal particle in me may mount up and enter into rest, and even be united to the Divine Essence;—but will it be myself? I cannot believe that I shall die, in the sense in which all the things about me die. Whenever I feel that I am at all, I feel that I am immortal; I may lose the thought while I am speculating; I can never lose it while I am acting and living. But this is the point—Shall good or evil, shall light or darkness, be that to which I am united, when all the spiritual energies, by which I seem to have asserted my connection with something better than myself, shall be as much crushed by pain and weakness and death, the great consummation of them, as the energies by which I eat and drink and walk? The Jews were taught to experience precisely the same difficulty, only with still greater power and reality, only with a brighter and better hope as to its solution. They felt in themselves this struggle; but then, taking hold of the covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, they were able to believe that the righteous Lord who revealed Himself to their hearts was indeed their Lord, and would be so for ever and ever; and coming with the appointed sacrifice, at the appointed time, in the appointed place, to the appointed priest, they were able to believe that that covenant had not been destroyed through their iniquity; that they still had an inheritance in the King of their nation; that they should behold His face in righteousness; and that when His glory was manifested to the whole earth they should partake in it. Yet it was a hope still; still the doubt rested upon their minds, and at times would gain a dreadful ascendency—Is this evil and accursed nature which belongs to me, my own self? Are not its evils imputed to me? Are not they counted a part of me? Will not Death destroy that nature; and when he destroys it, shall I be spared? These questions must have occupied men, not because they did not possess the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, but because they did possess it;—yea, according to the degree in which that light was revealed to them, or in which they followed it. Surely some answer was needed to them; surely

it is a mockery to say that the light itself was the answer. If we accept the doctrine of Luther, the answer is clear and intelligible. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; in this flesh He passed through the conflicts and trials of men; He died a real death; He brought back a real body from the grave. This was the voice from heaven replying to the voice from earth. The man asks: "What am I; am I to account myself a child of the light or a child of the darkness?" Christ dying and rising from the dead, declares: "Thy nature is accursed, thy person is justified; married to thy evil nature, thou art sinful and under the curse; claiming thy portion in me, thou art holy, and righteous, and redeemed." Is this merely the doctrine of an Indwelling Word? Does it contradict that doctrine? Or does one prove the necessity and the reality of the other?

It is most true, however, as I have said already, that there is one side or aspect of the Lutheran doctrine, to which there is nothing corresponding in the mystical. The outward acts of our Lord in human flesh, considered as assertions of the right which creatures bearing that flesh have to rise above themselves and claim a portion in Him, have been recognised by many an earnest mystic in his later years, as most needful portions of a spiritual economy. But the feeling which was at the root of all others in Luther's mind, that these acts were mediatorial, propitiatory acts, having for their ultimate object the satisfaction of the will of the Father, has been generally received by persons of this temper with coldness if not with disgust. It should, I think, be distinctly understood by them at first—for they must arrive at the discovery sooner or later—that they cannot hope to connect this faith with, or to reduce it under, any of the ideas which belong properly to mysticism. If those ideas do include all truth, this Lutheran doctrine is not true, for the very assumption upon which it proceeds, and to which everything is referred, that there is an Absolute Will which is the ground of all things, of all being, life, thought, forms no part of mysticism, however mystics may have adopted or grafted it into their faith. The Divine Word is the only real subject of their meditation; a

vague gulf of being beyond they may awfully think of, but they dare not speak of it in the forms of human language, or bring it within the region of personality, or dream of it as the ground of human relations. Now that the mystics have most reasonable complaints to make against the systems to which the Lutheran theology has given rise, on this very ground, that they have despoiled the idea of God of its fearfulness and grandeur, and reduced it under human notions and experience, I shall be presently obliged to admit. But the question here at issue is — Does or does not evidence, similar to that which compelled us to acknowledge the truth of the mystical idea of an Indwelling Word, compel us to acknowledge that there is a truth beside and beyond this, which involves, under some terms or other, the belief of Mediation, Sacrifice, Satisfaction? Supposing, for instance, we attached any value to the discovery, that the doctrine of a Divine Indwelling Word was not merely asserted in certain detached texts of Scripture, but that it imparted a coherency and clearness to the whole course of Scripture history, giving a sense to the word Idolatry, showing how and why that was treated as the sin of mankind, explaining the lives and language of those who kept themselves free from it may we not observe a parallel line of proofs bearing just as strongly in favour of these other principles? Is the Lutheran obliged to depend upon certain words or texts, in order to show that the idea of human Mediation is contained in Scripture? Is it not worked into the very tissue of the history which the Scripture contains? Is it not involved in the constitution of the Jewish commonwealth, which it treats of? Can less be said concerning the kindred ideas of Propitiation, Atonement, Sacrifice? May it not be more correctly affirmed, that what gives the sense of continuousness and unity to the books of Scripture, written under so many different circumstances, and at such wide intervals of time, is this fact, that law-givers, psalmists, prophets, are, one and all, according to their various functions, in obedience to their inward promptings, and to meet the necessities of their respective times, gradually drawing out these ideas

which were already embodied in the institutions and life of the Jewish nation?

If, again, it seemed to us a remarkable witness in favour of Fox's principle, that one great portion of Gentile records was scarcely intelligible without it; have we no witness in favour of these principles from another part of those same records? The philosopher discovered a divine light, or wisdom, which he was to cry after and to follow; did not the whole body of the people believe that there was an invisible power, which it was to propitiate, which it was to reach by mediation, to which it must offer sacrifices? Did not the wisest statesmen, even in days when all actual faith had disappeared, still recognise these thoughts as strange and mysterious, which the nation must acknowledge if it were to be a nation, though they might dispense with them, or overlook them? Was philosophy ever able to get above these ideas, or to merge them in that which was peculiarly its own? Many philosophers laboured hard; the best of them felt more strongly than all others, that there was in the popular faith upon these matters, that which contradicted truths which seemed to him most sacred: yet he was the least disposed to attack that faith; the most inclined to recognise it as something which the philosopher needed so much the more, because he was a philosopher.

In this view of the subject he was, as I have hinted before, almost peculiar; nearly all others wished either to extinguish the existing theology by philosophical notions, to translate it into philosophical notions, or to invest philosophy with the mysterious and miraculous character of revealed theology. The records of each experiment are preserved, the more they are studied the better. The fact has survived them all—these ideas in one form or another have been and are the most characteristic and fundamental ideas of humanity; the very proofs and witnesses that we constitute a kind. Explain them as you will or as you can, but remember that an explanation is not the thing. If these ideas be not delusions, there is some reality corresponding to them; and that reality, could we know it, might be expected to contain

the explanation of them, and also of the partial, false, and mischievous notions which may have encompassed them; if they be delusions, it would seem that all humanity must be a delusion; that there can be no common principles to form the groundwork of it. I cannot think, then, that the mystical objection to the Lutheran doctrine, on whichever side we view it, is a tenable one.

2. Another class of persons, who oppose the doctrine of justification, as it was stated by Luther, maintain that it exaggerates a mere fact or crisis in the history of individuals, into a fixed and permanent law. "At a certain period," they say, "a man who has been careless of religion, acquires a conviction of his error. He is sensible that he has been leading a faithless, godless life. He has been acting as if there were no Lord and Saviour whom he was meant to trust and to love. He begins to recognise such a Saviour—to believe in Him. It is unquestionably a new feeling; the beginning of a different class of feelings from any of which he has hitherto been conscious. It is, therefore, invested by him, and rightly, with great sacredness; but it is only the first in a series of spiritual acts. His belief, if it be not stunted by the notion that it is all-sufficient, grows into love and good works. And this it might have done if there had been no such sudden discovery as that to which he gives the name of Justification. From his baptism upward he might have led a faithful and pure life; then that baptism would be just as rightly and reasonably called his justification, as that a primary and preliminary act of conscious faith. Luther," they continue, "was led by his own circumstances, or by those of his age, to dwell with particular delight and emphasis upon the transition moment of his spiritual history; yet even he speaks frequently of baptism, as if that was entitled to the credit of his justification; it is evident then that there was a confusion in his mind which, though it might not unfit him for an active reformer, certainly must make us suspicious of him when he assumed to be the enunciator of a great principle. And everything in his words, and the history of his doctrine, tends to heighten that suspicion. For why did he dwell so much upon a formal release from guilt, and a formal

imputation of righteousness? Surely it is a real deliverance from sin, and a real righteousness that man requires. Give the best form you can to the other notion; strip it of the fictitious character, in which it must be offensive both to God and man; and still it can only point to some feeling on our part of a position offered to us, which we may, if we please, realise; and then to speak of that position as something independent of the realisation, while yet you say that it is a position granted to faith, and that faith is the realising principle, is to give us shadows for substances, a dream of food to satisfy our hunger."

I have stated the argument, I hope, fairly, avoiding only the use of one or two favourite phrases,[11] which have become catchwords, and, I believe, embarrass the minds of all, on either side, who resort to them. I at once acknowledge the great plausibility of the statement, the admirable piety of those, who, in former days or of late, have brought it forward, and the difficulty of shewing why I think the substance of it to be fallacious, without seeming to reject portions of it which I believe to be both true and important. I think, however, that by at once going to the heart of the question, we may be able to relieve it of many of its perplexities. Everyone must have been struck with these words of St. Paul,—"That I may be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is by the faith of Christ; the righteousness, that is, of God by or upon faith" (Phil. iii. 9). What is remarkable in these words is, of course, their connection. St. Paul is speaking of some very high attainment, some end which was to be the consummation of all his strivings. And this attainment, this end, is what? Having an individual righteousness? No; but precisely the not having it. The highest perfection this saint and apostle could think of, one which he could not dare to say he had achieved, was the ceasing to be anything in himself, the acknowledgment of his whole moral and spiritual life and being as in another.

[11] Such as "forensic."

I do not believe that the excellent men, who argue against the Lutheran doctrine upon the grounds I am considering, have the least difficulty in interpreting this passage. I do not fancy that they wish to explain away its force. On the contrary, I am quite persuaded they would say, "Certainly this is one of the paradoxes of divinity; but it is a paradox upon which every new fact in our spiritual history throws a new light; a paradox so involved in the idea of Christianity, nay, in the idea of our own moral constitution, that there are few persons who do not frequently justify it by their unconscious expressions, even if they have little apparent insight into its meaning. Every man knows, that just so far as he contemplates self in his acts as an object for gratulation, so far those acts are contradictory, and that just so far as he can renounce self, and look upon his acts as beginning and terminating in another, just so far he has fought the great fight of life, and has attained his true state." Such language as this is most common in writers who have a strong dislike to Luther. Let us look steadily at it for a moment.

It is admitted that this state of self-denial, in the highest and fullest sense of the words, is the true state of a man; not a fantastic imaginary state at all; something which every good man is to desire and strive after: and to sorrow because his vanity and pride continually check him in his efforts to reach it. Assuredly then it ought not to be assumed that there is something necessarily fictitious in the idea of abandoning a self-righteousness, and acquiring another righteousness; there is a sense in which that idea is not only not fictitious, but the very reverse of fictitious; the deliverance from the perpetual fictions and counterfeits of our selfish nature. Nor, again, can it be maintained, that the doctrine of renouncing our righteousness, and receiving another, does necessarily belong to one stage—the lowest stage—of a man's spiritual progress; it would seem, that in some sense it appertained to the very highest stage of it. But then, it is said, this cannot be the Lutheran sense, for that sense is, as clearly as language can describe it, this—that a sinner, a man pursuing an evil course, does by an act of faith, in the righteousness of another, become a righteous and justified man. No

one, not wishing to pervert and confuse things essentially distinct, nay opposite, can identify this assertion with one which evidently relates to the most advanced period of Christian life and experience. Now let it be remembered, that the especial charge against Luther is, that he mistook the phenomena of a certain crisis in our life for a fixed law applicable to the whole of it. He is blamed for attaching so much importance to this doctrine, as if it were the key to the entire meaning of a man's spiritual existence, when in fact it merely describes the first conscious feeling of such an existence. May we not fairly suggest the thought to the objector, that possibly he may be falling into this very error himself, and mistaking Luther just because he was free from it? May there not be a law which is expressly the law of a man's being; complete conformity to which is his perfection; but which, from the first hour of his life to the last, is his law; which does not depend the least for its reality upon his recognition of it, or his denial of it; which will judge him at the last day; and which must not, therefore, be concealed from him at any time, but be announced to him as that against which he is rebelling? May not this law be, must it not be if St. Paul's words are to be received in their simple sense, the law of union with another, the law of self-renunciation? Suppose then I see a man pursuing an utterly wrong course—a course of indulgence in the most ordinary sense of the word—have I not a right to say to him, This is an evil course; and if he ask me why, to answer, Because it is a course of selfishness, and because you were not meant, and your conscience tells you you were not meant, to be selfish. And if he reply to me, as in nine cases out of ten he will—"But how can I be otherwise? every man is selfish; selfishness is our nature, our necessity; God made us so, we cannot help it," am I hindered from asserting God's ways against man's blasphemy in some such words as these,—"I care not whether you call selfishness your nature or not: if it be, your nature is a contradiction and a lie, for it makes you do that which you cannot do without being at war with yourself. If that be your nature, then you are not meant to live according to your nature, but to rise out of it—

above it. And there is One who has come to redeem you out of your nature, and to unite you to Himself. In Him you may believe and live; in yourself you cannot?" In saying this, I have preached to this sinful man the Lutheran doctrine of justification. I have told him that there is a state belonging to him, with which he is not living in accordance, but with which he is living at variance. I have said, that union with another is his law; separation from him, his transgression. I have said, that that union is not a natural, but a spiritual one. It is a union which is maintained by faith; unbelief is the renunciation of it: therefore an anomalous sinful condition. There is a fiction here assuredly: it is a fiction to have a state and not to enjoy it; a fiction to possess the conditions of a spiritual being, and to be acting as if these conditions did not exist. But it is the fiction of an evil world; and I know not how we are to get rid of the fiction but by declaring the fact to which it is opposed.

The dream, that because it is announced as a fact it will be at once received as a fact, that there will not be a fierce conflict with the selfish nature before it can be acknowledged at all, and that these struggles will not be repeated every day of a man's pilgrimage through an evil world, was certainly not Luther's dream. Every page of his writings, like every hour of his life, bears witness to a tremendous struggle. The question which he thought to be all-important, was this—Is the struggle against the too great proneness of the evil heart to believe and trust, or against its reluctance to believe and trust; against its overeagerness to cleave to its Lord, or against its passion for a selfish independence?

His conviction was, that when he distrusted Christ he was a bad and evil man, with no capacity for doing any right or good act. To trust then must be a duty; a man could not be just or righteous who did not trust; so far as he did trust he must be so. If he were asked whether nothing must precede this trust and give a warrant for it, he would have answered— Assuredly God's word and promise must precede; the declaration, that this state is yours, must be your warrant for claiming

it. The words of the Bible generally, the assurance of baptism to you particularly, give you the right to believe. To seek the right in anything else, in any outward acts or inward feeling of yours, is to commit a contradiction; for these acts and feelings, if they are lawful and right, are acts and feelings which imply trust—are expressions of trust. A man's repetition of his Credo does not give him a right to trust in God's mercy and forgiveness; but if he repeats it, as he should, it is a form of trust and affiance in God. A man's comfortable impressions and feelings are not reasons of confidence; if they are not mere physical sensations, they are the effects of his resting in his true Friend. Faith then, according to him, could not be looked upon as a grace which we may contemplate and reflect upon in ourselves. By its very nature it is the act of going out of self, the act of entering into union with another from whom all our graces are to be derived. That the power of performing such an act is conferred by God, and is therefore a grace, he of course asserted stoutly; but it made an immeasurable difference whether the grace was supposed to be given to a man as so much stock which he might call his own, or whether its effect was to induce him to disclaim all property in himself, and to live entirely in Christ. It was on this account that he resisted so strongly the argument which the Romanists deduced from the relative excellence of faith and love. Love, they said, is a higher grace than faith, by the testimony of your own St. Paul, and yet you make the grace of faith and not of love the ground of justification. I do not, he would answer, make what you call the grace of faith the ground of justification. I do not tell a man that he is to ask himself, how much faith he has, and if he have so much, to call himself justified. What I tell him is precisely that he is not to do this, that this is the very trick which he has been practising upon himself, while he has been under your teaching. He is not to think or speculate about his faith at all. He is to believe, and by believing, to lose sight of himself and to forget himself. And, therefore, I cannot allow that he is justified by his grace of love, though I admit that it be the highest of all graces. Trust is the beginning of love, the way to

love. A Being who shows that he cares for me, and in whom all love dwells, proposes himself to me as an object of my trust; I trust him, and so enter into a knowledge and participation of his love. And that love works in me to will and to do of his good pleasure.

I do not say that on all these points Luther may not have fallen into a hundred inconsistencies. Those who search his writings for such inconsistencies will, I doubt not, be amply rewarded for their pains. Those who look in him for a strong, steady current of thought and meaning running through all his perplexities and contradictions, and often made more evident by them, will also, I think, find what they desire. One remark I would venture to make in support of the view which I have taken of his theology. It is certainly a rare case that the character of the doctrine which a man spends his life in proclaiming should stand out in direct contrast to his own personal character. In nearly all cases the one receives some strong impression and colouring from the other. Those who read Luther's history, would certainly not expect to find an exception to this rule in his case; they would fancy that he must have thrown more of his own personality than another man does into any principle he defended, not less. Now Luther is often condemned as coarse, rude, impatient; did ever anyone affirm that he was not sufficiently plain-spoken and substantial? Is there not then a rather strong à priori improbability in the notion, that his doctrine, to whatever charges it may be open, is obnoxious to just this one, of being a mere pursuing or fighting of shadows? Might not one be glad to discover some escape from a supposition which, to any ordinary person who is not a theologian, must seem most utterly startling and inexplicable?

3. When I have mentioned one other objection to this principle, I believe I shall have encountered all those by which persons in this day are likely to be perplexed. Many students are at a loss to discover how the doctrine of justification by faith differs from the general doctrine of atonement, which was as strongly recognised, in words at least, by the Romanists as it could be by Luther.

We can understand, they say, that many practices may have been sanctioned at that time, which interfered with the full acknowledgment of our Lord's sacrifice. We can suppose that it may have been important to reassert the principle strongly for the purpose of protesting against these abuses. But the doctrine was there; the Romanists insisted upon faith in it; what more have we to do? If Protestantism have got rid of any mischievous outgrowths of the elder system, let us be thankful; but why endeavour to maintain this particular mode of expression which was, to all appearance, adopted for a temporary purpose, and has accomplished that purpose?

I think that the statement I have given of Luther's doctrine is, to a certain extent, an answer to this difficulty. He did not call upon men to acknowledge either a new doctrine or an old one, to believe either in a certain opinion concerning justification or in a certain opinion concerning the atonement. He called upon them to believe in God the Father Almighty—in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, and in the Holy Ghost. He said again and again, that the Credo was justification. He told men that union with Christ was deliverance from sin and condemnation; that that union was claimed and maintained by faith; that faith was therefore justification. Such an assertion was true or false; if it were true, it cannot have ceased to be true; all the circumstances and occasions which called it forth may have passed away; but the law which it proclaimed must be as much a law for us as it was for those to whom Tetzel sold his indulgences. And so far from thinking, as those who make this objection seem to think, that we of this day can afford to substitute faith in a certain notion or dogma, for faith in a living person, though the men of the 16th century could not, I rather fancy that this is a temptation to which we have yielded more than even the Romanist did, and from which we almost need a second Reformation to deliver us.

But I do believe that the objector really means this; I suspect that this difficulty about the relation between the idea of justification and the idea of atonement is a very important difficulty indeed; that it is

one which did not force itself upon the consideration of the Reformers; that it is one which does force itself upon our consideration; that people are taking various methods of expressing it to themselves —some of them being very confused methods, tending to increase rather than to remove our perplexity and to rob us of distinctions and principles which with great difficulty have been established for us; but that it must be earnestly considered, and will receive some practical resolution—a very mischievous if not a satisfactory one. The question is this. Can this doctrine of justification, if it retain its Lutheran meaning, if it be the assertion of a man's personal position and personal duty, if it do not degenerate into the most lifeless of all formulas—assume the position which it does assume in a great part of our Protestant divinity? Can it be put forward as the truth which lies at the foundation of the Christian Church? Does this view honour the doctrine, or only kiss it, in order to kill? This is a question which we shall have to consider when we inquire into the Protestant systems and their practical workings. Perhaps the reader may be the less unwilling to enter with me upon the examination, if he perceive, as I hope by this time he does, that it is as much my desire as it can be his, to assert the principle in its integrity and fulness.

II. 1. It is evident that the mystics, who oppose themselves mainly to that side of the doctrine of justification which connects it with the idea of the Divine Will, must dislike to see that idea so prominently exhibited as it is in the Calvinistical theology. And it is not difficult to understand, from the style of their previous arguments, what kind of substitute they would be inclined to offer for the doctrine of Election as it appears in that theology. Each man, they say, stands in a certain relation to the light and to the darkness; following the light, and submitting to the Divine Word, he enters into an elect state; preferring the darkness he becomes reprobate. In the first case he acts according to the purpose of God; in the second he resists it. But because this is the case, man is not therefore to be spoken of as the author of his own salvation; the nature of the act which he performs proves that he

is not so; it may be more properly called an act of submission than of choice, though it involve choice; it is the surrender of his own will; whereas the opposite kind of act is emphatically the assertion of his own will, a declaration of independence.

I have already recognised so strongly the principle which this statement embodies, that I am not likely to make any exception against it. I receive it as a satisfactory explanation of the practical conditions under which every man acts; conditions which must remain true, whatever other truth there may be involved in them. The only question is, whether this doctrine respecting the Divine Word, can set aside, or make unnecessary, the distinct formal belief of a primary, absolute, originant Will? I have already said that I think it cannot. That belief seems to lie deeper than the one respecting our relation to the Divine Word, and to be the necessary ground of it. Take away that ground, and I cannot see that we retain any acknowledgment of God in himself; that we contemplate Him otherwise than in reference to us, or his operations upon us. The mystical doctrine may explain the position and circumstances of man; but these very circumstances, if the doctrine be true, imply a theology, and that theology it seems to me is the very thing which mysticism wants.

2. Again, the class of persons who complain of the Lutheran doctrine of Justification, as leading to the belief of a fictitious righteousness, see in the doctrine of election an arbitrary dispensing with all righteousness. "A person receives eternal life because it is the good pleasure of God that he should receive it. Supposing we grant that the obedience is decreed, as well as the reward of it, yet where is that which is the essence of all obedience that can be acceptable to a perfect Being, freedom? You cannot, therefore, make the doctrine reasonable, except by admitting Divine election to be the foresight of human obedience."

Unquestionably I would admit that proposition, or any other, were it never so startling, rather than acknowledge that great primary contradiction, that the source of all being is self-will. But one contradiction

is not the escape from another, and assuredly the idea of an obedience in man, which has no ground to rest upon; which was foreseen by God, but not derived from Him; of something good, therefore, which cannot be traced ultimately to the Fountain of good; nay, which exists independently of it, that is to say, under what are we wont to consider the very condition of evil—is a most agonizing contradiction. And what need have we of it? Only do not suppose the Being whom you worship to be a mere power; only acknowledge him to be that in reality which you say in words that He is, the essential truth and goodness; only suppose the absolute will to be a will to good, and how can we imagine that happiness, obedience, freedom, have their origin any where but in Him; that misery, disobedience, slavery, mean anything but revolt and separation from Him?

3. The last complaint against this doctrine runs parallel with the last against Luther's. Does not the election mean the election of a body? Has it anything to do with the election of individuals? I would make the same answer here which I made in the other case. Every individual man must be in some state or other. Every individual man ought to know to whom he is to ascribe that state in which he is. The Reformers were especially dealing with the circumstances of individual men. They meant to explain to whom each individual should attribute his election. But what the true state of each man is; in what relation each man stands to a body; whether the election of an individual can be viewed apart from the election of the Church;—these are questions which are forced upon us at this time, and which it is possible may be resolved in a way in which some of the Reformers and most of their disciples would not have resolved them.

III. 1. The language of the Reformers respecting the Bible was probably more offensive to the Quakers and the mystics generally, than even their doctrines of justification and election. The notion of a book to which men, possessing the Inward Light and guided by the Spirit, must defer as an absolute authority, puzzled and confused them. Nevertheless, they were by no means inclined to deny that, the more

they were walking in the Light and submitting to the Spirit, the more sympathy they had with the words of this book, the less they were disposed to cavil at them. In this, therefore, as in the two former cases, they were inclined to translate the language of the Reformers into their own, and to affirm that in any other sense except that it was false. The spiritual man had a capacity for discerning spiritual truths under the letter of the Scriptures; to him, therefore, they had a meaning and an exceeding value. But to call them in themselves, as words, as records of facts, divine; to hold them up, in this character, as objects of reverence, was to turn men's eyes away from the true light, and so far as you could to quench it.

The truth of this statement, so far as it describes the faculty which the Scripture addresses, I have already admitted, and have maintained that it is implicitly recognised by those who seem to be most startled by it. That all revelation is to the conscience, to the inner man, and that when that conscience is not awake, when that inner man is buried, the revelation is not really made, most persons, under some form of language or other, are ready to confess. And that the most consistent and intelligible interpretation of this truth is contained in the doctrine that man is created for union with the Living Word, and that except in union with Him he is not in a true living state, I, at least, am most anxious to maintain. But then if this be the state, not for one man but for all men, and if each man, just so far as he enters into his true state, becomes more of a man and less of a mere individual, does it not seem strange that there should be no instrument through which the mind of the Living Word is expressed to the race, and which therefore overreaches the feelings and judgments of each particular mind, while it imparts to these feelings and judgments clearness, purity, and strength? Does not the expectation of such an instrument, a certain conviction that it is necessary and that it will be given, grow up just in proportion as we take in the other idea, and observe how entirely it contradicts the notion that each man is a law to himself? Now, supposing there were such an instrument, of what kind must it be?

You say that the same set of facts, words, records, conveys a different meaning to the spiritual enlightened man and to the fleshly ignorant man. Be it so; then what is there to prevent us from believing that the truth which is meant to be conveyed, should be conveyed in facts, records, and words? Why may it not be a spiritual communication, because it is embodied in the ordinary forms of human discourse? Can you imagine how it should be embodied in any other forms? That you may not be able to conjecture what facts and events would be adequate to make known to man the law of his own being, his relation to God, the character of God, I willingly acknowledge. But suppose you were told that a set of men—a peculiar nation—had been selected as the organs of divine communication to the nations generally, and that all their circumstances had been contrived for the purpose of fitting them for such a function, would you say there was an a priori improbability that this would be the method adopted by the Lord of man for speaking to his creatures? Would you not feel there was a singular fitness in it; that there was some difficulty in conjecturing how any other could be equally in accordance with the principle which we have acknowledged?

Whence, then, comes the reluctance of the mystic to receive the reformed doctrine on this subject? It may be traced, I believe, to the same defect which we have observed in him already. He perceives the conditions under which man exists, the relation in which he stands to a divine guide and teacher, but he does not trace that relation up to its ground in an Originating Will. Stopping short of that, he cannot, it seems to me, heartily believe in a Revelation. He thinks of the eye which receives the Light; he cannot steadily reflect that there was a Light before the eye, and that it called into existence the eye which should behold it. I do not say that he does not implicitly acknowledge this truth. But the explicit acknowledgment of it is that which I believe gave the Reformation all its moral strength and grandeur, and above all, which imparted to the Protestant doctrine respecting the Bible all its meaning.

2. The Quaker complains of this doctrine because it subjects the spiritual man to the government of words and letters. A much more popular objection to it is, that it sets particular men, however ill-taught and undisciplined, free from all authority but their own. "Interpretations of Scripture have been compiled by a series of wise, learned, holy men; some of them receiving their lessons immediately from the apostles. Evidently, therefore, there are difficulties, amazing difficulties, about its meaning. Yet the most ignorant mechanic is to be treated as if he could take cognizance of it, and attain to a complete understanding of it."

Now it should be understood or remembered, that however the doctrine of the Reformers respecting the Scriptures may have become identified with the doctrine of private judgment, it did not present itself to them in that form but in the most dissimilar form imaginable. They expressly proclaimed the Bible to be that book which puts down and humbles private judgments; which asserts its claim to be heard above them all and in opposition to them all, and which is able to make that claim good. They believed that its words were with power; that when it spoke, man felt that power, and either submitted to it or consciously rebelled against it. I appeal to any one who has looked at all into the writings of the Reformers, whether this be not the tone which habitually pervades them. Was this notion of theirs absurd or extravagant? Assuredly it might have been justified—it was justified to the men who lived at what is called the revival of letters—by the most obvious analogies. Was it the fact that the men and women and children in the Greek isles and on the shores of Asia had heard the Homeric songs from the lips of wandering rhapsodists, and had received them into their memories and their hearts? Was it the fact that in the most cultivated period of Athenian life these same songs were listened to, with less of genuine admiration perhaps, but still with delight and a confession of their strange power? Was it the fact that afterwards they became subjects of philosophical speculation to Aristotle, but at the self-same moment stirred the spirit of Alexander

to the invasion of the East, without any reference to his master's criticisms upon them? Did English or German schoolboys wait till they had studied Aristotle or Eustathius to feel them—nay in the best sense to understand them—in their first dress or in their own tongue? What man in his senses will say that there was any arrogance of private interpretation in all this; that it was the setting up a right to criticise, and not much rather the abandonment of all such right in submission to an influence which could not be resisted? Were the Ionian women and children, the Macedonian prince, the English schoolboys, disparaging the labours of Aristotle or Eustathius? Were they not affording the best justification of them?

All then that the Reformers said when they claimed the Bible for peasants was this—that if it pleased God to make Himself known to His creatures, and if this book contained the records of His revelation, it was not more strange to expect that His power would go forth to carry the meaning of the book home to those for whom it was meant, and that the words of a human book should be able to make themselves intelligible; it was not more necessary that the peasants of Christendom should wait for a commentary before they opened their ears and hearts to receive the words of the one book, than that the peasants of Greece should wait for a commentary before they opened their ears and hearts to receive the words of the other. This was their notion, which did not, however, require even this process of reasoning for its confirmation; seeing that they had evidence before their eyes that the Bible did speak to poor men, and did make itself heard by them, the more in proportion as it was more directly and livingly set before them. I say livingly, for we must not impute to the Reformers the opinion that the power of the book would be felt by the mere reader of it: they attached, as every one knows, an importance and sacredness to the office of the preacher which we are apt, and not without reason if the circumstances of our own day are to regulate our belief, to consider extravagant.

3. There is however another side to this objection. The doubt recurs here, as in the other cases—Is this power promised to individuals or a certain body? Are individuals as such to expect that the word of God will reveal itself to their hearts and consciences? And the former answer must be repeated. Unquestionably the Reformers believed that the word was to each man, not to a mere mass of men. They believed that the Bible had its peculiar lesson for every one, and not merely its general lesson for the world. But to ascertain how the peculiar lesson and the general lesson bear upon each other, and under what circumstances and conditions any given man may hope to profit by either, we must know whether he is in his true state when he is living in a certain body, or when he is standing aloof and asserting his independence. This is, as I have said already, a very important question —perhaps the question for us in this day to decide. A kind of help to resolving it may perhaps be obtained from the comparison which I first used in defence of the Reformers. The Homeric poems were sung to Greek women and children. They were received and loved by them because they had Greek sympathies: we receive and love them because we, being members of a nation, are able to enter into those sympathies. Whether a set of savages, without any sense of society, could have listened to them with equal rapture, or with any rapture at all, is a point worth considering. But this is merely a hint for reflection; the subject must receive a more full consideration.

IV. I believe it will be more convenient to pass over for the present the objections which are made to the doctrine of the Reformers, respecting National distinctions and the power of Sovereigns. Till we have considered many topics which have not yet come under our notice, the force of these objections could not be appreciated; it would be therefore unfair to attempt a refutation of them. And the omission is of less importance, as we shall find that the systems to which the Reformation has given birth have been but indirectly affected by this particular tenet.

One remark, however, I must make, which is necessary in order to understand the contrast which I have attempted to exhibit between the Quaker tendency and that which characterised the Reformers. I said that the assertion of an Absolute Will was the main peculiarity of the latter, the assertion of a relation between the Divine Word and His creatures of the former. It might seem that this assertion was scarcely consistent with another which I made (and which will be at once admitted as true), that Luther delighted to realise the connection of our Lord with all human circumstances and relations, and that Fox turned away from such contemplations altogether. But a minute's thought will remove the apparent contradiction. The relation between the heart and spirit of man and its Divine Teacher was the one which the Quaker perceived. To connect ordinary human relations with this seemed to him impossible; it was almost profanation. The Reformer, taking his stand upon the ground of the Divine Will, and looking upon the Bible as containing the revelation of that Will, had no such delicate feeling. The common earth was God's creation. Kings, fathers, and husbands had been appointed by Him and were spoken of in His word; the whole economy of His kingdom had been transacted through their means. The Papists had treated the world as the devil's world, with their "touch not, taste not, handle not;" but there was no safety in such abstinence—the security was in serving God with a clean heart, and giving Him thanks for His gifts. Such was the Reformation feeling, wherein we must perceive indications of a high truth, which might lead to a deliverance from sensuality or materialism, or might be perverted into them. This was, at all events, the immediate effect of its proclamation. The Teutonic nations, in which family life had always flourished, and in which the King had been able to assert his position as something distinct from that of the premier baron of his realm, and in which there was a tendency towards business and enterprise, became Protestant; the Latin nations, in which there was a lower standard of domestic and national feeling, but more of the feeling and sympathies which dispose to general social intercourse, with more

also, as I think, of a tendency to pure contemplation, continued to call themselves Catholic.

Section III. Protestant Systems

WHAT I have maintained that the Protestant principles are inseparably connected, and that all are implicitly contained in the first, I have hinted also that they presented themselves in quite different aspects and relations to the different Reformers. Justification was the central thought in Luther's mind; Election in Calvin's; the Authority of the Scripture in Zwingli's; the Authority of Sovereigns in all the political patrons of Protestantism, and in some of its theological champions, especially here in England. And as these differences indicated the existence of different, nay, opposite, habits of mind in persons who bore the common name of Protestants (and had a right to that name, not only as being all opposed to Romanism, but as all recognising the positive doctrines which Romanism denied), so it portended the growth of immediate divisions.

I. The character of the German Reformation is mainly, but not wholly, expressed in Martin Luther. Most students feel that in order to understand it fully we must connect with him, at all event, Philip Melanchthon. It has been a wonder to some that Luther, whose language against the teachers of the Church, not only in his own time but in past times, is probably more vehement than that of any other Protestant, should nevertheless have felt so much sympathy with the man who was least disposed to commit any act of separation from the old Church, and should have turned away with dislike from those who were labouring to consolidate a Protestant System. The circumstance is undoubtedly very curious, and cannot, I think, be explained merely by the influence which a man of calm character and logical intellect is wont to exercise over one of ardent temperament and practical energy. The truth seems to be this—Luther believed at first, and believed to the end of his life, that the Creed and the Sacraments were the great witnesses for justification—if it was not proper to call them acts of

justification. They were such partly because they were acts of affiance in a person; partly because they, the sacraments at least, were, as he believed, not merely human acts, but acts on the part of God, recognising and adopting those who would receive them. But everything in the new endeavour to create a Protestant system was drawing men away from this creed and these sacraments. Systematic articles and confessions were beginning to be formed; justification was again taught scholastically as one of a set of dogmas; the very meaning of it was escaping. Now Melanchthon probably was scarcely aware of this danger, for he was an Aristotelian schoolman, and was half disposed to acquiesce in the scholastic theories which Luther abhorred. But his dislike of separation led him to the same result. There was something terrible to him in the thought of leaving the old German Church—the Church of his fathers. He would have said: "We have made our protest against the abuses of Romanism; possibly we have fulfilled our work." And if he were asked, "But what then becomes of the doctrine of justification?" he would have said, "Has it not been asserted, in a sense, in the Church at all times? The doctors maintain a justification."

For a moment such words may have come with power to Luther's mind; whether they occurred to himself, or were suggested by his friend, they will have derived strength from some Anabaptist atrocity, or some Zwinglian discourse on the Eucharist. But an infamous proceeding of the Romish court will just then have come to light, or a decree will have gone forth from the emperor making reconciliation impossible. Then such thoughts will have been cast away as the suggestions of a fiend. To assert justification, not a justification, but the one only real justification, was the business of his life. He who did assert this could have no peace with Rome; he must break all bonds; the name of Catholic itself must be cast away. There must be an Evangelical Church; a Church witnessing for justification by faith, though all Christendom witnessed against it; Germany is to be the seat of such a Church. But it shall not be built upon a mere notion. The Sacraments shall be the great constituents of it. Baptism shall

declare to its members their spiritual citizenship. They shall not regard the Eucharist merely as a feast, at which they are to express their own faith and love. The consecrated elements shall not be spoken of as if they were made something by the receiver; they are something in themselves; they are consubstantiated with the Divine Presence. This is the Lutheran system, and of this the Evangelical Church of Germany professes to be the great Conservatrix.

II. It is evident from these remarks, that though the leading Protestant doctrine was meant to be embodied in Lutheranism, we must look, for the purely Protestant system, to Calvinism. It is not necessary to suppose that Calvin, from the first moment that he began to bear witness against Romanism, contemplated a separation from the old Church. Such a notion would be contrary to all that we know of ecclesiastical history, and of the lives of those who acted in it. But the idea of an Ecclesia, consisting of individuals taken out of the world by Divine Election, was the one which was continually present to his mind, and which gradually subordinated every other to itself. As all the appearances and conditions of the so-called Church outraged in Calvin's apprehension this idea, it must embody itself somewhere else. No self-willed act for the construction of a new body of faithful men might be justifiable. But the circumstances of the time seemed to point out the will and purpose of God; and his position as to Geneva might enable him to carry out that purpose, by planting the seed of a divine society.

That this society should, except in its acknowledgment of a Pope, correspond to that which Calvin did not deny had been once established by God, though it had fallen into so great corruption, would at first have been his wish; that it should feel itself to have some links of connexion with that old stock might be well on some accounts, though on others dangerous. But the main point was, that it should bear witness to the idea of a distinct election. The question, therefore, practically decided itself. The Church was essentially a collection of individuals. Now, an instinct taught Calvin, and his learning helped his

instinct, that the existence of Episcopacy involved another idea than this; it was the witness of something besides mere individual association. Episcopacy therefore was, at all events, not necessary; might it not be on the whole rather a perplexing and unintelligible institution?

In some other points Calvin could use language not very different from that which had prevailed among the Fathers, and in the Catholic Church. He attached a high importance to Baptism, and a mysterious worth to the Eucharist. Wherein then consisted his difference from them, and even from Luther? The Fathers actually regarded the Incarnation—Luther wished to regard it—as the foundation of the Church; Calvin sought for this foundation in individual election. In this difference all others are included. This idea of election involved the idea of a particular redemption; the selection of particular men being regarded merely in the light of a Divine decree, logically implied the reprobation of the rest. Thus the Calvinistic system is formed—a system essentially distinct from the Calvinistic principle, but necessarily involved in the constitution of the Calvinian Church. To Geneva, as the nucleus of this system, the cradle of this Church, men repaired from other lands for teaching and illumination. Thence came John Knox, and planted that which was destined to be the most vigorous shoot from the Genevan stock. Thence came Englishmen, who had been refugees during the Marian persecution, to lay the foundation of our Puritanism, and of the different nonconformist sects which have issued from it. Of all these bodies, however much they may differ from each other, the Calvinistical doctrine is the animating principle; when that is forgotten, or merged in any other, there ceases to be any meaning in their existence.

III. Luther and Calvin entertained a great reverence for the old Creeds of the Church, and some for the teaching of the Fathers. Those in whom reverence for the Scripture took the place of every other feeling, gradually acquired the habit of disparaging both; but this was not their main or distinguishing characteristic. Looking at the written Word of God, as the declaration of God's will, and as His

great gift to man, they became impatient of the value which the other Reformers attached to the Sacraments, especially to the Eucharist. Had not this been the great snare of the Romanists? Had not the belief of sacramental grace made them substitute something else for the great facts of which the Bible is the record? It was well, no doubt, as it was commanded, to keep a memorial feast in remembrance of those facts, or of that which is the most transcendent of them. This was to be the sign and bond of church fellowship in all ages; but the notion that this memorial feast had the virtue which the German, and even the Genevan doctor, was inclined to attribute to it, opened the way to all superstition. These were unquestionably the elements of a peculiar system; but they had not strength to be the groundwork of a society. The Zwinglians succumbed for a time to the Calvinists; their maxims were not embodied anywhere; but on that very account they were destined to exercise a more powerful influence over the whole Protestant mass.

Another influence of the same kind began to make itself manifest within the century which produced the Reformation; of the same kind in more senses than one, though apparently most unlike the Zwinglian influence, inasmuch as that seemed to contain the very essence of Protestantism, and this to be in direct contradiction to its most remarkable peculiarity. I allude to the doctrines of Arminius and Grotius. These doctrines looked at on one side bore the distinct impress of the Reformation. They were set up in opposition to all mystical notions; they were presented as the plain, popular, practical view of men's duties and responsibilities; they were deduced from texts of Scripture; they were probably felt by their principal propagators to be much more unlike the sacramental views of the older Church than the Calvinistic views were. But on the other hand, an acknowledgment of the absolute will of God was believed to be—as we have seen that it was—the recognition upon which, not one, but all the Protestant doctrines were grounded. Because Calvinism had put forth this acknowledgment more prominently than Lutheranism, Calvinism

had become almost identical with Protestantism; it had been believed to be the witness against the selfwilled inventions and self-righteous doctrines of the Romanists. It was not strange, then, that the vehement Protestants in England and elsewhere should identify Arminianism with Popery, and should believe that the same decisive measures were necessary for extirpating one as the other. They were successful in preventing Arminianism from establishing itself into a rival Church; they were quite unsuccessful in preventing it from leavening the minds of those who adopted the Genevan model, and subscribed the Genevan confessions.

IV. Our last duty in this section would be to consider how far any of these systems became connected with the government of the nations in which they established themselves, or whether any other has arisen to assert the relation between Protestantism and national life. But the last of those questions is closely connected with the history of the English Church; the first will be better considered under our next head.

Section IV. The Practical Working of the Protestant Systems

I. The character of Luther, like that of most true Teutons, was compounded of hearty joviality and deep sadness. It has often been remarked that the latter element, which was inseparable from his conflicts and his vocation, painfully predominated in his later years, in which one might have hoped there would have been serenity, if not sunshine. Romanists, and many who are not Romanists, have said, that but one inference can be drawn from such a fact; he felt a bitter sense of disappointment in the result of his labours; if pride had permitted him, he would have confessed that he had rashly and sinfully entered upon them. Such observations are very plausible, and very convincing to those who fancy that a man commences a work, like that to which Luther's life was devoted, from some calculations of producing an effect that will redound to his own satisfaction, or profit, or honour, or even to the advantage of the world. He cannot be governed by any such calculations: no one to whom mankind really

owes any great gratitude was ever governed by them. A mighty Power which he must obey is urging him forward; at every step there is reluctance; oftentimes he says to himself, "I will speak no more words in His name;" he is ashamed and confounded that one like him should pull down and destroy: but the fire is in his heart, and it must come forth from his heart, whatever it consumes. A man who obeys such an impulse will have much sorrow in himself, and will be little understood by others. All he can say in his own defence is, "I know this was to be done, and that I was to do it." Men will tell him that a knave might use the same language; he will admit it, and will only answer, "Whether I be a knave or no, I do not stand before your tribunal. My judgment is with the Lord, and my work is with my God." It will be time for the Romanists to say that Luther did not accomplish anything which he wished to accomplish, or which his time required, when they are able to explain without reference to him the extraordinary change which took place in the morality and energy of their own hierarchy in the generation following. It will be time for Protestants to sneer at Luther, when they have fully ascertained that every step out of the errors which they deplore in their own systems will not be made most effectually when they understand the spirit in which he acted, and enter into it; and whether every attempt to set aside the principles which he promulgated will not establish the evils of those systems, and strengthen them by the addition of others from which they may have been separated.

The fact, however, must not be concealed—Luther did feel that Protestantism in every form, even that form which he had been the means of establishing, would not be an adequate or faithful witness for the truth which he had existed to proclaim. It was not merely that he foresaw a loss of the freshness and fervour by which new converts are wont to be distinguished; he felt—though he might not be able to find a reason which satisfied him for the feeling—that there was something in the idea of the Evangelical Church which would involve the necessity of great practical contradictions. Experience has justified

his fears, and, faithfully used, may perhaps assist us in discovering the ground of them.

As soon as a body was expressly established for the purpose of asserting the doctrine of justification by faith, the confessions and formularies which set forth that doctrine began of course to be in the highest esteem. They were the casket which contained the jewel, and the jewel could not be preserved without the casket. It was all very well to say, The Creed contains it; or, as Luther would say, He that can declare, I believe in God the Father, etc., is justified; but the Romanists acknowledge the Creed too, and we are to defend justification against the Romanists. It was still more unsatisfactory to say, The Bible contains the doctrine: the Romanists acknowledge the Bible; the Bible, interpreted in a particular way, or not interpreted in another way, might seem to deny it. Consequently, a certain interpretation of the Creed and of the Bible must be guarded and upheld; these formularies have been carefully worded to include that interpretation, and to exclude every other; to these we must adhere.

How to escape from an argument of this kind, none could tell; it seemed perfectly conclusive. Nevertheless, in a very little time, some men arose who said they had been deceived. You tell us justification is our bond of union; but it is not so: justification is a living thing, the justification of which Luther speaks, and of which St. Paul speaks, means the deliverance of a man's conscience from a burden and a bondage. But the justification of which you speak means a notion or theory about something which you call by this name; which theory is contained in a certain document you call a confession. This will not do. The Evangelical Church is no Church, it does not deserve its name, if it do not consist of men who are really justified. Moreover, the Bible, which is a real book, and speaks of the real justification, must be the book of the Church, and not these formularies; otherwise Protestantism is not Protestantism.

The proclamation went forth; it was heard and felt to be true; the living preacher was followed, the dry doctrinalist deserted. But what

is the living preacher to do with those who follow him? They are to form the true Church. But how is it to be ascertained that they do form it? We must see that they really feel what they profess, that they experience this justification, and do not merely use the name. Well then, there must be another set of tests introduced, and another set of books written to ascertain which of these tests are sound and which fallacious.

And now comes another reaction. What! it is said, and do you call this Lutheranism? Feelings, experiences—Luther abhorred the words. All Romanist imposture lurks in them. Luther set up his doctrine of justification as a witness against them. This proclamation also goes forth. It is seen to be true; men hearken to it; the preachers of feeling and experiences are pronounced unsound. Then what can we do but return to the good old way. The confessions regain their esteem. Believing these confessions must mean believing justification; there is no help for it; we cannot come at any other rule. The records of this series of reactions form the longest and most important chapter in the history of Lutheranism.

But there is also another chapter.

The ideas of Imputation, Satisfaction, Representation, were, I said, expressed to Luther in living acts of faith and devotion—in the Psalms, in the Creed and Sacraments. Apart from these, he did not wish to contemplate them, though he might be compelled to do so by the necessities of controversy. But it was the business of his disciples to exhibit all these ideas—being inseparably connected with justification—in very precise and accurate expressions. The nature and mode of imputation must be described in propositions; it must be made clearly and definitely intelligible to everyone how the divine Justice was satisfied; it must be shewn what is the amount and measure of sacrifice which was necessary for the deliverance of man from the penalty of sin.

If these statements had taken the purely scholastic form which was given to theological propositions before the Reformation, it would

have been seen that they were not, at all events, sufficient for men's wants; that there must be something else, since the Gospel was meant for the poor. But the Reformation had, as we have seen, a peculiarly popular character. Protestantism addressed itself to common men. Even the books that were written for the preachers must have something of this character, as they were to deliver to the people the dogmas which they learnt. Hence these definitions and propositions became strangely mingled with popular illustrations. The language of the schools and of the world was blended into a most bewildering mosaic. Precedents and customs from the law courts, maxims of trade, the vulgarest proverbs of worldly men, were all pressed into the service of the sanctuary, and used to explain and defend the acts of Him to whose righteous judgment all these customs, and maxims, and proverbs must at last be brought. And because in the dealings of men, what are really deep and true principles, sometimes, through misunderstanding or misapplication to purposes for which they were not intended, come to have the effect of fictions, and to be so regarded, and as fictions are praised and accounted clever by men who know not that any utility they may possess is derived from the original truth that is in them; these theologians of the semi-scholastic, semi-popular class introduced this habit of thinking into their own study, and taught their disciples to believe it nothing horrible that fictions should be attributed to the God of Truth.

I do not say that the temper I have described was more characteristic of the Lutheran or Evangelical Church, than of the other Protestants; but it particularly affected the class of doctrines which that Church especially undertook to defend, and the opposition to it was perhaps more marked in that than elsewhere. This opposition arose from the feeling that these dogmatic teachings had nothing to do with practical morality, nay affected it injuriously. The Reformers had withstood the Popish notion that family duties, national duties, the transactions of common life, were less holy than the services of the cloister; they had openly or implicitly discouraged the opinion that

men who will renounce the ordinary routine of social life may hope to attain a peculiar saintship. Now their language was turned against the doctrines which they had bequeathed. Christianity, it was said, must have for its main object the inculcation of a pure, simple, and practical scheme of Ethics; it could not be intended to introduce a theory more difficult or embarrassing than that of any heathen philosopher who had not professed to provide a gospel for the poor and ignorant; least of all could it be made to contain notions respecting the ways, designs, and character of God which actually contradicted all the notions of justice and benevolence which we recognise in ordinary life. As this tone of thinking diffused itself more and more widely, a set of maxims, partly appertaining to outward conduct, partly to the discipline of the temper, affections, dispositions, gradually shaped themselves out and were received as the essential part of Christianity. These became the main topics in the discourse of the preacher; it was the business of the schoolman to show how the Bible might be interpreted, not to mean more, or much more (doctrines being freely interpreted) than these maxims. Some could satisfy themselves more easily than others that they had succeeded in this task. Those who were critically honest felt that there were great difficulties; that much of the Bible must be given up in order that the notions of their opponents might not derive a support from it. The precedent had been given by Luther himself; it was possible to believe that the carrying out of that precedent was the carrying out of the principle of the Reformation. Hence, the commencement of that form of Rationalism which characterised the last age.

It was a simple, practical, intelligible system, which the wayfarer who ran might read, that was demanded by these modern Protestants. But it was found by experiment that the wayfarer who ran did not read the scheme of Christianity which was thus presented to him. The poor men said that it had nothing whatever to do with them. This was a startling practical difficulty which led to results affecting Protestantism in all directions, and not merely the Lutheran form of it. But

what I wish the reader to observe here, is, how little the body which took justification by faith for its motto and principle, has been able, in any stage of its history, to assert that doctrine; how constantly the system, whether interpreted by earnest believers or stiff dogmatists, by orthodox doctors or mere moralists, has been labouring to strangle the principle to which it owes its existence.

I cannot touch at present upon the later history of Lutheranism. It belongs to the records of a great struggle of which our time has witnessed the commencement and may witness the completion, whether the doctrines which the Reformers proclaimed are to be overcome by Romanism, to be merged in Pantheism, or to find for themselves some surer basis than either.

II. Some of my remarks upon Luther must of course apply to the Calvinistic bodies; still they have features of their own, which are well deserving of a separate consideration. We have seen that the idea of an Absolute Will, choosing individual men out of a fallen world, is not merely recognised by these bodies; that it is actually the ground of their existence. What strength there is in that belief, what deep irresistible truth there is in it, has been demonstrated in all ages of the world, and certainly not least in the history of Calvinism. The same divine might —I dare not call it by any other name—which was permitted to go forth with the Islamite armies, when, in the sight of Christians who had lost the faith that they were God's chosen and appointed servants, and had sunk into a low slavish unbelief of a spiritual Presence and a spiritual Kingdom, they proclaimed that God's will was still the supreme law, still the actuating spring of all human energy—that same might was given, as I believe, not seldom, to the Covenanters of Scotland and the Puritans of England, when they dared to put their trust in a spiritual arm, and to mock at all human and material weapons which set themselves in opposition to it. God forbid that we should lose the lesson, which the records of their victories contain, or that we should deny that they were victories given to faith with whatever inconsistencies that faith may have been mingled.

But there did lie in the heart of the Mahometan conquerors—mingled with the very truth which gave them all their power, and to their understandings inseparable from it—a dark and desperate fatalism, which was to prove how unlike it was to this truth, by the difference of its effects; which was to prove that the system of Mahomet—the system which owed its life to this principle—was a lie, and was charged with a curse, not a blessing to mankind. The history of the Calvinistic bodies ought to shew whether any similar fatalism be hid in their creed, and whether they owe it rather to the sound portions of that creed, or to the influence of a surrounding atmosphere which they did not create and would have been glad to exhaust, that they have escaped from the same gloom and helplessness which has succeeded to that early vigour in the soldiers of the Crescent.

1. The Calvinists on the Continent, since their first establishment, have exhibited little of the energy which I have attributed to their principle. A Dutchman or a Genevese might ask me with a sad smile, to what period in the history of the Reformed Church I could point as affording the least illustration of it. But the conflicts of the Synod of Dort soon brought to light the denying side of the doctrine, and gave it the most evident predominance. The Arminian doctors set up, or seemed to set up, the belief of a will in man against the idea of Election. The Calvinists began to set up the idea of the Absoluteness of the Divine Will against the idea of a will in man. Dogmas and determinations came forth—perfectly adequate for the purpose of contradiction, utterly inadequate for the purpose of assertion. In the next age the Calvinist found that he had got the notion strongly grafted into his creed and rooted in his mind, that he had not a free will; all that he had lost was the clear conviction that there was a Divine will, and that he had any connexion with it.

Then began some of the same reactions as in the Lutheran body; men feeling that they wanted more than logical formulas about Election; declaring that the sense and experience of a Divine election was the condition of it; this declaration leading to tests for ascertaining

who possessed that condition; such tests again denounced as setting aside the very idea of absolute and unconditional sovereignty.

A combination of the spiritual and dogmatic elements is found in the able Dutch and German Commentators, who arose in the early part of the last century; but they resorted to that same method of illustrating the scheme of God by human precedents, which I have already noticed. The clear acute reasoning temper, which Calvinism especially fosters, detected the inconsistencies of it: the disciples of the Genevan Reformer said that they were meant to be witnesses for simplicity; and that simplicity in forms ought to be sustained by simplicity of doctrine: the Ethical system became universal, and Voltaire wrote to tell D'Alembert that there were few preachers in Geneva who believed a word of the doctrine which Calvin spent his life in propagating.

2. I have expressed, in as strong language as it is possible to use, my belief that there was a vital and powerful element in the Scotch Kirk and in English Puritanism, which came out in the formation of the one, and in the conflicts of the other with our Royalty and Episcopacy. I am not anxious to qualify the assertion by dwelling on all the cruelties and meannesses, the alternate cringing to the State and insolent domination over it, which marked the history of Scotch Presbyterianism in the sixteenth century, or the intolerance and persecution which characterised the English assertors of religious freedom in the seventeenth. These indications may be attributed to the temper of the age, and to the evil lessons which the Calvinistical bodies learnt from our Church. It is more important to observe, how these bodies testified for the principle which called them into existence after the motives to violence had disappeared. The difference in their position makes the experiment a fair one. The Scotch Presbyterian body after the Revolution was raised to the dignity of an establishment; the English sects acquired a recognised position in the country, but, as they boast, were not hampered by any state alliance. Moreover the English Calvinistical sects were several distinct experiments, as to the mode of expressing the principle which was common to them all. To the

Presbyterians it seemed that there was one general scheme or platform of polity laid down in Scripture for all the faithful; the Independent asserted the right of each distinct congregation to be its own lawgiver; the Anabaptist maintained that each individual ought to be conscious of his own adoption into God's covenant, before he received the sign of it. In the doctrine of this last named sect, we clearly discern the idea which all were labouring to embody. Each of the others confessed that it was not a Church, but the shell of a Church, and the effort to become one; the Anabaptists believed that if they had not actually solved the problem how to make the professing body identical with the elect body, they had at least made the nearest possible approximation to a solution of it.

In the period which followed the Revolution we have the most numerous testimonies from their own authorities, that a gradual decay of faith and doctrine took place both in England and Scotland. In the latter country it was ascribed by all the older Covenanters to the convention with the government; the English dissenters can only account for it by the general temper of the times. What renovating principle there was in either, to overcome the effects of state influence, or of the world's infidelity, does not appear; they both alike attribute the restoration of their old doctrine, and of something like their former zeal, to an action from without, to an action proceeding from a corrupt body, against which they were each protesting. The preaching of Whitfield in Scotland, of Wesley and Whitfield in England, we are told by Presbyterians and dissenters, awakened a spirit which had been long dormant among them. But only one of these Oxford divines was a Calvinist, and his preaching was not at all of the kind which was likely to recreate a Calvinistical system. The quickening influence, however, being once imparted, these bodies began to require a doctrine. Just at that time an American divine appeared, who united remarkable strength of thought to an earnest spirit, and to what he believed was a profound veneration for the name and creed of Calvin. The Edwards version of that creed, or some modification of it, became from this

time forth the recognised system amongst English and Scotch Calvinists. Now this system, just so far as it received its complexion from the piety of its author, is unquestionably an assertion of a Divine Will. The strength of Edwards' mind seems to have been derived from his acknowledgment of a distinct Being, dwelling in his own Absoluteness and Awfulness. But that which gives his system the logical consistency which its disciples so much admire, is his manner of dispensing with a Human Will. Man is a piece of mere mechanism, acted upon by a certain set of motives; he is not a stone, for he has certain affections and sympathies, which are susceptible of outward influences; but the notion that he is capable of being determined from within is utterly repudiated; the very object of the scheme is to set it aside. But any one who looks at the nature of that power, which the earlier Calvinists put forth in action, or who even attends steadily to their deeper utterances, must perceive, not merely that they did recognise these inward determinations, but that the belief in them was the life-giving principle of their minds. Whether they could explain the connexion philosophically or not, the idea of the Divine Will was inseparably involved with the energy and activity of their own human will; they realise the one in the other. This logical development of the Calvinistical idea has therefore the strange peculiarity, that it stands in the most direct practical contradiction to that idea as it existed in the mind of Calvin himself, and of all who sympathised with him. I say practical, for this is no difference about words. In Scotland especially, the working of the new system has been very remarkable. Find any man who has drunk deeply into the spirit of Knox and the old Covenanters, and ask him what manner of doctrine he hears from the Scotch preachers generally (I do not mean of the Robertson school, but of that which is most opposed to it); whether it be essentially the same with that which he supposes was delivered two centuries ago? In one form of language or another he will give you to understand that he is sensible of the most violent contrast; that the modern Calvinism is a compound, to which if John Knox has contributed one part, Thomas Hobbes has

contributed three. The consequence is, that a young man going from the house of his fathers to a Scotch university, passes by the most natural steps possible into the philosophical system with which the religious one has been leavened;[12] he adopts it as the most consistent interpretation of the phenomena of the world; the idea of anything spiritual becomes lost in his mind. Afterwards, perhaps, he may take up some one of those philosophical theories by which his countrymen have endeavoured to modify or subvert pure Materialism and Utilitarianism. But he takes it up as a theory merely; it has nothing to do with his life; the maxim of the other system reigns there, only the more undisturbed because it presents itself less formally and obtrusively. Then if he have a good hardy Scotch understanding, which, though it may dally with abstractions, has great sympathy with the palpable and the actual, he soon becomes weary of this child's play, and goes forth into the world, to show, by his successful management, that he has not lost that sense of an individual importance and position which characterised his forefathers, though he may turn it to a different, and what he considers a much more profitable, account. I know well what noble minds there are in Scotland, in whom another influence from that which I have described is at work, and who think, with bitter pain, of the materialism which has crept over their land. But these have no dreams that the old faith can be restored. They speak with great reverence of the first age of their Kirk; they denounce Prelacy and the English Church with vehemence; they dwell with affectionate tenderness upon the patriarchal life and discipline, which existed in the rural districts of Scotland (among the middle classes), but a short time ago, and which was at all events connected with Presbyterianism;

[12]I may probably be encountered by the observation, that Hobbes is, of all authors, the least likely to find favour with a young Scotchman; for that he was a Dogmatist, whereas Hume the proper idol of Scotland was a Sceptic. The criticism I believe is of no great value. No young men are Sceptics in the sense in which Hume was a Sceptic. Their infidelity, as much as their faith, is dogmatic. If they worship Hume, they worship him, because they imagine, however falsely, that he arrived at certain conclusions. They suppose him to have believed and proved that the world is under the dominion of Necessity, not of God—the very principle of Hobbes. It is the point wherein these writers are identical, not that wherein they disagree, which the youthful philosopher, escaping from a Calvinistical school, takes notice of.

but they acknowledge that the system is worn out, that it has no longer power to produce energetic action, deep thought, or a simple form of society; that it flourishes only while it has something to fight with; that the symptoms which it exhibits in its decrepitude are the consequences of evils and weaknesses which were concealed in it when it was in its best estate; that in that best estate it could not satisfy the wants of which they are conscious. What these wants are, and in what forms they have expressed themselves, are questions belonging to a larger subject, upon which we must presently enter.

The present political crisis in the Kirk will be more properly spoken of when we touch upon its connexion with England. The circumstances of the Nonconformists here are still more involved with the circumstances of our own Church; still, it is almost impossible to notice them as illustrations of the history of Calvinism, without looking at them on their political side. As theologians they have struck out no path for themselves; what philosophy they have is derived from Scotland or America. It is therefore precisely as bodies possessing a certain outward organisation, that they suggest any important topic for reflection. Of this fact, they are themselves apparently sensible; they feel more and more that they exist to oppose and destroy certain institutions, which they find established about them. If we look at the sects separately, we find that they are confessedly not spiritual bodies; only bodies professing to include within them a certain number of spiritual individuals. We find new congregations arising out of the old, protesting that these have become earthly and corrupt; that the only hope of a pure Church is in fresh division and secession. We find the members of the old societies denouncing these endeavours after an ideal perfection, and maintaining that experience has always confuted them. We find accounts given by their own members of proceedings resorted to in the election and deposition of ministers and the formation of congregations, which are, to say the least, what men commonly call secular. We find these sects engaged in angry controversies with each other; the Pedobaptists for instance vehemently denouncing the

Anabaptists, because they maintain the fearful heresy that immersion was the earliest mode of initiation into the Christian Church. We find the leaders of these bodies complaining of the great deadness of their congregations, and endeavouring to produce revivals in them, by methods which seem to us of the most mechanical and material character. These are the indications which the different dissenting bodies present, when looked at separately or in their relations to each other. Is it wonderful that they should wish rather to fix our attention on the great united force which they are able to bring into play at public meetings, in vestry rooms, and in newspapers, against that which they name the secular anti-spiritual Church of England? Unquestionably, if she be secular, or just so far as she is secular, these weapons may prevail against her, for that which is secular may be destroyed by that which is secular: if she be spiritual, they will be as powerless against her, as secular armour has always proved against a spiritual principle, whether it has come forth in Puritanism, or in any other shape. But this is not the question now before us. It is, whether the evidence furnished by the Reformed Church on the Continent, the Presbyterian Kirk in Scotland, and the English Nonconformist sects, tends to confirm or refute the notion that the Calvinistical principle is a sufficient foundation for a universal Church, and the notion that that principle can be safely preserved in a Calvinistic system?

III. As the Zwinglian doctrine was not able to work out a system or church for itself, and as I have already noticed, while speaking of the Lutherans and Calvinists on the Continent, how faith in the Bible, which was the strongest element in that doctrine, fared under the protection of those who put it forward as their exclusive profession, I may here close my remarks upon pure Protestantism. Our next duty is to trace the characteristics of that system, of which Zwinglism has often been called the parent, and in which, as we have already seen, all the Protestant systems in the last century showed a tendency to merge.

Chapter III. Unitarianism

Connexion of Unitarianism with pure Protestantism, with Natural Philosophy, and with the System of Locke—Its positive side— Its negative side —Final results.

I saw that the early Quakers acknowledged many of the doctrines which other Christians acknowledged, but that the sense in which they received them was determined by the nature of those tenets which were specifically theirs. It would be incorrect to apply precisely similar observation to the Reformers. The doctrines which were not characteristic of them, but which were professed by their Romanist opponents, and under certain important modifications by the Eastern as well as the Western Church—the doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation—stood prominently forward in the Protestant confessions. Luther at least looked upon them as the primary doctrines of Christianity, and upon his own great principle as the link which connected them with the distinct personality of each man.

But what was not true, or but partially true, of the founders, was emphatically true of the successors, whether they belonged to the spiritual or the dogmatic school. The former uniformly spoke of Election, Justification by faith, the authority of the Written Word, as the vital, essential truths of Christianity those which belonged to personal religion. When they alluded to the doctrine of the Trinity it was in some such language as this—Every true Christian, they said, must needs recognise a Creator, a Redeemer, and a Sanctifier. These offices were necessary to the accomplishment of his salvation, and he must attribute them to distinct agents. Hence the necessity of admitting this principle. But the thought would present itself: "these offices are undoubtedly distinct; but does it follow necessarily that there is a distinction of persons? May not that notion be a mere effort to explain a diversity of operations, which is capable of being accounted for upon some less difficult hypothesis?" The suggestion might be repelled by the humble and pious, but bolder spirits would broach it, and that which was dreaded by the fathers as a temptation, would be welcomed by the sons as a discovery.

The Dogmatic school used a different language. They maintained that this doctrine was taught in Scripture; it formed part of the confessions, and was just as necessary as any other part. But here another kind of difficulty presented itself. Were the texts alleged in behalf of a doctrine so very strange and incomprehensible, adequate to the support of it? Had not the Romanists done something to keep alive the belief of it by their traditions? Was it quite consistent with Protestantism to own such help? These questions were asked, and the answers to them from the doctors of the Evangelical and of the Reformed Churches became daily more faint and incoherent.

I have shown already how in the Calvinistical bodies from the first, and in the Lutheran so far as they caught the purely Protestant complexion, the idea of the Incarnation was deposed from the place which it had occupied in the older divinity of the Church. The state and constitution of humanity was determined by the fall; it was only the pure, elect body, which had concern in the Redemption; that redemption therefore could only be contemplated as a means devised by God for delivering a certain portion of His creatures from the law of death, to which the race was subjected. In endeavours to explain the mode of this redemption, and to justify the limitation of it, consisted the divinity of the most purely Protestant writers, and for this end they resorted to those arguments from the schools, and illustrations from the market-place, of which I spoke in the last chapter.

Meantime a great change had been effected in men's notions upon several subjects not obviously theological. The experimental philosophy in physics held out to students the hope of attaining an actual knowledge of things, by delivering them from the impressions of the senses, and from the notions which the understanding generalises out of those impressions. Already this philosophy had borne its noblest fruits, and the Astronomer had asserted a principle as true, which was the most contradictory to sense and to all conclusions from sense.

But if this experimental philosophy were the great means of leading to such discoveries, did it not follow that Experience was the one

source of knowledge? The conviction became stronger and stronger, "There is no other, there can be no other." Then clever men began to explain how many false schemes and systems had their origin in the notion that there was some other foundation of knowledge than this, and each fresh exposure drew from the enlightened and philosophical world a fresh peal of laughter at the absurdities of their forefathers. There were indeed various thoughtful men in different parts of Europe who were struck with the reflection, that the new doctrine, which seemed to have grown up side by side with the great experiments in natural philosophy, had led to exactly the opposite result. Physical science had advanced, or rather had been found to be possible, just so far as it had set itself free from sensible impressions, and the notions deduced out of them. Moral science was advancing, it was believed, to its perfection, by acknowledging these impressions and notions as the only standard of truth. But such suggestions were little heeded at the time. It became the first tenet of philosophical orthodoxy, which it was most dangerous to dispute, that sensible experience is the foundation of all belief and of all knowledge.

The rise of this philosophical theory is historically connected with that of a great political theory, which was also to displace all that had gone before it. In order, it was said, to make men tremble at certain doctrines or notions which contradicted their experience, it was necessary to make them tremble also at the authority by which these notions and doctrines were communicated. A mystery was supposed to attach to the origin of society as well as to the origin of knowledge. The one opinion was as fallacious as the other. As knowledge comes in the simplest and most obvious way through eyes and ears, so society grew up in the simplest way by compacts and conventions. Experience was the root of both. Men either felt the miseries of fighting, or dreamed of the blessings of government; they waived their privilege of being independent units, and either yielded themselves passively to one who was stronger than they, or else entered into stipulations with him to rule them till they should find his rule burdensome.

All these points must be taken into consideration, if we would understand the temper of the last age and the nature of the scheme which obtained so much secret or acknowledged prevalency in it. To suppose that there is nothing positive in Unitarianism, that it derives all the popularity it has ever enjoyed from its denials, is a plausible but a serious mistake. It has been embraced by a number of earnest minds, which never could have had any sympathy with a system merely because it rejected what other men believed. I do not say that they may not have felt a certain delight in that peculiarity of their doctrine; that the thought of being different from the vulgar mass may not have been flattering to them, as it is to the evil nature of all men; and that the positive and negative elements of their minds, being confounded by their opponents, may not at last have become hopelessly confounded by themselves. But I do maintain, that something deeper and more solid lay beneath their not-belief; that it is very important to know what that was, not only for their sakes but for our own; not only because the only way of extricating any man from a falsehood is to do justice to his truth; but because by this course the history of the Church and the plans of God, so far as we may be allowed to examine into them, become far more intelligible.

1. From the dogmatic tendencies which distinguished one class of Protestant theologians, and from the disposition to exalt and all but deify the modes and experiences of their own minds which belonged to another, the natural philosopher was equally free. But if he were a simple, humble man, if he had been trained in his youth to the habit of worship, if he had been taught to connect deep and holy thoughts with the idea of God's presence, his vocation would certainly not diminish his awe and reverence. It would call such feelings forth; nay, he might easily believe that they were first given to him when the marvellous distinctions and inwoven harmonies of creation revealed themselves to him. At all events he was in a new world, a freer world—it would seem a more real world—than that of experiences and notions; one which bore a more immediate and naked witness of a Divine Being.

It was only afterwards that this witness came forth in the guise of arguments and demonstrations (the mind of a scientific man naturally enough endeavouring to clothe all thoughts in the forms to which it was habituated, and recognising this idea of a God as one of those certainties to which such forms would be applicable); but the heart and conscience had spoken first; the testimony had been received already there where it was needed, before the slow machinery of proofs was constructed to justify the assumption, and the spirit had bowed and worshipped with a mixed fear and joy at hearing in the world without the echoes of a nearer and deeper voice.

Thus nature spoke to one brought up in a Christian atmosphere, as it was not impossible to suppose it might have spoken to some wondering sage of Greece or India. It seemed to bring the news of a simpler, earlier, more universal faith, which must belong to all, and which all might receive. Other testimonies might be added to this, to confirm it, or to restore it; but no true testimony could set it aside or contradict it. And, therefore, were our Scriptures to be prized to the utter rejection of all Shasters containing the mythologies of the old or new world. The first evidently were affirming and re-establishing this primary testimony; the others were outraging it. The belief of a Being not manifested in outward forms, but manifested in His works; not divided according to the diversity of His operations, but one, was the belief which lay at the root of all their teaching. And since the universality of Christianity had superseded the narrowness of Judaism, it was evident that this belief must be asserted with only greater clearness. It would be strange if the universal religion were more wrapped up in particular notions and opinions, were less expansive, than the ancient, which did, however, testify most strongly against idolatry as a limitation of the Divine Presence and a division of His essence; strange if the more perfect religion were to throw us back upon the very notions from which the imperfect had succeeded in emancipating all who faithfully received it. By such feelings and arguments did the idea of the unity of God gradually raise itself up in the last age against

the faith which had been recognised in Christendom for seventeen centuries. Where lay the force of these feelings and arguments? Surely in the strong inward conviction which they expressed, that the unity of God is a deep, primary truth, which no words can explain away, no experiences of ten thousand minds make unreal, no dogmas of ten thousand generations turn into a nullity; that it has stood its ground and asserted itself in defiance of all such words, experiences, dogmas; that everything which is true in the teaching which men have received, has tended to bring it into clearer manifestation. With this conviction was associated another, less clearly brought out, but the stronger perhaps for being latent, that this idea of the unity of God must in some way or other be the ground of all unity among men; that if there be a universal religion, this idea must be at the root of it. With such convictions let no man dare to trifle; rather let him labour by all means to draw them forth into great strength and clearness, bringing so far as he can all history, and the history of Unitarianism in the last century most especially, to illustrate them.

2. A natural philosopher, trained to pious and reverent feelings, free from petty vanity, and keeping himself aloof from vulgar excitements, is more likely than most men to have a calm and cheerful temperament. His mind is not turned in upon itself; the evil which is there is not constantly reminding him of its presence; his circumstances do not oblige him to contemplate the sins of the world; he is habitually occupied with objects which are serene and unchangeable. To such a man the lessons which he has received in his childhood respecting a Being of perfect love and purity, will recur with particular delight; every new fact in nature will bring them home to him; the whole face of nature will seem to be beaming with them. But then the thought will occur to him of other lessons received in his childhood, which seemed to contradict these; lessons respecting justice, and vengeance, and schemes for removing or propitiating wrath. Of a Being possessing such attributes, and needing to be approached in such a manner, nature says nothing. There may be tempests and volcanoes, but all

her operations, so far as we are able to penetrate them, are subject to fixed, unchangeable laws; these will at last be found to obey a law too, and He to whom we refer all creation and all laws, must needs have a mind perfectly at one with itself, subject to no vicissitudes, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. Here again, see how the pure, original testimony to God's universal love has been darkened by human conceits and systems. But that testimony is reasserted in our Bible, distinguished by this characteristic as much as by its assertion of the divine unity, from all pretended revelations. The heathens are denounced in the Old Testament for setting it aside by their cruel inventions; Jesus Christ, by His words and acts, condemned the Jews because they were not honouring God as the God of mercy and love; His dispensation is one from which every other idea is banished; the beloved disciple affirms in words that God is love; all sacrifices and institutions interfering with that notion are expressly abolished. Such were the feelings and arguments by which thousands in the eighteenth century, either openly or secretly, were led to believe that the idea of Atonement, which had been assumed for seventeen centuries to be the radical idea of Christianity, was a wretched and inconsistent graft upon it from some other stock. Where lay the strength of them? In the conviction, it seems to me, that the idea of the love of God is an absolute primary idea which cannot be reduced under any other; which cannot be explained away by any other; which no records, experiences, dogmas, if they have lasted for a thousand generations, can weaken or contradict; which must be the foundation of all thought, all theology, all human life. With such a conviction I believe it is as dangerous to trifle as with that respecting the divine unity.

3. I have spoken of the natural philosopher as withdrawn from the observation of the evils in the world around him, and to a great extent of his own, and as disposed, by his circumstances, to a benignant view of things. How pleasant to such a man when he came from his closet and his problems, with a mind in a measure fixed and abstracted but not unharmonised, to look round upon his children, and to recollect

what he had been told in his nursery, that He who created the sun and moon was their Father. How pleasant when he had time to think of all the generations which had looked upon the light of this sun and moon, to believe the same of them. But what jarring thoughts derived from the same nursery would intrude themselves! All these children of men, all these generations, have undergone a fall; they are the subjects of a curse! Of only a few, how few if the calculations of different divines are to be admitted, is it possible to think—"these are God's children;" all the rest we can only speak of as doomed, and not it would seem by their own sin but by an inevitable necessity. Surely this too must be one of the wretched interpolations into the old and simple faith. Nature teaches no such lesson. The same sunshine and rain for all; the whole universe claimed for its Creator. And the Bible does mean this, must mean it, whatever divines may assert to the contrary. In some way or other it does reconcile the existence of man with its witness of God's love; in this way it cannot. By such feelings and arguments was the doctrine of a Fall—admitted for seventeen centuries by all Christendom, recognised as the central doctrine of Christian divinity by the Protestant sects—driven out of the hearts of thousands in the eighteenth century.

Against these convictions, the orthodox of the day, especially those of the Calvinistical school, opposed many plausible arguments. A belief in the unity of God, they said, was no doubt in some way compatible with a belief in the Trinity, but we were not to trouble ourselves with efforts at a reconciliation. The subject was mysterious, profoundly mysterious: how could we hope for light upon it when there were so many subjects connected with our common life, of which we know next to nothing. The Bible required this belief; numerous texts might be adduced which could be explained upon no other hypothesis; abandon it, and you must abandon much more, even many of those truths which it had been the peculiar glory of Protestantism to assert.

The principles respecting the character of the Divine Being were disposed of in a similar manner, only with more of logical and

metaphysical subtlety. It was questioned whether we are bound to consider the names given to the attributes of one wholly divine and incomprehensible, as having the same signification with those names when they describe qualities in us; it was said that we must depend wholly on revelation for our knowledge of God, and that if certain acts and feelings were ascribed to Him by the Bible, we must simply acknowledge them, and wait for the explanation of them in a future state; it was maintained that the attribute of justice was as essential to the perfection of God as that of mercy.

To the notions respecting the fall, various answers were given. First, the universality of human depravity was said to be asserted in many passages of Scripture; secondly, it was attested by experience; thirdly, it was not incompatible with the acknowledgment of a natural conscience in man; fourthly, it was the consequence of a wilful act on the part of the first man; and fifthly, the visitation of the consequences of that act on his posterity might be defended by many human analogies.

These arguments were produced in various forms, and with various degrees of ability; but there were two barriers against them which they were quite powerless to break down. The first was that strong feeling I have spoken of already, that these principles concerning God and man are great ultimate principles, which cannot be denied without denying everything that is true and solid, and which must receive the most distinct and solemn acknowledgment, unless we would have all the rest of our belief confused and false. To raise any specific argument, any set of texts, against them was propter vitam vivendi perdere causas—to set aside by reasoning the first witness of reason; by passages from the Bible, that which was its end and substance. This was the irresistible protection of the Unitarian system in the minds of earnest men who had embraced it. There was another equally secure defence to persons of the most opposite character. It consisted in the doctrine which Locke had proclaimed—not in a full, clear, steady contemplation of that doctrine, and all its results, for then Hume's conclusion stared them in the face, then it was felt "There is no

warrant for acknowledging any being, eternal, immaculate, invisible; for of no such being do the senses, or experience arising from the senses, furnish an indication;" but in a loose, popular impression about the doctrine—a feeling spread through society, that experience was in general the only root of knowledge, that you were not to believe much which you could not establish by its evidence. This philosophy, which was commonly recognised by those who assailed Unitarianism, as well as by those who defended it, gave to the arguments of the former the strangest appearance of inconsistency. They were simply affirming something to be revealed or made known to man, which according to his nature or constitution, as they understood it, could not be revealed to him. He was to learn and receive something which he could not learn and receive; a condition, the Unitarians rightly said, which even Papists had not exacted; for in the days when Popery had made its great demands on men's faith this doctrine of experience was not understood. And this demand, they went on to say, you urge upon us at a time when the very idea of a body which can make it has been scattered to the winds. A Catholic Church, if there could be such a thing, a body having divine and mysterious endowments, might with some consistency claim an assent to a mysterious dogma. But your Confession of Augsburg has dispersed that dream. You have constituted societies which you may call churches, or what you will, but which do not and cannot pretend that they have any authority over the world. They may lay down what canons or maxims they please for their individual members; they have the same right of private legislation—of making rules for their own government, be they ever so absurd, which every other corporation possesses. But the only warrant for imposing an inexplicable creed upon mankind is gone. Each portion of mankind has its own habits, maxims, opinions; each man his own particular judgments, which he has a right to exercise and defend against the world; there are a few common principles, admitted alike by saint, by savage, and by sage, but these, so far from being identical with those incomprehensible doctrines, are the very reverse of them.

Never surely were more plausible opinions promulgated in the world than these; never any which seemed to carry with them a more natural and less painful demonstration. To divines, they seemed a deliverance from the strangest intellectual confusions; to easy and comfortable men, the removal of an inexplicable burden from their consciences; to those who desired to be philosophical, the satisfaction of their longing; to those who disliked extremes, a convenient refuge from the difficulties of belief, and the dreariness of infidelity. But the more such persons crowded into the ranks of Unitarianism—(not in general by an open renunciation of their former creeds, but by habitually and practically confessing a disbelief in them)—the more were those who had adopted it on the other more positive grounds, startled and confounded. With deep awe they had acknowledged the Unity of God, as the unfathomable foundation of thought, and faith, and being. Now they heard that unity asserted, not as mysterious and unfathomable, but as the escape from mystery. It was a purely material notion; all the arguments in its favour were deduced from the impossibility and contradiction which a Trinity presents when it is contemplated materially. But where they asked themselves is unity in matter? Is not matter infinitely divisible? Can this be the way of escaping from contradictions? Can this be the way to be rational? Throwing aside everything but materialism—dismissing every thought that lies beyond it—we are then called upon to recognise an idea, of which matter affords no realisation—scarcely the indication! Such thoughts brooded in their minds, and led them by very slow processes and through bitter conflicts to the conviction: "If the Unity of God is to be asserted it must be asserted on quite different grounds from those which the so-called Unitarians have chosen, and the true assertion of it may possibly be contained in those creeds which we have rejected."

On the popular supporters of Unitarianism such arguments made no impression. They probably received them with indignation. What! they would have said, Do you suppose we meant a metaphysical unity? we meant to escape from all subtleties—the Bible is written for simple

people. I have hinted already that this language was unfortunate; they appealed unto Cæsar—unto Cæsar they must go. They wished to be tried by simple people; it remained to be seen whether there was that in their scheme to which the hearts of simple people responded. But, before that experiment was made the more thoughtful disciples of Unitarianism began to be struck with another strange contradiction between the principles on which it rested and the system in which they are embodied. The Unitarians were the great assertors of the absolute unqualified love of God, in opposition to all mythologies and theologies which had preceded. And Unitarianism was the first of all theologies or mythologies which denied that the Almighty had, in His own person, by some act of condescension and sacrifice, interfered to redress the evils and miseries of His creatures! Every pagan religion had acknowledged the need of an incarnation; the modern Jew and Mahometan, nominally rejecting it, is yet continually dreaming of it and testifying of its necessity: it was reserved for this religion to make it the greatest evidence and proof of love in a Divine Being, that He merely pardons those who have filled the world with misery; that He has never shared in it; never wrestled with it; never devised any means, save that of sending a wise teacher, for delivering mankind out of it.

Again; to a man who really cherished with earnest affection the thought, "God is a universal Father, His creatures cannot be merely the subjects of a curse," what a strange reflection it must have been —"And yet, according to those doctrines which I hold, He is not, and cannot be, a Father. The word means nothing. It is a lazy inappropriate synonym of Maker, for it is the very glory of my creed to do that which no other has done; first to deny that there is any human bond between men and God; secondly, to deny that they have in themselves any capacity, different from that which an animal has, of receiving impulses from God."

Once more; to purify men of their false notions of morality, to establish religion on the basis of morality, and to reveal the existence of another world than the present, were, according to Unitarianism, the

objects of Christ's appearance in the world, and the objects which the reformers of His doctrine were to keep steadily in sight. For this end they were to desire the removal of all systems and institutions which had kept alive a false faith and a distorted notion of the character of God. "But who," the disappointed disciple of this school inquired, "who are the great helpers in this work of reformation?—who show most longing that it should be accomplished? Are they men of deep thought and high devotion, who have been poring in sadness over the condition of society—in solitary chambers crying out, Usque quo, Domine? Are they even poor men, not aiming at some high standard, but feeling the burden and oppression of the universe, and believing that God could not have meant so many of His creatures to live and die, without comfort or hope?—or are they not rather men, who for the most part have preserved a quiet decent level tone of mind and character; who belong to the easy, respectable, prosperous classes, and who are actually impatient of anything which disturbs them with the recollection of an elevated supersensual morality, or of a society based upon self-sacrifice?"

Alas! he will have said, and is it for this only that I have parted with all the dreams of my childhood? I thought in my infancy that a kingdom of righteousness, peace, joy, had been set up in the world, and that I was to wait and hope, till that kingdom should rule over all. It has been the glorious discovery of my manhood, that there is no such kingdom here—nothing but a world, in which men are to observe certain rules of behaviour towards each other, to restrain themselves within certain rules of prudence for their own sakes, and to cheer themselves with the prospect of a future world—unknown and undefined—wherein they shall be rewarded if they have not transgressed social decorums, and be forgiven if they have.

Such a picture of the tendencies and ultimate results of the system, must often have presented itself to those who had embraced it with affection, as a deliverance from the dryness and narrowness of Calvinism, and as a witness for the unity and love of God. But these

thoughts would only have stirred powerfully in a few minds if a series of strange movements had not taken place in European society, some of which must have seemed most promising to Unitarians, but which really destroyed the whole credit of their system, depriving it of the patronage of nobles and prelates, and supplying it with no substitute in the sympathies either of the thoughtful or of the poor.

Chapter IV. On the Tendency of the Religious, Philosophical, and Political Movements Which Have Taken Place in Protestant Bodies, since the Middle of the Last Century

Section I. Religious Movements

Methodism—Religious Societies—Search for a Theology.

The History of Methodism, in one of its aspects, belongs to the history of the English Church, and does not therefore form a part of the subject I am now considering. But any considerate reader will admit, that as France has been the centre of the political, and Germany of the philosophical movements of the last hundred years, so England has been the centre of all religious movements which have occurred within the same period. It is not necessary to maintain that the first impulse to them was given in England; Wesley may have derived much of his teaching from Zinzendorf, and the different efforts made by him and others to awaken a more earnest religious feeling, may take chronological precedence of those which our countrymen witnessed: still the form which they assumed here was so much more determinate, their influence so much more extensive, that if we wish to investigate their character generally, we shall find that our own soil is the proper place for the experiment.

It is often said, that the Methodist movement had for its object and its effect the revival of the great principles of the Reformation. There is a sense in which this remark is unquestionably true; but if that sense be not carefully noticed and defined, we may, I think, fall into great mistakes. The Unitarianism which formed so large an element in the

religious sentiments of the eighteenth century was, as we have seen, essentially impersonal. It was so, even in its best form; for those who felt most deeply and earnestly the necessity that great and wide principles should be asserted respecting the unity and character of God, found no way of connecting these principles with the individual conscience. It came out in direct opposition to Calvinism—as an escape from it, and yet as what seemed a consistent deduction from some of its maxims; and the more it advanced towards a mere system of denials, the more it was proclaimed as a deliverance from the narrowness of this theology. Above all, Calvinism had maintained, that a set of individual believers constituted the Church, and were to bear witness against the world; the Unitarians affirmed that no warrant existed for any such protest; that an enlightened age or world was far in advance of those who pretended to be in separation from it; that the great object which such an enlightened world should propose to itself, was the extinction of the idea of an Ecclesia, in whatever shape that idea might present itself.

It was inevitable that, in any strong revival of religious feeling, these notions should be first attacked; in other words that the personal interest of men in religion, and the distinction of those who felt and acknowledged that interest from those who were indifferent to it, should be asserted. Such convictions are characteristic of any strong awakening in men's consciences; they may be said to be the awakening. But then the vague phrase—personal interest in religion—cannot long be adequate to describe the feelings of men who have begun to use it in a real sense. One who knows that he is a person requires a personal object—an abstraction cannot satisfy him. The doctrine therefore that a man is justified by faith, and lives by faith in Christ, became a principal element in the Methodist, as it had been in the early Lutheran teaching; the doctrine that individual believers constitute a peculiar Ecclesia grew out of that; and the Bible began again to be put forth as the poor man's book, which he could receive in its simplicity, though the learned sought to explain it away.

But it is remarkable that the most decided proclamation of these Protestant dogmas grew not out of Methodism itself, but out of a reaction in the minds of those who had been brought, more or less directly, under its influence. The history of the very violent conflicts of the Calvinists, under Toplady and Sir Richard Hill, against Wesley and Fletcher, is abundant evidence of this fact. It is true that the most powerful of the Methodist preachers, Whitfield, joined the opponents of his master and early coadjutor; but it is highly probable that he was led to this step by observing how much his own preaching had tended to stir up affections and feelings in men's minds rather than to give them a firm resting-place, and that he sought in the Calvinistical doctrines for a balance and counteraction to this danger: at all events it is quite certain that though a far greater influence was attributed to him in his lifetime than to Wesley, he left a comparatively insignificant body of disciples. It must then, I conceive, be admitted, that the revival of these Protestant doctrines, though it might be an inseparable accident, was not the essential distinction of Methodism. There was something in it different from the feelings which worked in the minds of the Reformers—nay opposite to them, though not therefore incompatible with them.

I think everyone must admit that Luther and Calvin directed men very much more to the invisible object which men are to contemplate, or to the original source of their faith in the Will of God; and the Methodists very much more to the operations of the Divine Spirit upon their own minds. This distinction is so obvious, and was so clearly brought out in the controversies to which I have alluded, by persons who acknowledged that they had once adopted the Methodist peculiarity themselves, and who shewed clearly that they could not divest themselves of it even while they laboured diligently to speak another language, that it needs not to be established by proofs, though it ought to be very carefully noticed. The denial that it was possible for men to be the subjects of a spiritual influence, was the great characteristic of Unitarianism, and of the age which was imbued with it; the assertion

of the reality of such an influence, and of its continual manifestation, was the distinguishing property of the teaching which disturbed and partially subverted the liberal system.

But there were other peculiarities connected with this. Methodism was not, like Quakerism, the proclamation of a law in each man's own mind, or of a power working there. It was expressly addressed to large masses of men; the power was believed to descend upon them, especially when they were met together; and though every individual was, in an important sense, said to be taken apart and brought into debate with his own conscience, it was not denied that the feeling of a united influence had a great tendency to increase the consciousness of it in each one. All that was most fanatical in the Methodists was undoubtedly connected with this belief, and it gave the most plausible, often the most just ground, for the assertion, that the effects said to be produced by their preaching might be traced wholly to contagion and sympathy, and would disappear when the moving cause had ceased. Still we do not get to the meaning of a fact, merely by using the words "contagion and sympathy" to describe it; fanaticism and even consciously dishonest quackery cannot produce any results unless they have some true principle to work with, and it seems as if the principle involved in Methodism might be one which has often been dawning upon us in our previous inquiries, though we have never yet found any satisfactory development of it. We have often been obliged to ask ourselves, whether these distinct individual acts, on which Protestantism dwells so exclusively, may not, must not, depend at last upon some relation in which men stand to their fellows; whether we can take our start from individuals, and form a society out of them; whether the existence of society be not implied in their existence; and whether, consequently, if each man have a spiritual existence, and be subjected to a spiritual government, there must not be somewhere a spiritual body, of which he should account himself a member? The facts of Methodism may offer but few helps for solving this problem, but as-

suredly they force it upon our attention, and make it more abundantly necessary that we should seek the solution of it somewhere.

There are other points of great importance and interest closely connected with the two to which I have adverted. This proclamation of a spiritual power went forth from men who had been brought up in a university which had the reputation of preserving more of the old Catholic temper than could be found elsewhere, and whose very nickname indicated that they had been more scrupulous and regular than the majority in their devotion to forms and ordinances. Those who are acquainted only with the practices which the Wesleys afterwards tolerated, and which their followers regard as characteristic of their system, would not easily believe how much importance they attached in the outset of their career to the episcopal ordination of ministers. Nevertheless a certain impatience of order—nay, a conviction that it ought to be broken through—might be discovered in them from the first. It seemed to them that there was an immense body of human souls, which had no national position, and of which the nation took no account. The upper classes in England cared not much for religious ministrations, but they might have them if they would; the middle class, if they were not particularly well affected to the National Church, had provided for themselves in different organised and tolerated sects; but the class below these, the mob, the canaille, as they were then named by their despisers, the masses, as they are now called by their flatterers, were as little regarded by the churchman who inherited the family living, as by the dissenting minister who received his appointment from the tradesmen of the market town. To these, therefore, the Methodists, like the friars of old, addressed themselves; in them they, like those friars, awakened thoughts and hopes to which their educated countrymen had appeared for a long time to be strangers; in providing for their wants, like the friars, they invaded the privileges of the parochial (both alike would have called them the secular) clergy. I know not in what way Bishop Lavington maintained the position that the enthusiasm of the Methodists and of the Papists

had many points in common; but no one who considers these facts, or a hundred others connected with the peculiar superstitions to which they respectively gave currency, will doubt that he may have found very plausible arguments in favour of his opinion. At all events, it must, I think, be admitted, that Methodism had some important peculiarities which it did not derive from Protestantism, and with which a pure exclusive Protestantism can scarcely co-exist.

2. The practical belief of a spiritual operation upon the minds and the hearts of men, may be said to constitute Methodism so far as it is a creed. But as soon as the creed had obtained prevalency, a system developed itself, which, as Mr. Southey has remarked, is a more complete specimen of organisation than any which has been produced in Europe since the days of Loyola. The more this organisation is examined, the less it seems to have to do with any spiritual principle; the more evidently it proves itself to be an invention of human policy. This assertion will scarcely be denied by the Wesleyans themselves; though they are stronger than most in asserting the principle of divine inspiration in individuals, they have pretended less than almost any that their scheme had a divine origin; they attribute it with scarcely any hesitation to the wisdom and sagacity of their founder and of his successors. In one respect only is there a resemblance between the system and that which called it into existence: the spiritual feelings of the Wesleyans led them to overlook national distinctions; the system of the Methodists is essentially extra-national. It is the effort to establish a powerful government in the heart of a nation, which at no point shall impinge upon, or come into contact with, the government of the nation. It differs from the systems of the old dissenting sects in this important point; the limits of each of them are defined by the profession of some peculiar tenet in which they differ from the others, and from the rest of Christendom; that of the Wesleyans, professing no tenet which is not recognised or tolerated by the National Church, simply exists to assert their own independence of it, and the importance of such an organisation as theirs for the conversion of mankind.

In this respect Wesleyanism is an indication and specimen of the religious tendencies which prevail in this age very far beyond the immediate circle of its influence. The religious feeling of the last century has given birth to religious societies, between which and their parent one finds it difficult, for some time, to discover a feature of resemblance. The first tended to draw men into themselves; the last throw them altogether out of themselves. The first was grounded upon the acknowledgment of a directly spiritual influence, as the only source of any moral change in the condition of individuals or of the world; the latter are constructed upon the most earthly principles, and seem to attribute all power to them. Accordingly the contrast has been felt, as well by the good men who took part in the movements of the last age and have survived them, as by the younger men who have grown up under their teaching. The first confess, with something of timidity, as if they were afraid of appearing to disparage the fruits of a tree which they believe to have been planted by a divine hand, that the restless turmoil and bustle of a modern religious life is not what they or their fellow-labourers would have wished to produce; the latter in more open, sometimes in more angry language, complain, that under spiritual words and pretexts there has grown up amongst us a great machinery—complicated, noisy, but inefficient to produce any great results; acknowledging no law in its workings, save certain vulgar maxims, which are applicable only to trade, if even trade itself do not demand principles of a simpler and nobler kind. Nevertheless we find the very persons who make these complaints confessing that they know not how to dispense with this machinery, for that there must be some method of combined voluntary action, grounded not upon our relations to each other as members of a state, but upon some higher and more universal relation. Here again then we are struck with indications of a Catholic feeling arising out of the very heart of Protestantism.

3. The religious feelings of our age, in both the forms which they have taken, seem almost incompatible with the existence of a

positive theology. Men studied the movements and operations of their own minds till these and their endless vicissitudes acquired such an absorbing interest, that the idea of the absolute and the permanent was almost lost. They fled from these inward contemplations to occupy themselves with an external mechanism, which they believed was meant to promote the glory of God; how difficult not to believe that any meditation upon His being and nature was an idle occupation for schoolmen! how difficult not to feel an entire alienation of mind from such studies! Therefore it has come to pass that the main part of what is called theology in Great Britain of late years has been an attempt to systematise individual experiences, or else to discover some general theory about the condition and prospects of the world at large. Still the craving in men's hearts after something deeper and larger than this can never be extinct; the literature of past times, which bears witness that men have ventured into a more awful sanctuary, was not wholly closed; and by degrees, either weariness of merely experimental divinity and mere views about the world, or a conviction that they cannot subsist alone, has led to the inquiry, whether that which was once called Theology be a reality or only a dream?

In Germany, where outward religious excitements are so few, where students are students in the strictest sense, and where habits of meditation are assiduously cultivated, those who had felt the evangelical influence, and had been delivered by it from the materialism of the last age, soon perceived that, unless this influence led to a search for theological principles, it would melt away, or only produce a succession of fever paroxysms. They therefore applied themselves earnestly to consider how the religious feelings, without being lost or weakened, could be turned in this direction. They had seen the mischiefs which the dry dogmatism of the Lutheran and Calvinistical bodies had produced; they had seen that the spirit of man, whenever it was strongly stirred, became impatient of this dogmatism, and sought to escape from it by making spiritual motives and consciousnesses all in all. Did not these observations prove that the affections

—the seat of these consciousnesses—are the proper and appointed organs of religious belief? And may it not be, that all religion—so far as it acts from without—is simply an orderly cultivation of these affections; educing them, and enabling them to perceive those objects and that character which must correspond to their wants, and which are fitted to give them a living and permanent form? Every one must perceive how much there was in the circumstances of the age to suggest the thought, that this is the all-comprehending, all-satisfying idea of Christianity. It was in fact the scientific methodism of the Evangelical feelings and tendencies, which at once vindicated them from the charge of being incoherent and fanatical, and promised them an escape from the peril of becoming so. It seemed to justify much in the Scriptures which philosophical men in the last age had given up as untenable, and at the same time to make the abandonment of much which religious men had thought indispensable, no longer unsafe. It was a strange contradiction upon this hypothesis to believe, that the all-perfect Being should manifest himself to men in one of their own nature; that was evidently the form in which alone he could present himself as an object to their affections, and in which the affections witnessed that they needed he should present himself. Symbols which brought this image more near to men's hearts and sympathies, carried in them an evidence of their truth which no abuse of them could set aside, and they preserve us from the tendency of mere intellectual dogmatism. On the other hand, the history of the way in which the divine manifestation took place might, perhaps, be open to criticism. Criticism could do no harm by dealing severely with the shell of it; for the kernel within was something which the affections could not afford to part with, and would defend, in defiance of all efforts to rob them of it. The criticism of the last age, because this principle was not admitted, was generally false. Much had been thrown away as superfluous which the affections felt to be necessary: many things perhaps suffered to remain against which they protested. For it will be found, say these teachers, that they reject as incongruous with themselves

whatever the understanding on other grounds insists should be thrown aside. "Upon this principle we are to deal with the Jewish records; they explain how the religious feelings of a certain nation were awakened; but we must not invest them with an exclusive dignity; we must not make Christianity dependent upon them. The affections being in all men, every history and every theology will contain hints of the efforts which men have made to discover what they needed for this portion of their being; every scheme of philosophy (though philosophy has a distinct province of its own), will have tried to methodise these hints. Christianity must be looked upon as the announcement to men of what they had been seeking after."

Though some of these views may be very offensive to those who compose the evangelical school in this country, they certainly have been adopted by men of deep thought and learning, and as I believe of simple, earnest piety, in the most thoughtful country of Europe, as the only scheme of theology which a person starting from the evangelical premises, and admitting no others to be sound and true, can consistently acknowledge. And I do not believe that the history of the progress of this doctrine in the country which gave it birth, will prove that they were wrong. If indeed it be asked whether it has been found in practice, that those who embraced this scheme could abide in it, however elaborated and fenced it may have been by the art of a clear logical understanding, sustaining a devout and honest heart, I imagine the answer would be, No. Those who have taken up this theory have been compelled either to advance or to retreat. The principle of it is, that the manifestation of Christ is the one great fact in the Bible history, to which all others are subordinate, and which we may continue to recognise, even though we should be compelled to reject many of the records which have been supposed to foretell it, as well as some parts of the story which contains it. To this fact the believer in this system clings as the deliverance from large Pantheistic notions about the Godhead, and as the warrant and protection for that personal religion which he takes to be the especial characteristic of

Protestantism. But in following out the plan of discriminating between that which men must receive as congenial to their inward feelings and wants, and that which belongs only to outward form and history, it has been found that the recognition of a personal object has evaporated altogether. Our Lord's life does but embody certain great ideas and principles, which have been at work in men's hearts at all times; which probably did exhibit themselves very remarkably in Him, and may have seemed to His affectionate, credulous, or interested disciples, to exhibit themselves in Him as they never did or could in any other; but which can be contemplated by us apart from the accidental form which they assumed in that or in any age, as principles appertaining to our general humanity. Such is one result of this method—a result, it will be seen, as directly in opposition as any that can well be conceived to the feelings and intentions of its originator, and which yet has seemed to be merely a natural deduction from it. On the other hand, many of those who would have been most inclined, by the habits of their minds and the mode of their initiation into Christianity, to adopt this form of theology, and who probably did adopt it, have been led more and more to feel that the doctrine of a personal manifestation of God cannot rest merely upon the individual experience or feeling of its necessity, however deeply they acknowledge that experience in themselves and would wish to produce it in others; that it must be sustained by a still more awful truth, and that that truth must in some sense have been given to men in order that they might enter into it. This, I apprehend, is a faith which is every day growing to greater strength in many serious German minds, and which must in due time bear important fruits. What these fruits may be, I shall not here inquire. This fact I conceive is at all events established, that as there is a Catholic tendency even in those views concerning spiritual influence, and in those concerning outward organisation, which seem at first sight to be of the most exclusively Protestant character, so likewise there is a Catholic tendency in that theology which can be traced most directly to a Protestant origin. Even that system which

builds theology upon something purely internal, yet makes the idea of a divine manifestation or incarnation its central idea, and connects with this the use of outward symbols, and two opposite schemes which have grown up by the side of it and seem to have developed themselves out of it, bear unequivocal witness that Protestant Germany cannot be content with a purely Protestant system. Catholicism it must have either in the form of Pantheism, or of definite Christianity.

I said that Unitarianism in the form which it took in the last century was crushed, and only not extinguished, by the Evangelical movement. But it was susceptible of another form, which it has assumed among the descendants of the English Puritan colonists of North America. The coating of dry materialism with which it was associated, and from which it appeared to be inseparable, has been cast away; the orthodox systems are charged by the modern Unitarians with disregard of man's spiritual nature and his spiritual powers; the idea of a divine humanity in one person is only rejected because it interferes with the acknowledgment of it in every one. It is not pretended by these teachers that the idea of the Divine Being can be otherwise than a mysterious idea; no attempt is made to refute the old doctrine of Christendom by exhibiting its absurd inconsistency with notions which are applicable to sensible things; it is rather accused of being formal and systematic, of making accurate distinctions when all ought to be left vague and indeterminate. Sabellianism has in fact superseded Socinianism.

The views of the modern school respecting the world or the age, are also different from those of their predecessors. Everything is growing and progressive; the existing age sees further than its predecessors, and can afford to reject much which they believed. But the age is only to be contemplated in a few illuminated persons who are setting themselves in opposition to the ordinary feelings and habits of their contemporaries. The idea of an Ecclesia has thus come to light in another form, and in a very remarkable form, for it is assumed that the Ecclesia (a very narrow and exclusive one, consisting of men of genius and intellect,) is the proper world of which what is called the

world is only the counterfeit. Such is modern Unitarianism, against which the different sects in America feel that they have need to strive with great earnestness, and of which they say, I believe most truly, that it makes quite as little appeal to the conscience, has as little to do with the life and heart of men, as that which it has succeeded. The wise members of these sects affirm (experience will soon show whether they are mistaken) that between this Unitarianism and Pantheism there is only an imaginary boundary, which must soon be transgressed. But neither of their assertions acts with any great power as a check upon the progress of the system. The Americans are craving for something which is Catholic, and not sectarian. This system appears to have that merit, and it is a common opinion that either Unitarianism or Romanism will overspread America, or that the two will divide it between them. If there be no Catholicism which is not identical with one of these schemes, I cannot doubt that they are right.

Some allusion has been made to a feeling of discontent in the minds of earnest and pious Scotchmen with the Necessitarian system, which has assumed in that country the name and reputation of the old Calvinism. There, as in Germany, though for somewhat different reasons, men cannot be content with mere individual feelings or mere schemes of action; they require a theology. Now the great solitary principle of Scotch theology, that the Will of God is the original to which everything that is real in the universe or in man must be referred, may, as we have seen, take two entirely opposite forms. It may be an assertion, that there is a sovereign over the world who disposes of all things and persons according to his pleasure; it may be an assertion that there is one from whom all good is derived, all evil being the contrary of his nature and the resistance to his purpose. As the former of these views became more and more characteristic of the new Calvinism, the latter began to be proclaimed as the only principle which is consistent with Scripture by a small minority of Scotch divines, whose zeal, love, and in many cases knowledge also, compensated for their numerical weakness. After a short but violent struggle, they were excluded from

the Kirk; the doctrine of the Universal Love of God being declared to be incompatible with its formularies and its existence. But the fact that such a principle once proclaimed can never be suppressed by any efforts of any body of men, is not the only one which makes this apparently insignificant demonstration of great importance to those who are taking account of the religious tendencies of this age. We have seen how the idea of the incarnation or manifestation of God in the person of man has presented itself to the Evangelical Germans as that which must be the groundwork of religion, if there be a religion, and how remarkably this question, whether the incarnation be a fact or only a dream, has become the turning point of all theological controversies there. Thus that Church body which was created to witness of justification by faith, has found that it must have a deeper ground than this to rest upon, if it rest at all. Again we have seen how among the Unitarians in America—the body which imagined that it existed to protest against the possibility of God taking the nature of man—language has become prevalent and popular which, however vague and however unlike the doctrine of a divine humiliation, yet involves all the difficulty and mystery belonging to that doctrine. Yet neither of these changes seem to me so remarkable as the fact, that Scotchmen, trained from their infancy to look upon the fall of man as the only foundation of divinity, and upon the incarnation as only intelligible when regarded as a means of deliverance from the effects of it, should have been led to acknowledge this as the central truth, and to exhibit all other truths in the light of it. Now this is the case with those I have spoken of as protesting against the Calvinism of modern Scotland; all without exception have spoken of the divine manifestation in Christ as that which constitutes Christianity. But it was remarkably the case with the Scotch divine, whose name, for good and for evil, is best known in this country, and whose thoughts have left upon many minds traces which will remain long after the body which bears his name shall have been forgotten. The late Mr. Irving, bred in the straitest school of Presbyterianism, and retaining, I believe to

the last, a vehement admiration for Knox and his principles, was yet led to adopt the conviction, that the doctrine of the Incarnation had been strangely kept out of sight in all Protestant systems; that it is the centre of all divinity; the deeper mystery of the Trinity being at once the foundation upon which it rests, and the truth, to the full knowledge and fruition of which it is to lead us. In the attempt to reassert this doctrine, he was betrayed, it is well known, into the use of strange and perilous language, which was vehemently attacked and often greatly misrepresented—language which a man will, I believe, inevitably adopt who has not quite divested himself of the notion that the Fall is the law of the universe, and is trying to reconcile that Calvinistical theory with the Catholic faith. But Mr. Irving was not content with the bare proclamation of a principle. He felt that this principle must be the foundation of one Catholic Church; that if a Church existed, this must be the truth on which it rests; that if this be a truth, there must be a Church. No man had taken more pains to proclaim the coming of a future and perfect dispensation. But he found that the mere prospect of a Church did not satisfy the language of Scripture, nor the faith of one who had really believed in a divine humanity. The existence of such a divine humanity was not a prospect, but a reality; facts had attested it; the society which was built upon it must be a fact too. But such a Church, he contended, does not exist; it has been, but it has ceased, or is on the point of ceasing to be; it must then be restored; it can only be restored by a divine intervention. There must be a fact embodying the principle of a union of God with man which is the Church; this is the incarnation; there must be an organised body built upon that fact; there must be the manifestation of a spiritual power to attest its existence, and to enable its respective members to perform their functions. The religious public of England might safely indulge their humour, if these be ever safe occasions for jesting, with the evidence which the disciples of this system produced to show that they had been constituted the Church of God in the world. But I maintain that this public cannot set at naught the principles which led men to

desire such evidence, and to accept almost anything as if it were the answer to their wishes. For whereas the three characteristics which we have noticed in our modern religious movements, the first, the recognition of a spiritual influence; the second, the demand for an outward organisation; the third, the craving for a positive theology, have been existing hitherto in the greatest contradiction to each other; each by turns putting itself forth as the great necessity; each by turns crushing and extinguishing the others; here was an attempt to combine them all, and to exhibit them in that relation which I think we all feel to be the right one. If then there be a falsehood in a conception which seems to unite so many elements, all indispensable, yet unsociable—and every fact in the history of Irvingism convinces me that there is a great and terrible falsehood—one would think it must be in the assumption, that there is not already a Catholic Church which is grounded upon a theological truth, possesses a divine organisation, and is endowed with the living Spirit; and that, therefore, it is to be founded in the nineteenth century,

Section II. Philosophical Movements

Feelings respecting man—Poetry and criticism—Pare metaphysics—Eclecticism.

1. At the time when Wesley and his fellow-labourers were proclaiming the doctrine of Spiritual Power and Influence with so much of energy and practical demonstration, the common faith among philosophical men was, that man is a mere creature of flesh and blood. It might be only in the enlightened coteries of France that this doctrine was proclaimed in its breadth and fulness; only in them was it clearly understood how to the processes of digestion, or rather to the mass of matter in which these strange processes go on, may be referred the phenomena of thinking, hoping, loving: elsewhere it was more or less confidently received as an article of faith, that there dwells in our bodily frame, a thing called a soul, which is known chiefly by certain negative definitions, and which will survive death. Nevertheless

the Encyclopedists did not express, in the shape of a proposition, that which was the habit of feeling in the age to which they belonged. "Given matter, to find whether there is anything besides, or whether all things may be reduced under its forms;" this was the problem which the men of that time imagined had been set before them to solve in whatever way they could. The experiments which were made by those who were willing in argument to start from these premises are, it seems to me, profoundly interesting; the results to which they led most satisfactory. Among these we must reckon Hutcheson's discovery of a Moral Sense, and Butler's of a Conscience. Discoveries I have a right to call them, for though the facts which were affirmed had once been taken for granted, they had become a terra incognita; nay, one which, according to the charts then received, could not exist. But like many great facts in the physical world, these were supported by evidence which had much more weight with the next generation than with the one to which it was addressed, and the principle was tacitly recognised that the material is at all events the substantial point of man; that what is spiritual, if it exist at all, is only his accident. Nay, this doctrine, though refuted by all the conduct and by much of the language of those who took part in the evangelical movement, yet formed a very considerable element in their opinions. They taught men that the soul was all in all; that everything was to be postponed to the salvation of the soul; that all men had souls; and that the majority of men were guilty of neglecting their souls: yet if they had been asked whether they really looked upon men generally as spiritual beings, they would have been at a loss to know what the question could mean. "Spiritual beings!" they would have exclaimed, "no, indeed; an unconverted man, a man who has not been brought under the influence of divine grace, is simply a carnal being; there is nothing spiritual about him." They knew that this language in some sense was true; they knew that it denoted something real, and the habits of their time hindered them from perceiving the contradiction which lay concealed in it. "What," they would have said, "is philosophy to us? all we want is to

declare the truth of the Gospel." But philosophy was very much to them notwithstanding; the materialistic philosophy had unconsciously a great hold upon their minds, and it may be safely affirmed, that the most extravagant notions and acts which can be charged upon them, arose from the mingling of this philosophy with the spiritual maxims which they had derived from Christianity. It seemed so utterly strange to men in the eighteenth century, that human beings should exhibit any spiritual feelings or energies, that the appearance of them was almost necessarily looked upon as something not wonderful merely, but startling; not as the effect of a divine influence merely, but of a magical one.

The Methodists, however, led other men into a belief which they did not entertain themselves; they were the unconscious and unacknowledged, but not the least powerful instruments of a great change in the views of philosophers. It is difficult to determine when a change of this kind may be said to have actually taken place; in other words, when a principle which has long struggled with opposition and ridicule may be treated as the recognised and popular creed. The generally admitted test is this. As long as a doctrine is held only in such a country as Germany, a country of recluse students, so long it cannot be said to belong to the age. But so soon as it has become the common talk and profession of the lecturers and coteries of France, we may be sure that it has established its claim to that distinction, notwithstanding any resistance it may still encounter from the opinions and habits which have been bequeathed by previous generations. And this test is especially applicable to the doctrine that man is to be spoken of as a spiritual being. The materialism which the last age implicitly adopted did not fully develope itself in that age; the successors of the Encyclopedists carried their doctrines even further than they had done, and proclaimed them with even more confidence. Nevertheless, they have been losing ground every hour for the last ten or twelve years in the country which seemed to belong to them; till there is scarcely a subject, not even that of physiology and medicine, on which

they have not been vehemently assaulted, nay, from which they have not been almost dislodged. We may, therefore, fairly assume, that a philosophical revolution has occurred, quite as signal as that which distinguished the middle of the seventeenth century, though of a directly opposite kind. The change which we noticed in the phrases of Unitarians and in the whole conception of their system is an index of it, and may help us to understand the character and effects of it. It does not consist in any dry, tame, acknowledgment that man has an immortal part or property which may survive the dissolution of his animal frame; it amounts to nothing less than a distinct affirmation, that those powers and properties which he has within him, of which the senses can take no account, and which are not reducible under any mechanical conditions, are what constitute him a man; and that all the most important part of his history is the history of these powers, of the restraints to which they have been subjected and of what they have achieved. A dynamical philosophy has gradually superseded a mechanical one in those countries where philosophy is considered of a distinct substantive value, and in spite of the influence of trade proper, and trade political, is endeavouring to supplant it in England also. And though I call it a philosophy, I mean something which diffuses itself through the most ordinary and popular literature, and has created a language for itself, which will become in a short time, if it have not become already, familiar to clubs and drawing-rooms.

This language will of course very often touch upon points which religious men have thought belonged exclusively to them. All the facts which concern the internal life and consciousness; all the religious changes which have taken place in different periods of society; all the personal conflicts of Christians, will be spoken of with the deepest interest, as being vastly more important than accounts of wars and state intrigues, and the fall of empires. Men in old times will be admired because they esteemed themselves the subjects of a divine inspiration, and faithfully acted upon that hypothesis. The ages in which faith gave place to infidelity will be denounced as barren and worthless. It will

be affirmed that in our day, as much as in any former one, men ought to exercise faith, and to look upon their different talents as marks of a spiritual vocation. In such expressions, mingled as they generally are with many in which religious men can have no sympathy, it is common to say that there is fraud and insincerity; language is wilfully perverted to mean something different from its common meaning. In many cases there may doubtless be this insincerity; the more fashionable the tone becomes, the more of it there will be. But it is dangerous to prefer such charges, for they are very often untrue, and they may often be retaliated upon ourselves. The case I conceive stands thus. A considerable number of persons in Germany, in France, and in England, believe that they have found an explanation for most or all of the facts which readers of the Bible attribute to the power and the Spirit of God. They believe that the last age had no such explanation, and that its attempts to interpret or deny these facts were ridiculous. Treating human beings, they say, merely as material mechanical creatures, you will always be puzzled with what pious people tell you that they have felt, and with what they have actually done; treat them as spiritual beings, and the difficulty ceases. You can account for everything; their divine interventions, spiritual illuminations, and miracles, were not mere inventions of priestcraft, though priestcraft has much to do with the continued belief of them; they are all to be traced to man's spiritual nature; by observing what theory prevailed in each age on such matters you can form a notion of its character, and of its relation to that which succeeded it. This is a language which perfectly satisfies some persons who can put all these subjects at a distance from them, and speculate about them with entire calmness. There are others, on the contrary, whose phrases will often be very like these—nay, the very same—but in whom they are indications of an entirely different state of mind. These are men who do not consider it their duty or vocation to explain away facts, or to philosophise upon them; they cannot look at anything as apart from themselves; when they talk of sufferings and conflicts, they are not expounding a scheme of metaphysics, they

are speaking of what they have known and what they can therefore sympathise with in others. Such persons cannot adopt the old religious language, because it seems to set aside facts which they feel to be certain; it seems to deny that a man is anything in himself; that he has an eye wherewith he is to receive light. But neither can they wholly reject this old religious language; they feel inwardly that the philosophical is no substitute for it; they feel that the words about gifts and inspirations did mean something more than that a man has all powers within him; they feel that an abdication of powers, a denial of self, is the characteristic of all really honest men; they feel that humility, and not exaltation, the acknowledgment of receiving, not the boast of possessing, ought to be the criterion of spiritual excellence. They therefore hover between the two forms of language, using either as the feeling of the weakness or falsehood of the other predominates, often committing the grossest inconsistencies, often uttering the most absurd extravagancies, but proving the honesty of their intentions more by these inconsistencies and extravagancies than by much which seems to their admirers coherent and reasonable; and I believe laying religious men, but especially divines, under an obligation to inquire what this perplexity means, and whether their own modes of speaking or thinking, the indistinctness of their minds, or the faithlessness of their hearts, may not have given occasion to it.

2. I attributed much, both of the good and evil which distinguished the last age, to the exclusive study of Natural Philosophy. Self-forgetfulness and the sense of something permanent and absolute distinct from us, accompanied with a tendency to overlook the importance of man altogether, and to regard God as merely a synonym of nature, are habits of mind, which seem so much connected with this pursuit, that wise men have alternately exalted it as the one pure and safe region for the soul to dwell in, and have fled from it as dreary and infectious.

In our day the most vehement efforts have been made by eminent individuals and by societies to assert the superiority of this study to all others; the certainty of its conclusions and its progressive improve-

ments have been set in strong contrast with the insecurity of all moral principles, when they are not mere commonplaces, equally obvious to the savage and the sage; the mighty practical results of it, which every one must recognise, have been appealed to as proving its claim to be the useful, and therefore the precious, part of knowledge. Yet all these arguments and encouragements have been insufficient to excite any ardent zeal for it in the minds of those young men who most represent the character of the age, or are most likely to stamp it with their own—insufficient to deter them from devoting themselves to the inquiries and speculations which are pronounced to be without any present advantage or promise of fruit hereafter. The Utilitarian does not acknowledge the ad hominem appeal of the natural philosopher; he declares that there are more useful studies than that of the stars or of strata. Religious men are in vain besought to believe that the great evidences of the divine existence and character are to be found in the outward universe: their tendency, as we have seen, is to reflect almost exclusively upon the feelings which belong to themselves. But above all, nature itself has been, to a very great extent, conquered from the natural philosopher. Sympathies have been discovered between the beholder and the objects which are presented to him, and attempts to express these sympathies or investigate the conditions and laws under which they exist have become the favourite, are threatening to become the exclusive, occupation of the more thoughtful and abstracted men in this time. A few hints respecting this important revolution are necessary in this place. I am quite unable to do justice to the subject; but the tendencies of our modern poetry and criticism cannot be overlooked by anyone who is studying the influences which are acting upon himself and his fellows.

From about the middle of the last century, we may trace the commencement of a poetry which had a much more direct and substantive reference to the outward universe than that of earlier periods. The doings of men, as well as the songs in which they were celebrated, had become artificial and conventional: those whom domestic habits had

inspired with a dislike of the hollowness of general society, or whom their early cultivation had taught to desire something more living and permanent than the modes of a particular generation, took refuge in nature. To their simple and sincere utterances succeeded violent paroxysms of rapture, concerning its more magnificent images, and most vague and abortive efforts to describe them. But both these forms of writing were rather indications that a new state of feeling was at hand than themselves the expression of it. Presently European society was shaken by an earthquake; conventions were loosened or dissolved; the links between the past and the present were snapt asunder; passions which had been smothered or icebound by the rules of etiquette broke forth; men in different classes remembered that under some conditions or other they had common rights and a common humanity; the question what law are we to obey, if old observances and decorums can no longer command us, began to be earnestly discussed. The admiration and love of nature became strangely connected with all these movements of the human heart and will, and different forms of poetry appeared to illustrate and exhibit the connexion. One form of it presented us with chivalrous legends of other days, enabling us to feel that there was still a bond between us and them, though the institutions which they had bequeathed might be perishing. In this poetry scenes in nature came forth as a gallery of pictures, which had lasted for generations, and upon which the heroes as well as the readers of the poem had gazed. Another form of it expressed the wailings of those who had been prematurely disgusted with society, or had not been able to reconcile its demands with their desire for individual independence. All the storms and tumults in nature echoed these discontents and discords; its more peaceful scenes were welcomed as the only medicine for them. A third was the calm utterance of a calm mind, which had sought to discover what bonds of fellowship existed between it and men of all different orders and degrees. Nature was evidently a common thing in which lord and peasant might participate, from which no prescriptions and formalities could exclude. A fourth was

of a far more comprehensive, if not of a deeper quality. It exhibited the efforts of a profound thinker to find a principle of life and action, and that principle is expressed in some such language as this— The perfection of a man is to be in harmony with nature.

Here then we are arrived at a result towards which the other experiments were evidently tending, a result of the very last practical importance, which is likely to produce a greater influence on the period which follows one of remarkable poetical genius and activity than on that period itself. But since many persons find it difficult to understand how works of the imagination can have become so involved with views belonging directly to human life and action since they are apt to suppose that the only moral effect of such works is to create and strengthen good or bad feelings and impressions, not to elucidate or to establish principles—I must endeavour to trace the steps by which they have acquired this new character.

In the last age it was customary to divide men of letters into two classes—those who followed the vagrant impulses of genius, and those who were content to subject themselves to rules and forms. The first received a patronising and qualified admiration, but they were beacons rather than examples; the latter because they had less originality might be more safely followed. The impulse of men just recovering the feeling that they had strange powers within them was exactly to reverse this decision, to assert the prerogatives of genius, to boast of its chartered libertinism, and to denounce forms as inconsistent with it. But this is a language which cannot last long: when men began to compare the writings which have stood for ages with those which affect their nature and freedom, it was perceived that the secret of power does not lie in its carelessness or vagrancy; that wantonness is allied to weakness; that it is the very characteristic of genius to own principles, not to despise them. It has been shown that the last age was not at all too careful in asserting the existence of laws to which all art and poetry must conform itself; it only mistook the character of those laws; it supposed them to be mere rules respecting the outsides of expression

and construction, not forms belonging to the thought and mind itself. If there be such principles and forms, then the intuition of them, accompanied with the capacity of working according to them, is the very quality of genius, and the study of works of genius in a spirit of submission, not of dictation, is the way of obtaining that knowledge which the artificer possessed. There may be a purely creative intuition which does not necessarily imply consciousness of the laws which it follows; there may be a critical intuition which discovers them after they have been already exhibited in practice, and is not necessarily associated with the faculty of embodying that which it recognises; but the critic is no further a judge of the poet than as he is able to perceive when he has departed from the principles which give coherency and harmony to his work. These doctrines, which seem to carry in them a witness of their truth, a witness confirmed as much by the success of those who have followed them in their criticism of great authors as by the feebleness and confusions of their predecessors, have, however, necessarily led to further reflections. What are these laws and forms, and where are they to be sought for? Are they laws of nature, or laws of the mind? Is the man of genius the author of them, or does he merely perceive them, and adapt himself to them? It has been found impossible to affirm either position, to adopt either form of language as the sufficient and exclusive one. Those who endeavour to do so, are soon seen to contradict themselves; some unconscious phrase asserts in one sentence that which was denied in the previous one. It seems to follow, that the law of the imagination is a law of fellowship or inter-communion with nature; you cannot describe it in any terms which do not imply this to be the case; you cannot go deeper than to say, that it creates only so far as it sees, and that it sees only so far as it has the faculty of creating; just as sight and sound can neither be predicated solely of the eye nor of the thing beheld, of the ear nor of the thing heard, but are the product of both.

Now if we admit, as I think we may, that the clear apprehension of this position, and of the manifold consequences which flow from it

in reference to poetry and the arts generally, has been reserved for our time; that as it was the characteristic task of the last age to discover the laws of the physical world, as it is in itself, so it has been the characteristic task of this age to investigate the relations in which men stand to that physical world; we need not wonder if this study, like the other, should seem to those who have made any proficiency in it all-satisfying, if it should seem to them to determine the very ends and conditions of man's being. No one who has considered thoughtfully the history of astronomy, of logic, or of political economy, would be surprised to hear that any study in any age has assumed to itself the character of the universal, all-including study. But in this case I cannot help feeling that there is still a stronger reason. I cannot but think that those who have detected this law of the imagination—this law of sympathy and communion between themselves and that which is distinct from them, have been assailed by a conviction which they cannot resist or part with, that some such law of communion is the law of their whole life; that life is an unintelligible blank without it; that here must be the key to its deepest mysteries. Neither can I doubt that they feel they have been in some way or other robbed and cheated of this truth, and that it is time to assert it, or recover it. And therefore, when I hear persons affirming, that harmony with nature or the universe is the great attainment of the wisest and greatest man; when I hear them drawing from this proposition the natural corollary, that the artist or poet is the elect man, the demigod of the world; when I hear it maintained, that all the religious systems which have existed have been attempts to embody a theory of man's relations with this universe; that the forms which are suitable to express these relations in one age become unsuitable in another; that the gifted man knows at what moment the old forms have worn themselves out and must be rejected, and new forms must be invented; when I hear such language as this—though I believe that greater danger lurks in it than in any phrases which have ever been current in any age; though it seems to me likely to subvert all acknowledgment of fixed, unchangeable truth, and to perpetuate and sanctify

that tyranny of modes and fashions against which it feigns to protest —yet I cannot treat it merely as the quackery of talking men, merely as the fanaticism of men who have seen one fact, and wish to explain all facts by that; still less merely as a deliberate wickedness which wishes to undermine the faith of mankind under a show of paying it compliments. There may be persons in abundance who practise this quackery, are possessed by this fanaticism, and hope to accomplish this wicked design; but they did not invent these expressions, they have only adopted them as they would in the last age have adopted its cant which they now can afford to despise. The sincere minds who have given currency to this tone of thought and speech, or to whom it conveys a real meaning, will exhibit their difference from the rest by their inconsistency. At one moment you will hear them proclaim harmony with nature to be the great object of all men's strivings; the next you will find them expressing the deepest admiration for those who have believed that they were sent into the world to contend against all those inclinations and appetites which connected them with nature and the outward world; who believed this to be the characteristic glory of men, and who exhorted others to be men by doing the like. One while they worship the artist because he submitted himself to nature, one while because he humbled nature to himself, and created it afresh; first they will speak as if the universe were created that poets and artists might live and reign, and as if all who had not their faculty, or the faculty of admiring and worshipping them, ought to be hunted out of it; then they will declare that the great difference between these poets and artists and others is, that they have more sense of a common humanity, and that there ought to be a spiritual commonwealth in which the meanest labourer and serf should feel that he had a portion. Now they can interpret all religious systems as imperfect attempts to explain the relations between man and the universe, and to embody the sense of those relations in certain forms; presently you will find them extolling some great Reformer or Iconoclast, whose peculiarity has been that he utterly repudiated those parts of the popular system which were the

links between man and nature, as the spurious outgrowths of a later time when men had lost their sense of a connexion with a Being above themselves, and therefore had bowed down to images and likenesses of the things below them; and that he reasserted the worth and meaning of these old forms which witnessed for the fact of their higher relation.

These are strange inconsistencies, but they are honourable inconsistencies; they prove those who fall into them to be earnestly and affectionately desirous to hold what is true, even when it crosses and interferes with views which they regard, or think they regard, as the climax of all past discoveries and revelations.

And therefore it is impossible not to believe that there is something in these views which ought to be upheld, and which may be upheld, not amidst contradictions, which make the practical application of them impossible, but in conjunction with principles which determine their meaning and prove their reality. We cannot say to these men, You must cast aside this faith in the existence of bonds between man and the universe; these bonds exist—they have been felt and realised the more they are felt and realised the better. Neither can we say to them, There is an individual soul in you which is more precious to you than all these bonds; they will go all lengths with you in that affirmation; they have been generally bred in a school of pure, exclusive Protestantism; they believe in this individual soul; they all but worship it. Nevertheless they feel that there are human bonds—bonds not merely for the individual soul, but for humanity; they feel that these must be acknowledged quite as much as the needs of the individual soul; that that soul does itself witness of them. But they have been told by their Protestant teachers, that there are no such bonds between humanity and God; He is connected only with the individual; all forms signifying any more general relation than this are unmeaning and obsolete. They have been told this; they have learnt the lesson; they believe it as heartily as such a lesson can be believed. Only they believe also, that if this be true, then humanity must seek its happiness in fellowship with something else than God, or rather must make its god or its gods

out of objects which can have living intercourse with it. And strangely agonizing as the thought may be, that after all, this humanity has had nothing firm to rest upon, or to commune with; that the only objects it could admire and love have been changing their aspects continually, and have received their beauty from the mind of the beholder; that therefore the idols have been changed with every new period; and that the incalculably few men who could discern a meaning in those things they conversed with, have been the real gods, because the god-makers of the universe; painful as it may be thus practically to deny the existence of any constant Being who has held the fragments of humanity together, even while you are in the very act of asserting that they are bound together, and thus to treat the idolatry which has been the apparent cause of all its divisions as the one only explanation of its unity, even this must be borne, because facts seem to enforce these conclusions though conscience and reason may revolt against them. Is it not the fact, say these men, that all Protestant systems—the last, the most perfect, attempts at a religious system—are crumbling in pieces? They have swallowed up all previous forms of faith, now they are proving themselves to be weak and good for nothing. Men have discovered wants in themselves which such systems cannot satisfy; it is idle to pretend that these narrow platforms can ever be a ground for mankind to rest upon; they are not wide enough for a few individuals to stand together upon without quarrelling and kicking. Their very merit consisted in the exclusiveness, as well of their admissions as of their objects. A few who have particular sympathies on certain points of religion, are drawn together in them; but the study of nature, of art, of man, they confess, belongs to another sphere from theirs; they may tolerate it, or prohibit it, but with it their religion or their fellowship has nothing to do, or if they do endeavour to find a connexion it is by making these studies dishonest; by compelling them to say what they do not say; by changing their object from the investigation of truth into the confirmation of certain pre-established maxims. This is language which we may hear in all quarters. I beseech divines, and the men who

influence the religious feelings of this age, earnestly to ponder it, and to consider what it indicates.

3. Before either of the tendencies of which I have been speaking had decidedly manifested itself, the question respecting the grounds of knowledge which was supposed to be settled by Locke had been submitted to a new and a most rigid examination. For a long time a ridiculous notion prevailed here, and in Scotland, in reference to the eminent German thinker who conducted this investigation. It was seriously believed that he had been swayed by the impulses of a vagrant and mystical imagination; nay even philosophical writers were not ashamed to insinuate that the British public might form a tolerably fair conception of the metaphysics of their neighbours, from the wild freaks which were exhibited in the fictions of some of their least cultivated or most immature poets. It is now, however, well understood that the persons who sanctioned this pious fraud were really deterred from the study of this author, not by the looseness, but by the severity of his logic; by the absence in him of all those vague and popular modes of thought and speech to which they had accustomed themselves and their readers. He entered upon his inquiry with no theological bias which could make him averse from the system of Locke merely because it had led to infidel results; with the very strongest dislike of a system which an earlier German philosopher had set up in opposition to the worship of experience; with a conscience which admonished him to reject every customary notion and opinion if it hindered him in the pursuit of truth; with an understanding adapted to the most calm and patient analysis. Those who understand most thoroughly the tests by which physical facts and laws have been ascertained, will probably pay most respect to the course of critical inquiry which led him to assign a large and most important province to experience, and then, for the sake of saving that province from the destruction with which its extravagant pretensions threatened it, to show what region lies beyond it, and by what faculty that region is cognisable. But those who are least competent to judge of these merits must yet perceive that this

doctrine has been subject to the most pelting storm of ridicule and abuse; has been resisted not only by the most accomplished intellects in Europe, but (which is more important) by all the habits of thought which had rooted themselves in the minds of ordinary men; has had as many appearances and plausibilities to oppose it, as the Copernican doctrine, or any other that is most startling, and yet has not merely stood its ground but has forced itself under one modification or other into the speculations of thoughtful men, and is moulding the language and opinions of those who have the least comprehension of its meaning, or are most disinclined to acknowledge its truth.

How important this fact is, in a theological point of view, may be judged from one circumstance. English writers continually use the word rationalism as if it designated one set of opinions or one mode of thought. But there is the widest difference between the rationalism of the last century and the rationalism of this—between that which grew up under the patronage of Locke, and that which is derived from the influence of Kant. The former, whether assuming the mild, modified, and feeble shape which it received from our critics in the last century, or the destructive character which terrifies us in some of the (now obsolete) German neologians, is merely the fruit of a desire to be rid of facts which are at variance with the ordinary notions and experience of mankind, and to make revelation the announcement of certain moral notions and axioms which men by their constitution must derive from without; the latter leads to the underrating of facts because they belong merely to the region of experience, and to the notion that naked principles, which alone are of paramount importance, and with which alone the reason is conversant, are not imparted to it, but contained in it. From this statement it is evident that the results of the two systems may often coincide; but the habits of thought which have engendered them are so adverse, that a person who takes one for the other, is likely to misunderstand the processes of his neighbour's mind, if not of his own.

It may be said, "But surely the difference, be it great or small, is in favour of the older opinion, and not of the more recent one. That assumed the existence and the necessity of a revelation, only confining its use within very narrow limits; this dispenses with a revelation, perhaps denies the possibility of it altogether." I am not anxious to disprove this statement. I may feel the force of it as strongly as those who are most inclined to put it forward in the shape either of denunciation or of warning. But before I can attach any great value to it in one form or the other, I must be sure that it is not disturbing the faith of those whom it condemns or counsels in a truth; that this truth is not one which God would have us of this age especially receive and hold fast; that it is not one which when thoroughly understood and heartily embraced may contribute much to the recovery of those principles and the assertion of those facts which it seems to set at nought.

I would ask anyone to reflect calmly upon the circumstances of the country in which this philosophical revolution has taken place. In that country Luther had asserted the doctrine that there were certain truths which were so necessary to the life and being of man that the simple proclamation of them—the foolishness of preaching—would carry home the conviction of them to innumerable hearts. They were proclaimed in the words of a book, because that book contained the simplest, most genuine, most vital exhibition of them. This was the first act of the Reformation. The curtain rises in the second, and exhibits to us the disciples of Luther poring over the words of this book, in the hope, often a most vain hope, of extracting some meaning from them; then fighting with one another in defence of the fragment of meaning which they had discovered in it. Then we see another generation engaged in quite a different occupation, that of tearing page after page out of this book because it speaks of unintelligible matters with which reasonable men have no concern; but yet maintaining the wisdom and propriety of certain parts of it which were consistent with the general verdict of nature and experience. Then a man arises who asks what this general verdict is? He takes to pieces all

the demonstrations by which men had fancied that they could make out to themselves the importance of morality, the immortality of the soul, the being of a God. He says, "All these are good for nothing; they establish no conclusion; it is assumed in the premises." But he says at the same time, "This is no reason for doubting or disbelieving these truths; if they be fundamental truths, they must be the premises of every demonstration, not the results of it; you cannot have a greater witness for these great elements of human faith than this, that everything seems to prove them, because in fact nothing can be proved without them." And then this argument ab extra is clenched and established by a corresponding one from within. "You say that this cannot be, because there is no faculty which takes cognizance of such primary truths as these. I say there is and must be such a faculty, otherwise the existence of a mathematical science—the existence of that science upon which the demonstration of physical facts rests—would be just as impossible as the existence of a moral science. I say further, that this faculty is not merely one of the faculties of humanity, but that it is precisely the human faculty; that which does not belong to an individual as such, but which belongs to each man as a man, as the member of a race; the faculty which is conversant with that which is universal as well as with that which is necessary."

Such language as this, so far as it is understood and believed, must, of course, displace a whole host of notions and conclusions which had previously been looked upon as sacred, not because they were old but because they were new—because they seemed to have been the last and most perfect effort of the human intellect in repealing and annulling the decrees of former times. The doctrine would therefore assume something of a destructive character—not that it really had that character, even in reference to the maxims of the school of experience so far as they were positive; for it distinctly ratified the doctrine of Locke, that all notions and conceptions are the results of sensible experience, and that the impressions of sense precede in order of time all generalisations (such as that the whole is greater than its part); it

merely affirmed the existence of principles, at whatever time they may be discovered to the mind, which are presumed in the existence of the mind itself, and without which it could form no notions, conceptions, or generalisations, nay, could receive no impressions. Still the effect upon the persons who adopted the system was not altered by this circumstance; they felt that they had found out something which set aside the most favourite theories of their immediate predecessors. And if it had set aside their theories, had it not even in a more complete way set aside those of the thinkers who had preceded them, and over whom they had prevailed? Had it not proved that to be involved in the very constitution of man, which had been supposed to be merely delivered to him, and delivered to him moreover as if it were essentially at variance with his constitution, as if he could not receive it except by miracle? To be sure the school of the Encyclopedists had talked nonsense when they attempted to say what Reason was, and when they affirmed that what they called Reason was the judge of what is true; but they were right in saying that reason is the judge of what is truth; nay, that truth and reason cannot have any existence apart from each other.

I would entreat a patient consideration for the previous difficulties of the persons who adopted this language, for the temper of mind which they inherited even when they fancied they had thrown it off, for all the temptations to pride and self-exaltation which arise from the sense of a new discovery—I would entreat a consideration of all these circumstances before such phrases as these are immediately supposed to mean all the mischief which I am quite ready to acknowledge is lurking in them. But above all I would entreat my reader to reflect upon the fact, which I have been forced to present to him under several other forms already, that while the Protestant system encourages all possible demands on the part of the human mind for satisfaction, it provides nothing to satisfy the demand for some truths or principles which shall belong to us, not as individuals, but as members of a race. Protestants say that every truth is to be realised by each man for himself, and that

when a certain number of individuals have been made conscious of the same truth, they are to meet together and have fellowship in the profession of it; they have never effectually taught men that there are truths appertaining to them as men, which do not depend for their reality upon our consciousness of them, but are the grounds on which that consciousness must rest. The doctrines of Protestantism do, as I believe, necessarily imply this, but they do not distinctly affirm it; they refer distinctly and formally to men as individuals. The systems of Protestantism not only do not affirm it, but in the most practical manner deny it.

I think then that this metaphysical revolution points the same way as those other changes in men's feelings which I have noted already, namely, to the demand for something Catholic, and for that, not as an accident and addition to the faith which we hold as individuals, but as the very groundwork of it. And if I am asked to explain how I suppose it is possible that a doctrine, which seems to set all revelation and all tradition aside, and to claim a more direct independence for the human reason than any other has ever done, may yet be leading, through God's gracious guidance and providence, to the assertion and confirmation of those principles which Christians refer to revelation or tradition, and which are said, and I think rightly said, to humble the reason of man—I believe the kind of conflicts which have been excited among philosophical men by the promulgation of Kant's doctrine are an answer to the question.

Almost from the time that its meaning began to be earnestly canvassed, three great difficulties, or at least blanks, were discovered in it. One set of persons complained that it was a hard, dry doctrine, with which a man who had a heart could have no sympathy. It supposed the highest of all affirmations to be—God is, immortality is, freedom is. These great primary truths of the reason lay there without any power of addressing themselves to or connecting themselves with any one form of feeling—the Hercules pillars of the intellect, or the premises of a demonstration nothing more. This was one objection which may

probably have led to that division between the objects of philosophy and religion which I noticed in the last section, and to the assigning to the latter whatever concerns our human feelings and sympathies. Others, to whom this distinction seemed artificial and impracticable, laboured to construct a philosophy which should possess the warmth and cheerfulness of a religion.

Next comes the feeling, which in a Protestant country could not but force itself upon a number of minds. The reason speaks of all these great and eternal verities; but what have I to do with them? What link is there between my personal consciousness and these grand and universal affirmations? Tell us this, or your scheme, be it as strongly fenced with demonstration as it may, cannot content a man.

But, lastly, there seemed to be a fatal contradiction, if not in the principle itself, yet between the principle and the inferences which were instantly deduced from it. There is an organ in man which speaks of that which is absolute and eternal. You believe that this organ, call it reason or what you will, is distinct from the one that merely forms notions and affirms propositions. But how distinct? If it merely affirm, "There is something absolute; there is something eternal;" these are propositions. To suppose this then, is to destroy your own doctrine. But if this be not the witness of the reason concerning that which is absolute, what must it be? It must affirm the existence of that which is absolute, not as the intellect affirms a proposition, but as the eye affirms an object. As an object, it must be something distinct from that which beholds it, anterior to it, that without which it could not be. Suppose the Universe be the great, eternal, absolute thing which we feel it must be—well, then, this Universe spake to us first; we did not form it, did not even discover it; it revealed itself to us. But it is the eye or the imagination which demands an external universe; the Reason must demand something different from that. Does it not, according to your own showing, demand that which is homogeneous to itself? Does it not demand an absolute Reason? And if there be such an absolute Reason to which the reason in man looks up, a real Being, is it more

consistent to believe that the reason found him out, or that he revealed himself to the reason?

According to this last statement, the doctrine that there are principles antecedent to experience, whereof the reason of man takes cognizance, supersedes the necessity of a revelation only when it contradicts itself. But this is not all: if this view of the case be the right one, the revelation which the reason demands, cannot be one merely of moral principles or axioms,—it must be the revelation of a living Being. It cannot therefore be one in which events are merely accidents that can be separated from some idea which has tried to embody itself in them. Facts may be only the drapery of doctrines; but they would seem to be the only possible method of manifestation for the Being, the essential Reason. And seeing that, by the hypothesis, this Being of whom the reason speaks is one who transcends the conditions of space and time; seeing that this one faculty in man has the power of beholding that which is not under these conditions, but that all the other faculties are subject to them, it would be nothing strange or contradictory if the facts which embodied the revelation, should be such as at once presented him to all the faculties which we possess, and enabled that highest one to realise its own peculiar prerogative of looking through them. In this way one might perhaps discover a hope of reconciling the law of the affections and the law of the reason, without that contrivance of separating them under two departments and supposing that a mere scholastic boundary could keep them really apart. One might dream too, of a way by which the consciousness of each individual should be called forth, through the sense of his relationship to the Being who was revealing himself to him and condescending to his necessities. But whether this be the case or not, it seems clear that this new form of rationalism cannot be satisfied with itself; that it will become irrational if it cannot find something to unite and combine with it; that if it be followed out fairly it involves the conclusion that something must have been originally given or imparted to the reason; that this gift must be of some truth

which is transcendant and divine; that it must proceed from, and have reference to, a living Being; that it must concern all men as men; that the best test of its concerning them and really being necessary to the constitution of humanity itself, is that it should have been received and believed by men merely upon the bare announcement of it, and that in every subsequent stage of human history it should have been doubted, contradicted, ridiculed, and yet have kept its ground, and proved itself, in the most advanced period of civilisation as well as in the simplest, to be that which men want as the sign and bond of their fellowship.

4. One feature more must be taken notice of in the philosophical countenance of our age, or we shall have still an imperfect image of it. The effort to bring all systems of thought into harmony, or to frame a system to which each one shall contribute certain elements, has been repeated in various periods of the world. But unquestionably the inclination for such experiments was not so strong, even in the period immediately following the promulgation of Christianity, as in our own. I do not think the strength of this inclination can be fully ascertained even by observing how many conspicuous men, and those of the nation which most represents the form and pressure of the time, have felt it and indulged it. Everyone can perhaps discover its workings in himself. One plan of union after another which we have devised may have failed; some strange, uncouth performer may have insisted with cruel pertinacity upon his right to play his solo, without the least regard to the order under which the rest have been reduced; or we may have found that when we had got rid of the discords, the music became so flat and uninteresting, that no one cared to listen to it; but amidst all discouragements, in spite of the just ridicule of others, or the more sad and painful scorn which the wearied Irenicus is tempted to indulge at his own expense, the wish continues unabated, and it is sustained by a secret spring of hope—an unconquerable conviction that the dream was a true one, though it may seem to have met with the most palpable practical contradiction.

This temper, as we have already seen, has exhibited itself among religious men—among a class of them in whom it might least have been expected, and who would have felt the strongest abhorrence of any system which was merely compounded of fragments from previous speculations and heresies. Nor can it be said with strict truth, that when it appears among the philosophers of our day, this is the object which they propose to themselves. The name Eclecticism, which they willingly adopt, seems to portend a mere hortus siccus of flowers gathered from all soils, and arranged according to the taste of the collector. But if they spoke for themselves, they would give a very different representation of their system. They would say that their will had nothing to do with it; that Eclecticism was a necessity of the age; that one partial theory had succeeded and displaced another in the bygone periods, that it was no longer possible to adopt any of these as adequate and self-sufficing, that they were all seeking some more capacious and universal scheme in which they might merge. The difference between this feeling and that which prevailed in the last century is made the more striking by the one point in which they are alike. The disciples of Cousin express as much reverence for the age into which they are born, as the disciples of Voltaire felt for their own; but the earlier school believed that it was created to destroy all forms of opinion which had existed previously; the later one, that it is meant to put a sanction and imprimatur upon all, and to discern the principle which is the climax of all. The first and most obvious effect of this difference is an entirely opposite estimation of the truth and uses of history. By the French school of the last century it was slighted as useless for any other purpose than as a record of absurdities to be ridiculed and avoided; by the French school of this century it is regarded as the key to all knowledge; the acts of past times are studied, not merely with diligence, but with reverence. Such a habit of mind, on whatever subject it is exercised, must draw a reward after it, and these philosophers have been permitted to throw a most valuable light

upon the meaning and succession of events, especially in the annals of modern Europe.

Upon the meaning and succession of events, they have thrown this light; but very little, I suspect, upon the feelings or character of men. It is a complaint which I believe is universal among their greatest admirers, that they have no faculty for understanding a living human being in any other way than as a link in a chain of operations. They do not wish to set aside free agency; their theory would rather dispose them to give it great honour, but they cannot look at it except in relation to a theory, which is nearly the same thing as saying that they dispense with it altogether. Now this will surely be found a most unfortunate peculiarity in men who hope to adjust and harmonise the different thoughts and feelings of our time. Putting religious opinions and habits out of the question, assuming that they are too vagrant and fanatical to be subjects for an eclectical experiment, passing over also all political questions, and the struggles of different individuals or classes for a recognition in the polity of a state—we shall find in the philosophical dispositions of our days most awkward and refractory materials. The strongest of these dispositions, I observed, was to acknowledge a spirit in man, and to regard all other facts with which he is concerned in reference to that one. Then again we found men full of living sympathies with nature, and longings for forms in which this sympathy might be expressed. Now no theory, let it make what allowance it may for the existence of both these inclinations, can really provide any satisfaction for them. All the efforts of the Eclectic theory, therefore, must be confined to that region of thought which I have designated by the name of pure metaphysics; to the adjustment, that is, of the doctrine respecting the reason and the truths antecedent to experience with previous speculations. But there are difficulties in the way even of this limited application of Eclecticism. The first is, that the rationalist will say, The work is already done; the critical philosophy is that which discriminated between the provinces of reason and experience; any attempt to eclecticise upon that is to gild refined gold

or paint the lily. But the other objection is more fatal. The reason, it would seem, from the remarks which have been made already, speaks of an actual Being, an absolute Reason; and all attempts to make it merely utter a proposition about that Being, tend to destroy its very nature, as that nature is expounded by the rationalist. It is evident then that no scheme of Ontology, be it as complete as it may, can dispense with or include the truth which he proclaims. It may be a sound theory, a valuable theory, but it will be a theory concerning something, and of that something itself he is endeavouring to bear witness.

Nevertheless, all these arguments will never persuade men in our day that reconciliation of some kind is not possible, and must not eventually take place, between warring opinions and feelings. All kinds of endeavours at the compromise and suppression of truth—endeavours which succeed just as long as men feel nothing, and care for nothing, and are laughed to scorn the moment any energetic man arises, or any energetic thought is awakened—endeavours which (however strange the assertion may sound) are, on the whole, more hopeless in our day than in any previous one—will be suggested and made by individuals and by governments, with a desperate conviction, that one at last must be meant to prosper, and with infinite rage and astonishment that the one proposed does not fare better than its ten thousand predecessors. Undoubtedly too there is great need that the philosophical feelings which I have spoken of as all belonging to this time should find some meeting point, for though all equally strong and apparently proceeding from the same source, they oftentimes clash strangely with each other. The assertor of man's spiritual powers exalts the hero who maintains a battle with circumstances and triumphs over them; the artistical philosopher delights in him who can adapt himself to circumstances. If they maintain any fellowship with each other, it is a fellowship founded upon the pleasure which the one takes in noticing a curious and to him puzzling specimen of human nature, and upon the awe which the other entertains of a person who has realised a state which he knows that he can never reach, and with

which he half confesses to himself that he has no sympathy. Again, both agree in dislike to the metaphysician, one because he seems to bind down the energy and freedom of man by fixed and absolute laws; the other because he sets up a dry truth against all forms and images. It would seem that if all these tendencies be sound and true, as I have maintained that they are, there ought to be some method of bringing them into harmony, which should preserve each of them in its strength; which should not merely account for them, but embody them, and enable them to produce some real fruit. But then would it not seem at least possible that if reason affirm a truth which must have always been; if the communion with nature be something implied in our constitution, and therefore implied in the constitution of those who lived a thousand years ago; if humanity be essentially spiritual; the reconciling method may already exist, and that the work of our age may be not to create it afresh, but to discover its meaning and realize its necessity?

Section III. Political Movements

American Revolution—French Revolution—Individual Rights— Individual Will—Schemes of Universal Society—Education —Power of the State

I have had occasion to speak of the theological temper of the United States of North America, as illustrating one stage in the history of Protestantism, and as indicating a desire for something that Protestantism does not supply. But the political change which took place in these states, when they revolted from the mother country, is, in the same point of view, even more important.

Among the leading characteristics of the Reformation, I noticed an anxiety to assert the rights of national Sovereigns, and, as involved in them, the distinct position of each nation. This feeling, I said, was closely intertwined with that feeling of personal distinctness in each man which is the main spring of Protestantism. But when the Protestant systems had developed themselves, these inseparable twins began

to manifest great impatience of each other's company. The monarchs of the reformed States found that the belief in each individual's right to act and think for himself trenched very inconveniently upon their authority, and tended in no degree to the consistency and unity of the nations which they governed. They observed that whenever the religious feeling was strong, it treated all things as subordinate to itself; therefore, unless it could be made to conspire with the objects of their government, it must thwart them. There seemed to be but two expedients; to force the religious feeling into this agreement, or as much as possible to weaken it. The first policy was tried, and failed; afterwards the latter was adopted for a time with better success. The dispositions on the other side of course corresponded to these. The religious bodies became more and more jealous of the sovereign's interference with them; in times of strong excitement they resisted it; but as such times made their terms of communion more strict, these bodies became less and less identical with the nation; therefore it was not difficult to believe, when peace returned, that they had nothing to do with national affairs, that it was their business to be wholly religious, and the business of the monarchs to be wholly secular. This opinion, however, was very slowly adopted by any class of Reformers. The Lutherans thought, and still think, a State tyranny less intolerable than the abandonment of the Reformation principles. The Calvinists, in their palmy days, resolved, that if the State could not be religious with a sovereign, it should be religious without one. The Scotch Covenant affirmed the State to be essentially theocratic; the whole effort of our civil wars was to establish the same principle, and in one strange interlude between the acts of that tragedy, the Scotch tried to create a Presbyterian theocracy in the person of Charles the Second. It was only upon the disappointment of these schemes, that the modern doctrine under its different modifications began to prevail. And in the meantime an experiment was to be made whether religious men, if they could not exercise an influence over the old societies of Europe, might not frame societies for themselves in another world.

The legislation and government of the Puritan colonies bore every mark of their origin. They were, in fact, if the solecism may be pardoned, sect-commonwealths, connected by their religious peculiarities more than by the bonds of a common language, of a common origin, or of subjection to a distant sovereign. Before the time arrived when the last-mentioned of these ties was to be snapped asunder, the colonies had acquired an important position as trading communities. The religious feeling of the early settlers had lost much of its strength, but had left behind it industrious habits, clearness of understanding in common matters, indifference to refinements either physical or intellectual, and a useful pertinacity of character. Of such elements the heroes of the revolution were composed, men who, being exceedingly like the Puritans in these qualities, differed from them in this, that their notions of government and society were unconnected with a spiritual principle, and referred wholly to the condition and circumstances of this world. This change was evident from the Declaration of Independence—a document in which the old Protestant feeling, that each man is a distinct being possessing distinct privileges and rights, is curiously blended with a vague notion of a general fellowship which was beginning to gain currency in Europe, and which was rather a reaction against Protestantism than the natural result of it. And of this declaration the ultimate consequence was that union of the different independent states, respecting which future history will determine whether it have taken effect by a process of natural fusion, or merely by the decrees and contrivances of legislators.

These events were undoubtedly indications that a strife of principles was at hand, though the scene of it was not to be laid in the land of Franklin and Washington. It was in a country of the old world, a country in which the Protestant doctrine had been stifled two centuries before, a country in which society had been everything and human beings almost nothing, that the most vehement declaration of men's individual rights was to be made, and that the death-struggle between those impulses which lead each person to maintain such rights, and

those which lead him to seek communion with his fellows, was to begin.

It has been truly and profoundly observed that the French Revolution could not have been brought about merely by the scepticism of the philosophers, merely by the sins of the civil and ecclesiastical rulers, merely by the starvation of the people, nor by all these combined, if there had not been a certain element of faith to mix with and contradict the scepticism—to create a kind of moral indignation against the sin and to convert the sense of hunger from a dead anguish into a living passion.

The Parisian philosophy of the eighteenth century was little more than the expression by men cleverer and bolder than their contemporaries, of that feeling which pervaded the whole of society. All the teachers did was to make their disciples conscious of the unbelief which already had possession of them; their wit was irresistible, because it brought to light contradictions which existed in the persons they were addressing. So long as such contradictions are painful, so long as the conscience is at all awake to say, "This which you are not you are meant to be"—wit of this kind is most torturing. The mind may feel a kind of awful delight in it, as in a just penance which it deserves to undergo, but no grave admonition is half so bitter. But when the conscience is not awake at all, or is only so far awake as to perceive that hypocrisy is an evil and dishonourable thing, this wit will be very differently received. The mere time-killer—the lounger of the upper classes—who is convinced that everything must go on as it has always gone on, that words can do no harm, and that his position in society gives him a title to see further than a clown or a shopkeeper, listens gladly, and entertains a doctrine which both is so consistent with his practice, and which enables him to cast away as absurd any lingering sense of responsibility. The active, intelligent, aspiring member of the middle class, who thinks that he is unfairly depressed, who sees that the habits of society are false, who knows that it derives a support from certain feelings of reverence and awe which are

connected with the acknowledgment of invisible principles, eagerly welcomes the discovery that no such principles exist; for then a system which, at least in all its outward appearances, is hollow and deceitful, and which certainly is a hindrance to his ambition, may gradually fall to pieces. But though this philosophy had, for these opposite reasons, a hold both upon the soirées of Paris, and upon the enterprising lawyer of the provincial town, there was nothing in it which could possibly appeal to the sympathies of poor men—of those who were actually suffering. It is true that many of the philosophers were economists, and could descant upon the circumstances which made bread dear, and might make industry more profitable; but hungry men, hating all abstractions, hate those most which refer to their hunger, and do not relieve it. Again, in many districts, the doctrines which the wise men derided, even if we may not believe that they commended themselves as realities to those who had no home or portion on earth, were at least connected with the friendly faces of curés who had sympathised and suffered with their flocks, and with actual gifts of bread at the convent doors.

Doubtless such relics of religious association and sympathy must have been much more thinly scattered among the mechanics of the capital: the habits of the classes above them will have descended upon them, and the quicker wit of the citizen will have more quickly detected the falsehood and hypocrisy—being much more glaring—which he saw among his instructors. Still, even to this class, what was there in the teaching of such a man as Helvetius, for instance, which could have given the least pleasure? Sir James Mackintosh speaks of the Helvetian philosophy as the philosophy of the pot-house. But the frequenter of the pot-house would scarcely have cared to be told that a man, apart from the influences of society, deprived of the help which he receives from legislators, soirées, and tailors, is good for nothing, even though it were added, that legislators, soirées, and tailors, through the influence of priestly imposture, had managed their affairs badly, that they needed to be reformed by philosophy, and that when so

reformed many persons now proscribed might be brought within the charmed circle of civilisation. The poor man must have felt that, whatever good chance might befal him hereafter, he was, at all event for the present, not within the horizon of the philosopher's telescope.

But how different was the case when a voice was heard from Switzerland, proclaiming that each man has in himself, apart from all social institutions and social civilisation, rights and power; that he may claim those rights, and put this power forth; that he must do so if he would break the bonds which legislators, tailors, and soirées have been fastening around him, and if he would form a society in accordance with nature and truth. This was an appeal which went straight to the hearts of those who had nothing that they could call their own except their human limbs and countenance, and whatever there was, known or unknown, which gave motion to their limbs and life to their countenance. It appealed to the sense of strength, of wrong, of suffering, which is extinct in none; it called that forth into energy and action which the philosophical systematisers, for the most part, either denied the existence of, or would have been willing should not exist; it mixed itself with all those notions about the frauds and tyrannies of priests and lawyers which the unsentimental school had propagated; it turned to its own use all the materialist notions of the age respecting the origin of governments in compacts and conventions: finally, it compelled the sages to acknowledge that the government of reason must begin in outbreaks of popular fury, and to join with the people in laying the foundation of society in a declaration of individual rights.

The allies soon became enemies: it was found that the philosophers could do nothing with their theories; then the poorer men tried what they could do with other weapons. The lookers-on were terrified; they began to ask themselves whether the notions which they had adopted, as the highest discoveries of the enlightened intellect, must not have been falsely deduced. Could law and government have had their birth in the way that the teachers of the eighteenth century supposed? Must not they have had some higher source? Was it not necessary to believe

that some mysterious power upheld them? These thoughts stirred in the minds of men, especially in the Protestant nations, and prepared them to listen to Burke when he told them, as one who knew, that law rests upon deep invisible principles, not upon philosophical maxims or generalisations; that it is to be feared and reverenced as something above us, not to be dealt with as our creature and servant; that if its existence and awful derivation be trifled with or denied, it will prove its power and have its revenge. This teaching, so unlike any to which the last age had been accustomed, was received by many wondering nobles and ecclesiastics as if it were the revelation of a new truth, especially given for the defence of their houses and lands; by others it was welcomed with a more genial and thankful feeling, as the application to new circumstances of a doctrine which had been familiar to all great thinkers, and which had been delivered with peculiar power and solemnity by the noblest writers of the English nation. How much Burke, an adventurer, an Irishman, a philosopher, was the instrument of restoring the tone of English feeling, both amongst the men of action and of meditation, both in the upper and middling class, many are now ready to confess. Nor was his influence confined to this country. The deep historical researches of Niebuhr and the jurisprudential wisdom of Savigny, if they were not called forth by his writings, at least received their direction, in a great measure, from him; they would not have found readers to understand or appreciate them, if the soil had not been at first prepared by our statesman and orator.

The French revolution, then, has led many thoughtful persons, and many who are not thoughtful, to the conviction, that the doctrine upon which the declaration of rights rests is essentially false; that a man choosing to stand upon his independence—choosing to be an individual—choosing the state of nature—can have no claims on his neighbour; that to build up a fellowship upon this principle of independence is a monstrous contradiction, which proves itself to be so the moment it is brought to a practical experiment; finally, that law, being the appointed corrector of and judge of man, must be derived from,

and rest upon, sanctions which men regard as superhuman. But, on the other hand, there are not a few who, without directly opposing these doctrines, nay, perhaps assenting to them in so far forth as they are answers to Rousseau, are inclined to draw inferences from the same facts which are most unlike these—one might fancy almost incompatible with them. 'Whatever may be talked about the majesty and transcendant character of law,' say these persons, 'it is manifest that men did set themselves above law during the Revolution, and did shew that they could defy it. The popular will proved that all the terrors of law, affirmed and made more fearful by religion, were not sufficient to bind it; and when at last it succumbed, it was not to this power, but to the will of a man, who shewed that there was that in him which all the units of the nation together could not resist. Afterwards, it is true, the political machine seemed to run into its old ruts; tradition and custom apparently resumed their sway. But again the same truth was established; all such influences have been found ineffectual; a will, a despotical will, is wanted somewhere; to this alone will men really bow down. Whether there be a right in individual men or not, there is—(I borrow the favourite phrase of a writer who has exhibited this position with the greatest clearness, and who has converted the whole history of the Revolution from an abstraction into a living reality)—"a might," and this might will make itself felt, either in a whole nation, or in some single person who compels the whole nation to acknowledge that he is meant to govern it.'

One might fancy, when the opinion is put into this form, that Hobbes was again speaking in the nineteenth century. But whatever resemblance there may be in the words, the feeling which finds utterance in them is the most opposite possible to that of the hard materialist; it is a feeling of reverence for spiritual force. The triumphant despot is not the man to whom men submit, because they find it more convenient to abstain from fighting, or because they find the government of one less perplexing than that of many; no, he is the man to whom they do homage, because he has the highest title, the most

perfect ordination, because he was in truth created to be their king. And therefore this is only another, and I fancy a more advanced and reasonable, form of that reverence for Will, as superior to the forms of government and society, which has led many to look upon the notions of rule and subjection as hateful inventions of priests and monarchs. The writer of "Prometheus Unbound," and the "Revolt of Islam," preached the freedom of man from all outward forms and restraints: those who say that subjection is a necessity of man's being, that he longs to be governed, are yet equally certain that he can only submit to the dominion of a man; that he can never bow to the authority of an outward rule. And both alike differ from the sentimental teachers of the last age, who exhorted men to follow their natures—to give their good feelings and impulses fair play, &c. Both acknowledge that a man must not yield to inclination, that he must win a victory over his nature that otherwise he can neither be free himself, nor obtain lordship over his fellows.

Meantime these notions, which in this form might be passed by as the dreams of idle men, are forcing themselves in another form upon the reflection of all practical politicians. Not only in quiet chambers, but by fierce mobs, is the doctrine proclaimed that Will is superior to Law—that it ought to be superior—that to it belongs the power of unmaking and re-making that which pretends to hold it down. Anyone who attends carefully to the phrases which are current among us now, will perceive, I think, that they are very far more tremendous than those which were heard at the beginning of the French Revolution. "We have a right," is a phrase which betokens the acknowledgment of some antecedent principle; but in our day this language, if we chance to hear it, translates itself immediately into "We will." This is the ground of the right; it aspires to be the ground of all things.

"And why has it not yet attained its aspiration, and what can hinder it from doing so?" asks the terrified statesman. He finds that when such a question is started, politics must have become an awful science; a science which can scarcely be pursued successfully by one who

determines that he will confine himself to official rules or precedents, and that he will admit nothing as concerning him which involves transcendent considerations. However he may be inclined to laugh at metaphysics and scorn theology, he finds that he must discuss a subject which touches upon all the deepest principles of both; that he must ascertain by what means the existence of law may be reconciled with the existence of the human will. The debate between the disciple of Rousseau and the disciple of Burke brought out the old controversy —"Is the nature of man a good thing, a thing to be trusted, as Rousseau affirms that it is? Or is it an evil thing, as the Reformers said it was, which is to be kept down, and which every good man is to triumph over?" And this controversy, after the experiment of the French Revolution, was decided by politicians in favour of the ancient opinion, and against the new one. But here is another old scholastic controversy brought to the like practical issue, and submitted to the same adjudication: "Is Man, as the successors of the Reformers have affirmed, to be identified with that nature which is attached to him; or is he, when he sinks under the dominion of that nature, to be considered as abandoning his proper state, as subjecting himself to that over which he was meant to rule?" If this controversy be decided in favour of the first notion, the notion of modern Calvinism, the politician must invent what charms he can to lull that will to sleep, "which hath oftentimes been bound with fetters and chains, and the chains have been plucked asunder by wit, and the fetters broken in pieces, neither hath any man tamed it. But in the mountains and the tombs has it been continually—crying and cutting itself with stones." If on the other hand he admit the existence of a will or spirit in man, and that this will is only safe and free when it has found some other will to govern it, and that in the vain effort for independence it constantly becomes the slave of its own natural inclinations, it can be no contradiction on the one hand to suppose that law is meant to overawe these inclinations; on the other hand, that there is some spiritual government, in which

the man himself has a claim of citizenship, and in which he may find his rightful king.

2. But this hint leads us to another aspect of the French Revolution, that which may be called its properly political aspect. It began with a declaration of individual rights, but upon that declaration it professed to build a society; and this society was to be universal. It is true that the character of the revolutionary proceedings, from first to last, was eminently French. It is true that a strong burst of French patriotism was called forth by the invasion of the Allies, and that a desire of French predominance may be traced in the different counsels of the nation, from the commencement of the war to the abdication of Napoleon. But the principle of the Revolution—I mean not its nominal principles, as they were expressed in parchment documents or in pompous phrases, but the real principle which governed the minds of those who acted in it, and which alone rescued their documents and phrases from the charge of utter unmeaningness—was the substitution of a universal polity for national polities. Every monstrous absurdity which marked the speakers, writers, and actors who figured in it savoured of this feeling, and proved its existence; all its achievements, both when it was acting as a republic and when it was concentrated in one man, tended to this result. Even the constitutions which were propounded one after another for France itself had no more reference to France than to Kamschatka; they were all constructed upon universal principles, all meant for mankind.

These illustrations of the worth and preciousness of particular governments, when they are framed in conformity with general maxims, awakened the thoughtful men of Europe to a study of national history, and of that internal life in nations whereby they have been able to preserve their identity for generations amidst all changes of external circumstances. And these profound investigations received light and strength from the national feelings which the propagandism of France and the tyranny of the universal empire called forth. A spirit was roused which made it impossible that men should look upon the

histories of Voltaire, of Hume, and of Robertson, as representing the feelings and mind of past generations; a spirit which led the children to feel that there was a bond between them and their fathers, that they were inheritors of the same soil, and that names, and memorials, and institutions, more permanent than the oaks which grew upon it, had been bequeathed to them to keep.

But this patriotic temper did not much survive the war in Germany and the Peninsula; and though the historical inquiries to which it had given life and interest were not neglected, nay, though they began to be more valued as the wisdom and learning which had been exhibited in them were better known, yet they no further influenced the popular mind than as they supplied the armour for resisting some of its most prevalent tendencies. In spite of the deep and solemn warnings which those who engaged in them have supplied, schemes of universal society, which pass over as insignificant all peculiarities of race, and of language, ridicule custom and the reverence of ancestors and annul the old constitutions in which these are embodied, have been most rife amongst us. It may be well to notice two or three of them.

Considering the change which has been gradually taking place in the philosophy of Europe—a change which only of late years has been distinctly perceptible, but which has been in progress at least from the commencement of the present century—it may seem a matter of some surprise that Mr. Bentham, a philosopher emphatically of the last generation, who was formed in the school of Locke and Hobbes, and who aspired to reduce their maxims to practice, should have exercised so considerable an influence over the minds of persons who live in this day. The fact would undoubtedly be difficult of explanation, if Mr. Bentham's influence had continued, and had overcome those which were opposed to it. To understand why it should have been for a time felt both in his own country and abroad is not, I think, impossible. He came into notice when the great Rousseau experiment had been made, and had led to the consequences of which we have spoken. It was impossible for anyone

to deny that Burke and the Constitutionalists had gained much for their argument by that experiment. To all appearance they were right, and the defenders of popular governments wrong. Still there was a restless feeling that the trial might have been conducted differently, and that then it would have answered to the wishes of those who commenced it. And besides this, the several countries of Europe, and presently, also, the Spanish colonies of America, were in that naked revolutionised condition which seemed to make a new constitution of some kind necessary for them. These feelings Mr. Bentham met. He told men that the Rousseau scheme was false in its very conception; that anterior to the existence of society we have no rights; that except in combination we are good for nothing; that the end of any combination is the greatest happiness of the greatest number of the units who enter into it; that the combination is preserved by the mutual suspicion of its members, and by such contrivances as dispose the governing body not to violate the interest of those whose affairs they administer. Having these few and comprehensible rules to guide him, the writer applied a very acute and painstaking intellect, first, to the construction of a scheme of government and legislation which should accord with his theory; secondly, to a detailed exposure of the various contradictions and absurdities which are to be found in the practice of different nations, and especially of his own. To young men who were ashamed of being reckoned sentimental, and who yet panted for the glorious commonwealth which the sentimental school had promised, the sight of a new society built upon logic was most consolatory; their elders could more easily appreciate, even if they were not disposed to acknowledge, the justice of Mr. Bentham's practical charge that while in their ordinary acts and discourses they admitted no other principle than that to which he referred all things, they were yet maintaining various institutions, which upon that principle could not be justified; that they were consequently carrying out the doctrine of self-interest so far as it furthered their own ends, and repudiating it just when it might inconveniently interfere with them. These were facts which

could not be gainsaid; and if Mr. Bentham could have contrived that his system should seem to meddle with nothing but law and government, he would for a considerable time have retained the disciples which he had made, and even have obtained frequent accessions to their numbers. After the shock of the French revolution and of the French war had subsided, men whose tendency was to occupy themselves with the workings of their own minds, began to lose all interest in politics, and even to decry them as belonging to a merely outward region; they could, therefore, easily consent that almost any system upon that subject should gain currency. But they soon found that a compact organized political scheme must involve the questions which they looked upon as alone sacred. The impossibility of distinguishing social Utilitarianism from individual Utilitarianism, of reconciling the acknowledgment of a certain ultimate end in one region of thought with the positive denial of it in another, became apparent to those whose minds were most real, most impatient of mere artificial boundaries, as well as to those who were strictly and formally logical. Poets found that if their art could be defended at all, it must be merely as a kind of amusement, upon the same grounds as cards or horse-racing; religious men, however reluctant they might be to acknowledge any relation between such topics, were driven to ask themselves whether the doctrine of Paley and Bentham could be reconciled with that of the Sermon on the Mount, and if not, which was to be abandoned? This school, therefore, found itself unexpectedly assailed by all those new and strange thoughts respecting literature, metaphysics, and the spiritual universe, which had been gradually working themselves out in the minds of men in different parts of Europe, while Mr. Bentham had been occupied in his study with the rationale of evidence, and having nothing to oppose to them, it could only sound a retreat, and endeavour, at whatever risk of theoretical or practical inconsistency, to defend the existence of its philosophy by circumscribing the application of it within very narrow limits. But even within these limits it has no safe dwelling-place. For while the desire of man for a universal

polity has grown every day more strong, this desire has connected itself more and more with deep feelings and passions, has had less and less to do with the mere calculating understanding. But to this calculating understanding the Benthamites make their sole appeal; by this they would fashion the whole scheme of human life, and of the universe. The right thing is that the will of the majority should be omnipotent. But what calculus have they discovered for measuring the strength which lies in that word—will—or for ascertaining what is to become of all theories and axioms of legislation when it has obtained supremacy?

Far more profound in its conception, and I think, also, more interesting in its details, than the system of which I have been speaking, was that which was proclaimed in France about twelve years ago, under the name of St. Simonianism. In their project of society the Benthamites discarded, or treated as mere accidents, all national distinctness. But there was one circumstance in the condition of man which could not be wholly accidental, or entirely the fruit of bad legislation. Men do exist in families; it would seem that in the most fortunate societies the principle of family life has been most recognized, its limits most accurately defined. Without taking any cognizance of this fact, the Benthamites created a society upon the hypothesis that mankind is an aggregate of individual atoms. The St. Simonians felt at once that such a scheme was a practical delusion: so long as the notions of mankind continue what they are, so long as the morality which maintains these notions, and is maintained by them, subsists, men will be continually acting, speaking, voting, per stirpes, and not per capita. Thus the aristocratical idea intrudes itself; the existence of a perfect democratical fellowship is impossible. Now while I reverence the feeling, to whatever cause it may be traced, which hindered the English Utilitarian school from boldly looking down into the gulf which this thought opens—while I rejoice that they dared not sacrifice their moral impulses to their logical consistency, and though I can easily understand how they may have persuaded themselves that they were logically consistent, because it was not for the greatest happiness

of the greatest number that all family ties should be sacrificed—I must yet maintain that if a universal society is to be constructed, either upon the Utilitarian maxim, or upon the chacun selon sa capacité maxim of the St. Simonians, it is an indispensable preliminary that domestic feelings, associations, sympathies, all the laws by which they are upheld, all acknowledgment of relationship as a significant fact, should be extinguished. The deepest mind that ever dwelt in a mere mortal when searching, and that with the noblest and purest aims, for the foundation of universal society, could find no escape from this conclusion; and every new project for the actual establishment of it has supplied fresh evidence that, if such a society is to be built by human hands, these must be the conditions of it.

But the St. Simonians felt that a universal society, even of the kind which they had imagined—even a universal bank—could not be established by mere human hands. Here was another indication of the deeper wisdom which was at work amidst their extravagancies and contradictions. They must have asked themselves as they repeated the words, "chacun selon sa capacité"—But where shall we find the judge of capacities? Where dwells that seeing eye which shall perceive in each, that mighty power which shall assign to each, his rightful vocation? The question carried them into a mysterious region. There must be some supernatural foundation for this commonwealth, some supernatural superintendence over it. It was inconceivable upon any other hypothesis. Once convinced of that fact, it became a duty, or what seemed to them the same thing, a logical necessity, to invent a supernatural machinery, and assume the airs of inspired men. Upon this fraud of course followed every species of absurdity and falsehood —under the weight of these the system sank rapidly. French philosophers were not yet prepared for an Apollonius in the nineteenth century; they had not yet learnt to feel as Porphyry felt, that there was a kingdom in the world which, without the help of some mythical hero, could not be opposed. Possibly, if the vision of such a kingdom should become more clear and threatening, some will be driven to

that resource, and then St. Simonianism will reappear, under another name and form, to try whether it can satisfy the inextinguishable longing in human hearts for a human fellowship.

The socialism of Mr. Owen is wholly unlike the St. Simonian doctrine in all its more striking and philosophical features, but for that very reason it may obtain for a time a wider popularity. A benevolent person established a factory in a certain district of Scotland upon a principle which made it a blessing, not a curse, to its inmates and the neighbourhood. One who had taken part in this experiment, though he did not originate it, adopted the very plausible notion that a similar arrangement might be applicable in all our manufacturing districts. The problem how to deal with the population concentrated there, is the most awful one which presents itself to the modern politician; anyone who could offer but a suggestion on the subject, especially if it were the result of experience, was entitled to a patient hearing. When Mr. Owen shewed that men, brought by certain contrivances under a laborious, kindly, self-denying superintendence, would be more happily situated than those who were merely treated as animals capable of producing a certain quantity of cotton twist, the demonstration was not the less valuable because the result of it might have been anticipated. But by a process (alas! most natural) he went on to the conviction that the whole secret lay in the particular machinery which he recommended: then, by another step, to the further conclusion that such a machinery was in itself capable of producing every desirable moral result. That Rubicon once passed, it needed only a mind somewhat more generalising, daring, and self-conceited than that which is found in the majority of men, one withheld by no historical knowledge and few intellectual impediments from experiments for the disorganisation of society, to produce a preacher of the doctrine that men are mere creatures of circumstances, and that by a readjustment of circumstances their condition may be completely reformed. The necessary corollaries from these propositions worked themselves out by degrees, without the help of any intellectual subtlety,

as the obstructions to the new scheme made themselves manifest:—whatever principles, practices, institutions existing among men were connected with the idea of a will or spirit in us which might be superior to circumstances, must be abandoned. That all forms of religious faith should be included among these was inevitable; but it is a discovery of the highest practical value which the Owenites have been permitted to enforce, though they certainly were not the first to make it, that Marriage is in the same category, that its meaning or validity cannot be maintained, either logically or practically, when the existence of a spiritual principle and of spiritual obligations is denied.

Owenism may be described as an attempt, upon a larger scale than Benthamism, to apply to society universally the maxims which have been already adopted by certain of the classes which compose it. The worship of circumstances is the habit of feeling into which the easy and comfortable part of mankind naturally fall; their inward thought is that their houses shall continue for ever, and that thought makes them at once indisposed to change, and sceptical about the existence of any invisible govern—When the poor men say, "We, too, will acknowledge circumstances to be all in all, we will cast away any belief in that which is invisible, this world shall be the only home in which we will dwell," the language may well appal all who hear. To one who sympathizes with the poor it is fearful, because of that which it shews they are ready to abandon. To one who has no sympathy with the poor it is fearful, because of that which it shews they are ready to take away from him. Nevertheless, be it observed, the force of these assertions lies in that very point in which they are anti-socialist—it is the "we will" that gives them all their meaning—it is that which imparts to the dry chips of Mr. Owen's theory the semblance of vitality. He protests against the existence of that to which he owes his own pertinacity, and all the effects which it has been ever able to produce.

Combination, therefore, in its simpler forms, combination for the purpose of assisting the will of the majority, and enforcing its right to be heard and to rule; combination in the form of trades' unions, and

chartist unions (I use language derived from our English experience, but, I fear, by no means unintelligible to the members of other nations, at least not to Frenchmen); combination—not divested of religious sympathies, but with a piteous fury striving to seize and to appropriate them to its own purpose;—this, it seems to me, is much more really the characteristic of our times, is much more really fearful because it carries with it so many more elements of real power, than all the schemes and systems for the reconstruction of the universe. No doubt every one of these schemes embodies some truth which cannot be lost. The greatest happiness of the greatest number, though it may be the most idle and insignificant of all formulas till each one of its substantives and adjectives has been translated, must yet contain a meaning which will somehow or other be realised. The phrase, chacun selon sa capacité, indicates a persuasion of gifts appropriated to peculiar vocations and offices which we cannot afford to part with; the idea of co-operation, on which Owen dwells, is one of wonderful depth and importance. But each of these is chiefly remarkable as the shrine of a feeling which it cannot satisfy, and of a conviction which it labours to stifle—the feeling, I mean, that a universal society is needful to man; the conviction that if there be such a society, the treatment of man as a voluntary or a spiritual being must be the characteristic distinction of it.

3. Among the notions which Rousseau scattered about the world, some of the most striking and startling, as everyone knows, had reference to education. The commonwealth of Plato, said the author of "Emile," is neither more nor less than a scheme of education; and when the true commonwealth which answers to that dream shall rise out of the ruins of the old form of society, the question, how education is to be conducted, will be the one which will absorb all others into itself. Men who started from the most opposite point to Rousseau, and took the most different directions from him and from each other, adopted this opinion. It began to be believed that education would be a substitute for prisons, penitentiaries, and hangmen, and that

consequently, statesmen were, above all other men, bound to interest themselves in it. These feelings received a shock from the events of the French Revolution. As the awfulness and dignity of Law began again to be acknowledged, the notion of substituting more benignant influences for its punishments and terrors was scouted; the educational doctrine was regarded as part of the sentimental creed respecting the goodness of human nature; that creed having been proved to be absurd—it having been seen how little man, left to himself, either can do, or wishes to do, without prisons or guillotines—the different inferences from it must also be abandoned. To some such feelings as this language indicates—feelings which seldom shaped themselves into definite thoughts or arguments, but which exercised a powerful influence, nevertheless—we may attribute the dislike to popular education which was manifested, especially in England, by the supporters of existing institutions.

But both parties in the controversy had forgotten one important point—Education must henceforth, said the disciple of the new school, be the grand agent and influence in the world. Nonsense, replied the English country gentleman, we will stand in the old ways, we will do as our forefathers did before us. Well! but what are the old ways? what did our forefathers before us? History shews that they attached as much importance to education as Rousseau himself could do—that they believed it to be that without which prisons and penitentiaries were perfectly ineffectual, which had powers that were never intrusted to them. It is evident that they had no thought of confining education to any class, for they were continually making provision for the training of youths whose main qualification was their poverty. The discovery of this fact was fatal to the argument against the philosophers. For a time it decided the practical question in their favour. The old institutions for education had been abused in England by carelessness or selfishness, had been destroyed upon the continent by revolutionary violence; and in the one and the other were multitudes growing up with all the new notions about popular power and will,

with all the new indisposition to bow down before authorities merely because they were established. Jails could not be provided for all, or if they could, it might in time be a question who would be the jailers. Therefore the statesmen began to say, we must have fresh schools; the old have served indifferently well to train those who have a national position; they are not meant for those masses which have none; they may train those who desire instruction, and will make sacrifices to obtain it; they can be of no service to those who look upon it scarcely as a blessing, who scarcely know what it means.

It is evident, I think, that these thoughts have worked a great change in the minds of all men upon these subjects. I say of all men, for the change is as remarkable in those who have declared education to be the panacea, as in those who have but lately been awakened to a sense of its necessity. The former used to urge the great advantage it would be to the poor to have the means of intellectual cultivation placed within their reach: how many new pleasures they would be able to command, how many temptations they might avoid. The latter were able to rebut such arguments by plausible appeals to fact. Did the boys of the schools acquire these new tastes? Were they the better for their knowledge? Was the population more refined or more moral? I know not where such controversies could end, or what violent twisting of statistics there might have been on each side in order to make out the theorem which was to be demonstrated. But the advocates of education now say, Look at these masses of human beings; it is not a question what you should do to amuse or benefit them, but what you must do in order to govern them, in order to prevent them from destroying the land and themselves. You have found the ordinary resources of government fail; you have proved how inadequate religion is when it only assumes the character of a support to law; you must resort to some other means. You may laugh at the notion of a silent moral influence, such as education pretends to possess, being sufficient; but does not history, do not these living masses, laugh at the notion of your physical appliances being efficient? Surely this is different language altogether.

The answer to it is not easy. There is no answer to it but the sleepy determination not to think about the matter till we are compelled to think of it by a revolution.

In this change of language, however, some other changes are involved which may not be obvious. There may be a hundred differences about the instruction which ought to be communicated, and the persons who should communicate it, but those who defend education upon these grounds are agreed so far as this—Whatever be the right agency or instruments for getting a dominion over the will of these masses, it is the attainment of this dominion which is our object. It signifies not much in what phrases this object is expressed. I can easily conceive that earnest and able defenders of education may be loth to adopt the conviction into which I remarked that many political students had been led by comparing the theories and the events of the last fifty years—very loth to speak of man as a mysterious being, whose natural inclinations, if they be followed, make him a transgressor of law and order, and an enemy of his fellows, but who may be raised above those inclinations, may attain a true freedom which sets him above the penalty of laws because he has no wish to break them: such expressions may appear to them strange and fantastical, and most unlike those of the school in which they have been trained. Nevertheless they may mean very nearly what the persons who indulge in such odd mystical talk mean; they may confess by a number of words and acts that they do look upon education as a wondrous power which is to act upon men in a very wondrous manner; yet not in the way of a charm, not in a way inconsistent with their constitution: a power which is by some means to reach a faculty or principle, call it what you like, that swords and clubs cannot reach. There is, I think, a very general consent indeed about this point, however diverse the elements may be which make up that consent. For instance, those who say that it is hopeless to communicate religious instruction to all the members of a nation, and that, therefore, (what they call) secular instruction must be communicated to them first, defend the proposition upon these two

grounds, one that the perils of leaving the people untaught are infinite, there being everywhere threatenings of popular outrage which the legislature cannot put down; the other, that there must be something common to all men, something which all men may receive, and that this cannot be the same with those sect-notions and opinions which manifestly do not belong to all. Such is the line of their argument. Taken simply as it stands, it does, I submit, lead us into reflections quite unlike any that would be naturally suggested by the ablest treatises on education in the last century. It sets us upon thinking what manner of power that must be which can address itself to a whole body of human creatures, and can call forth that in each of them which will give him the rights of Man, and make him a fellow-worker with his brethren. Sad experience has convinced thoughtful persons that the secret does not lie in the mechanical contrivances for bringing a number of children together in a school, which were produced as the perfect cure for the nation's evils a few years ago. These contrivances organize and discipline masses into a certain stupid material consistency, or they call out now and then into dangerous self-exalting activity the powers of one or two clever pupils; they do not infuse into the whole body a quiet life, which may circulate regularly and continually through each of its distinct members. Again, the different Protestant systems and sects, as I have said already, are found inadequate for the purpose; they scarcely recognize the existence of that in the pupil which can be spoken to and called forth; they divide instead of harmonising. Still it would seem that there must be such a power somewhere—who shall tell us where?

4. The method which has been used for cutting this knot explains the last remarkable peculiarity in our modern political views. All those bodies which profess a voluntary character having been found unequal to the task of conducting education, the conclusion has appeared inevitable that the government of each nation should undertake the formation and superintendence of it. Anyone who has soberly set himself to consider in what way it is possible to provide for this dire necessity, will not be surprised that this should offer itself to

hundreds as the only refuge from positive despair. However many cherished notions of personal and domestic liberty they may be obliged to abandon, however painful the thought may be that we in the nineteenth century have no better resource than that which we have learnt to consider unsatisfactory and dangerous in the old republics of Greece, still a wise lover of his species will not be hindered by such thoughts from adopting that which he is sure is the only practical means for its relief. But there are some perplexing reflections which will intrude themselves, before he attains to that perfect certainty. Is it not somewhat strange that we should be asserting this marvellous power for the state, just at the time when there is most reluctance to acknowledge even those powers which evidently do belong to it? Is not the Will of the multitude asserting its independence of the civil power, and are we not devising a remedy for this very exigency? Have not the governments in most European countries been for some time past rather hastily undressing themselves of the spiritual properties and functions to which they had in earlier times laid claim? Are not those called illiberal which hesitate to perform these acts of renunciation? and is it not a little inconsistent that these governments should at the selfsame moment be assuming that which, by their own confession, is in the very strictest and most remarkable sense an authority over the spirits of men? I say, by their own confession, for do we escape at all from the difficulty, by saying that the state shall only have the charge of secular education, other portions of it being left to more peculiar and individual interests? Is not this what we propose to ourselves by our education—the attainment of a certain influence over those human hearts which are cherishing such fearful dreams of independence and defiance? Is not this the very plea—the only plea for the state's interference—that its existence is endangered by ignorance and self-will? And must not, therefore, the education of which the state undertakes the superintendence, most especially aim—by such means as seem the likeliest to answer—(it matters not what epithet you give them) at the accomplishment of this design?

This is a contradiction by which I fancy the practical statesman will be haunted continually; which will perplex him far more in action than even in meditation. To satisfy the cry for a power which shall not be merely legal, not merely punitive, but which shall act directly upon the human spirit, that the legal and punitive sanctions may make their appeal to the consciences of men, not to the fears of brutes—you inspire a body with this power, or at least you force it into acts implying this power, which is saying continually, that it can deal with nothing internal—can take cognizance only of overt acts. To satisfy the cry for a universal body, in which men shall be regarded as human beings and not merely as the members of a local society, you insist that the government of a local society shall assume to itself a universal human character, when all the new schemes for the management of the world are bearing witness that it never has had and never can have such a character; that its only security consists in its distinctions and limitations. Still the difficulty remains: if there be no spiritual universal society—and all attempts to create one in this nineteenth century have been very abortive—the state must, at any hazard of inconsistency, in despite of every danger to individual liberty, notwithstanding the strong and increasing feeling of its incompetency, assume the appearance and perform the duties of one.

PART II. OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE ROMISH SYSTEM

Chapter I. Recapitulation

THE conclusion to which we have arrived seems to be this—that the principles asserted by the religious societies which have been formed in Europe since the Reformation are solid and imperishable; that the systems in which those principles have been embodied were faulty in their origin, have been found less and less to fulfil their purpose as they have grown older, and are now exhibiting the most manifest indications of approaching dissolution. Now I have alluded, when speaking of modern philosophical movements, to certain prevalent and popular statements which seem at first sight very closely to resemble those which have been the result of our inquiry. The doctrine that systems, religions, churches, are dying out, but that they have been the clothing of certain important ideas which will survive their extinction, and which it is the business of wise men to note, preserve, and perhaps furnish with a new vesture, is one which I cannot be expected to entertain; nay, to which if this book mean anything I must be directly opposed; nevertheless a conscientious reader may find it difficult to discover what is the point at which this doctrine and mine diverge. It is necessary for the purpose of making the connection of what has been said with what I am about to say intelligible, that I should relieve him of this embarrassment; and I know no way in which I can do it so effectually as by reminding him of the different points of evidence which have gradually offered themselves to us as we have proceeded.

I. The doctrine which, upon the authority of the old Quaker books, and in opposition to one of their modern teachers, I maintained to be the fundamental one of Quakerism, is, that man is a twofold creature, having inclinations towards sensible things, being united to the divine Word by trusting in whom he may rise above these inclinations and attain to a spiritual life and communion. Of all persons, those who seem the most unlike the primitive Quakers are modern philosophers, artists, and politicians; yet we found that various persons belonging to these different classes had been led by different processes of thought to adopt the maxim which had formed the great obstacle to the belief of Fox's principle. "It cannot be true," said religious people, "because man as such apart from a peculiar religious vocation and impulse is not spiritual;" "It cannot be true," said the philosophers of the last generation, "because he is not susceptible of a religious vocation and impulse at all, he is simply a creature of flesh and blood." Both these opinions would be disowned by those who claim to represent the enlightenment of our time; they would say 'man as man has spiritual powers, and is a spiritual creature.'

Now it is probable that many of those who use that language would produce it as an instance of the way in which a doctrine has been disencumbered of its ancient form and been reduced to a pure and simple essence. "In the acknowledgment of a spiritual life or existence in man," they would say, "we uphold Fox's meaning, we only take away from it that phraseology with which the religious traditions of former centuries had invested it." My object is not to argue the point whether this be so or not, but to shew that our observations have not led us to this conclusion, but to a most opposite one. It seemed to us that a man believing he has certain spiritual capacities within him, is just the person who is obliged to consider under what conditions these capacities exist; that it was this problem about which Fox was occupied; that the sense of certain upward tendencies within him which were continually restrained and resisted, instead of giving him peace and happiness was the very cause of his torment; that we may talk generally about

our spiritual power and existence, but that the moment we practically realize them, amidst all the contradictions under which they exist in this world, they become so involved with awful feelings of responsibility, with the vision of an unknown world, with the certainty of moral evil, that we are glad to escape from them into materialism; that this escape being now impossible we must inquire whence these spiritual desires and impulses have come, by what they are upheld, whither they are tending; that these questions lead directly to the principle which Fox asserted, that it may be omitted or substituted for some other in a system, but that it must be steadily faced and considered by every man who is really engaged in the world's conflict; that modern thinkers are perpetually exhibiting their want of it, especially when they speak of our self-consciousness, the necessity of it, the misery and falsehood of it; that the words, "Not I but Christ in me," are the answer to these perplexities; that we may search heaven and earth before we find any other. And if we are asked on what ground, then, we affirm that the Quaker system has proved inadequate, the answer would be, Precisely on this ground, that it has failed in giving a clear definite expression to the idea of Fox; that it has reduced that idea too nearly into a vague synonym of the notion that we have certain spiritual capacities or feelings within us, that it has not exhibited to men the object on whom Fox affirmed that their spiritual capacities and feelings were to be exercised.

The founder of Quakerism is however not much known to the ordinary philosopher: he would be much more anxious to shew that he had retained all that is really precious in the teaching of the great Reformer. Our mere men of letters, who reverence Leo and believe Erasmus to have protested quite as much as was needful against the abominations of his time, regard Luther, who knew nothing of statues and wrote indifferent Latin, with positive aversion; but the more earnest men among us—those especially who believe that European society has been making continual progress from darkness to light—speak of him as one who worked mightily for the overthrow of

opinions based upon mere authority and tradition, and prepared the way for the utterance of thoughts which he himself would have rejected with horror. I am not now alluding to the ignorant declaimers who boast of Luther because he exalted the understanding in place of faith; but of those who being really acquainted with his writings, are aware that he as much deserves that praise as Brutus deserved to be canonized by the French sansculotte for the noble plebeian spirit which led him to slay the great aristocrat Julius Caesar; and who would consider it a very ill compliment to anyone to say that he wanted faith himself and wished to destroy it in others. They will cheerfully admit that the assertion, "A man is justified by faith," is more characteristic of Luther than his opposition to popes or masses. They will allow that the different acts of his outward life had all a more or less direct reference to that principle. But then they would say, 'this principle when it is taken out of the swaddling bands of the sixteenth century and allowed to move freely, means just this, that it is the inward state of man and not his performance of certain prescribed acts, or even the worthiness of his outward conduct, which entitles him to be called good, that not what he seems nor even what he does, but what he is, constitutes him a right and true man. This truth had been set at nought by the Church of that day; by the vehemence with which he declared it and compelled men to listen to it, Luther established his chief claim to the gratitude of mankind.'

I am well convinced that this principle had been practically denied by the Romanists, and that Luther was the most powerful of all instruments in re-asserting it. But we have seen reason to believe that George Fox maintained the doctrine of an inward righteousness quite as strongly as the German; and yet that there was a very marked difference between them. The difference seemed to consist in this, that while Fox urged his disciples to exercise their faith in a spiritual Being, the Lord of their spirits, Luther delighted to declare that that Being had actually taken human flesh, had died a human death, and by these acts had redeemed us from a curse and justified us before his Father.

If Luther was, as his modern admirers constantly affirm that he was, eminently straightforward and practical, impatient of abstractions, dealing in all plain homely images,—here, it seemed to us, lay the secret of these qualities. It was no fantastic Being he was speaking of, no mere idea; not even merely an object for spiritual apprehension, though that in the highest degree; it was one who had identified himself with men, had by a series of outward acts those which the creed announces—established his human as well as his divine character. It struck us that this, which is in the strictest sense the Lutheran characteristic, was particularly necessary as a complement of the Quaker doctrine; that this without it soon passes into mere vapour. But be that as it may, it was this peculiarity in Luther's preaching which enabled him to effect the overthrow of existing superstitions, and so to be (as we are told) the precursor of greater deliverances hereafter. No doubt the fact of the Incarnation was fully recognised by the Romanists, but by certain notions about inward and inherent righteousness, and by certain practices which were grounded on these notions, this fact had been deprived of its significance. It had ceased to be a witness to any man of what he was. By affirming the reality of this fact and its significance, Luther got rid of the impositions upon the understanding and conscience, which the practical unbelief of it had made possible. It seemed to us then, judging from these facts, that we do not merely strip Luther of his dress, but that we destroy the man himself when we make him the witness for a principle and not for a fact, that we do not preserve that quality in him which enabled him to be a reformer, and deprive him of that which belonged to him in common with those whom he reformed, but that we take from him that wherein his reforming power consisted, and leave ourselves to the certain peril, if all history be not a delusion, of falling under those sensible tyrannies from which he was permitted to emancipate us. And if I be asked again in this case, what then is my objection to the Lutheran system, I answer this and no other—that it does not bear witness for the all-importance of that fact which Luther asserted to be all-important; that

it teaches us to believe in justification by faith instead of to believe in a Justifier; that it substitutes for Christ a certain notion or scheme of Christianity.

Quakerism and pure Protestantism both belong chiefly, if not entirely, to the region of individual life and experience. Unitarianism we found was of an altogether different character; it took men away from self-reflection to thoughts about nature and God. Nevertheless, it has changed its complexion as men's views about themselves have changed; it applied material standards to the Infinite, so long as it was the habit of the time to consider men as purely material; when that habit ceased, it began to decry the ordinary theological language as too earthly and definite. Here then perhaps we have discovered a system which answered exactly to the philosophers' demand, which readily abandons the dress of one period that it may clothe itself in that of another. But will it be said that this is merely a change of dress? Can those who just now represented the acknowledgment of man's spiritual powers as the very essence of all religion, so entirely alter their note that they look upon it too merely as an accident? According to their shewing Unitarianism has not preserved its identity at all; the alteration of popular opinion has abolished its very nature and substance. But it seemed to us that this was not the case; that it had a principle, that it did contain something which is constantly and invariably true. The hold which it had maintained for a time over earnest minds arose, we thought, from this, that it declared the unity of God, the absolute love of God, the existence of a good and pure state for mankind, to be primary truths which cannot be altered or set aside by any experiences or any dogmas. These were eternal principles not subject to the mutations of costume or fashion; needful for man, needful for him at all times. And the objection which we made to the Unitarian system was, that it did so feebly and miserably represent these truths—nay, that it practically contradicted them as no other system ever did; a charge which applies to the modern scheme no less than to the old one on grounds even more forcible; for whereas the

whole virtue of Unitarianism consisted in its asserting the existence of God as distinct from the thoughts and apprehensions of men, the later teachers are continually approaching nearer and nearer to a confusion between our own spiritual "nature" and the Being whom it acknowledges. The transition from this stage of belief to the worship of the separate feelings and moods of that "spiritual nature," and thence to prostration before them in the shape of idols is very rapid indeed. Surely a strange apotheosis for Unitarianism!

I contend then that the principles of Fox, of Luther, of the Unitarians, are too strong, too vital, to bear the imprisonment to which they have been subjected in the different systems which have been invented for them; but so far from thinking that those principles will be more true and vital when they have lost their religious and personal character, and have been translated into the terms of a philosophical theory, I believe that when they shall suffer that change they will lose all their preciousness, and will attain the perfection of the impotence and insignificance to which hitherto they have been but partially reduced.

II. Seeing, however, that these principles, even in the time of their strength, have shewn a disposition to clothe themselves in some form or other, nay, that it is only in times of great weakness that they can be content to remain merely as notions or opinions for individual minds; we are bound to inquire further what this tendency means, and how it is possible that it may be satisfied when the systems which have owed their existence to it shall satisfy it no longer. To answer this question we must refer to another class of facts which we have been considering. The second distinguishing Quaker tenet was, that there is a spiritual and universal kingdom established in the world. We may conceive, though not without great difficulty, how the doctrine respecting the Indwelling Word might have been received and acknowledged as a doctrine and as nothing more—at all events might have appeared to Quakers only as the governing law of their own individual lives. But it is obvious that this tenet ceases to be one at all if it is nothing more —ceases to be a principle for individuals if it be only for them. That

there should be such a kingdom, and that an honest man believing it to be should not ask, What are the conditions of citizenship in it? is incredible. To this conviction then we traced the origin of the Quaker society and the Quaker system: by entering the first, disciples of George Fox sought for themselves a place in this kingdom; by adopting the second, they interpreted to themselves and others its nature and its laws. And therefore our main inquiry in reference to the society was, Does it answer to this character? Does it even any longer profess to answer to it? and with respect to the system—what is there here which may tell us the secret of the failure to which the history of the body bears such a striking witness? I will not now dwell on the answer to this question, farther than to remark that we observed a resolute eschewing of forms to be one of the main characteristics of the Quaker system, and a disposition to formalism one of the most striking characteristics of the Quaker body. But my object at present is rather to remark upon the faith which seemed to make the existence of Quakerism necessary, than upon any of its good or evil features.

Was this faith a new one? was George Fox the first proclaimer of it? We found the acknowledgment of a spiritual kingdom among the Reformers as well as among the Quakers—a most strong and distinct acknowledgment of it. We found it working so strongly in Luther's mind, connecting itself so closely with his recognition of a divine Person, a divine Man, as the object of all trust and allegiance, as to make him most reluctant to introduce any theory or scheme of doctrine which might eventually become a substitute for it: we found at the same time that it at last urged him and the other Reformers to set up little Churches or kingdoms of their own because they could not imagine or discover how otherwise God's purpose could be accomplished. And we found that it was partly the unspiritual character of these bodies—their manifest inadequacy to express the idea of Christ's spiritual kingdom, partly the importance which the Reformers and their followers attached to national societies and the confusion that

seemed to have arisen between them and the universal body, which led to Fox's protest in the subsequent age.

But though this idea of a spiritual and universal kingdom was not new in the seventeenth century, may it not have become obsolete in the nineteenth? The history of Unitarianism was an important link in the evidence on this subject. We found that in the last century the idea of a spiritual kingdom was distinctly and formally repudiated by those who were most admired for wisdom and enlightenment; man at all events being excluded from any concern in such a kingdom, seeing that he had no faculties wherewith he could take cognizance of it. At the same time the idea of a very comprehensive world, which should include all nations, systems, religions, began at that time to be prevalent, and to be produced in opposition to the different sects of Christendom. Here, then, was one half of the belief which had belonged to other ages, that half which had been apparently least regarded by Protestants—trying in the eighteenth century to assert itself under new conditions and to the exclusion of the other half. But if the Roman empire, from Augustus to Diocletian, had not been the sufficient type of this all tolerant all including world, the French Empire which succeeded to and carried out the speculations of the last generation was a fair specimen of what it must be. While this Empire was diffusing philanthropy through Europe, we noticed in different directions the gradual re-appearance of that other element in the idea of a kingdom for mankind, which this philanthropy had cast aside as unnecessary. First, we observed a religious awakening —men becoming strongly convinced that there is a spiritual power and influence at work among them. The immediate result of this awakening was a greater value for personal religion; then it led to a desire among those who had felt it for combination and fellowship in the promotion of spiritual objects; finally, to the inquiry whether such a combination must not have a spiritual foundation, whether it must not be connected with belief and worship. Then we were struck by various indications among philosophical men of a new habit of

thinking in reference to the constitution of our race, of a tendency to look upon man as essentially a spiritual creature, and therefore to conclude that his highest and most important acts and exercises must be of a spiritual kind. Along with this faith, we noticed the growth of another, that there must be a region for those acts and exercises; that they cannot merely turn in upon themselves, though that may be part of their occupation, but that there must be a world adapted to them and formed for them. We could not find any clear account of this world except that it was this universe which surrounds us, and of which our eyes and ears take account; but though this universe be proclaimed as the great possession and inheritance of mankind, we could not learn that more than a few gifted poets and sages had a right of admission to its meanings and mysteries. Another difficulty which these philosophers seemed to experience, arose from the question, whether a distinct spiritual world do exist at all, or whether it be only created out of this common world, by the class which is endued with faculties for that purpose. But this point was peremptorily decided by another set of deep and earnest thinkers, who seemed to have proved the existence of something which man did not create himself, but to which he must in some sort refer all his acts and thoughts, and which must be assumed as the ground of them.

Meanwhile we found the most eager and passionate demands for a universal constitution into which men as men might enter, occupying not religious, not philosophical men, but labourers, handicraftsmen, serfs. The nature of this constitution had been discussed again and again; and the settlement of it had not been left to mere discussions; it had been brought to the most severe practical tests. These inferences seemed to follow from them all: first, that every modern attempt to construct a universal society had been defeated by the determination of men to assert their own wills; secondly, that the true universal society must be one which neither overlooks the existence of those wills, nor considers them as an inconvenient and accidental interruption to its workings, as a friction to be regretted and allowed for, but which

assumes them as the very principle and explanation of its existence; thirdly, that it is equally impossible for men to be content with a spiritual society which is not universal, and with a universal society which is not spiritual. This doctrine then, I think, cannot be said to be obsolete, cannot be turned into a mere philosophical notion. Time has added to its strength, not diminished it; there is more necessity now than in any former day, that it should have a practical not a theoretical satisfaction.

III. It would seem from these observations, that the spiritual and universal society must be involved in the very idea of our human constitution, say rather, must be that constitution, by virtue of which we realize that there is a humanity, that we form a kind. But supposing this to be the case, may not we suppose that this constitution has been gradually making itself known to men as civilization has advanced; and that when it has been diffused more widely, each man will feel and understand his place in it—rightly and harmoniously exercising those spiritual powers which fit him for living in it, and suffering his neighbour without molestation, nay, kindly assisting him to exercise his; that in this way, those strifes and oppositions of opinion which have hindered men from cheerfully co-operating with each other, will gradually cease, and peace and good will become general; and may not one means to this end be the abandonment of those notions which prevailed in the early ages of the world, and which have been kept alive by the different religious sects and systems since—that the character of this constitution has been revealed to us in an inspired Book; and that it is ruled over in some incredible manner, by a divine Person?' This is the last hint I shall consider. It leads us to notice another class of facts which have passed under our review.

The Quakers, we found, were great disparagers of what they called the outward letter. They were jealous lest reverence for the Bible should interfere with the belief of a Spiritual Invisible Teacher. Nevertheless, it was in the Bible that George Fox learnt clearly the fact that there was such a Teacher; it was from the Bible that he preached of it

to others. It was not merely the principle of Justification by Faith which Luther, torn by inward conflicts, learnt from the Bible—he owed to it still more, the personal form of that doctrine, and the conception of it as a vital truth, not as a scholastic dogma. The belief of Election in its highest, purest form, was received by Calvin from the same source; the Unitarian prized the Bible as the great witness for the Divine Unity, for God's absolute and universal love, for the fact that mankind is under some better condition than that of a curse. Thus, whenever there has been in any man any one of these strong convictions, which seemed to us so precious and important, then he has looked with reverence upon the Scriptures, as the teachers of it and the authority for it; whenever he has been able to carry home that conviction to the minds of his brethren, these have been his instruments. And this fact comes out the more remarkably, when it is set by the side of another, which the study of the different religious systems made known to us—namely, that just in proportion as any of them has become consolidated, the Bible, even if it has been nominally and formally held up to admiration, nay even to worship, has been deposed from its real dignity. The Quaker, who converts it into a system of conceits and allegories, under pretence of doing reverence to the Spirit, has not really treated it worse than the Lutheran, or the Calvinist, who cuts it up into texts for the confirmation of dogmas, or the mottos of sermons, or than the Unitarian, who would reduce it into a collection of moral maxims. So that, instead of being obliged by our belief of the instability and helplessness of these systems, to suspect the value or underrate the authority of the book to which they all appeal; may we not say boldly, that as it was this book which revealed to each founder of a sect that side or aspect of the spiritual economy which it was his especial vocation to present and elucidate, so it has been a perpetual and most embarrassing witness against the effort to compress that economy within the rules and formulas, which he and his followers have devised for the statement of their opinions?

But this is not enough. It is alleged, that whatever may have been the case with religious bodies, the greatest light has, of late especially, been thrown upon the nature of our spiritual constitution, by those who did not derive their knowledge from the Scriptures; nay, who had great doubts about their value and authenticity.

Now, I have not affected to disparage the labours of philosophers, either in these or in past days. I have expressed the highest respect for those who have brought to light what seem to me precious truths respecting certain faculties in us, which have been supposed to have no existence. But I have also intimated an opinion, which I am most anxious should be sifted, and if it be false, exposed, that this is precisely the limit of their doings. They have proved that we have certain faculties which do take cognizance of spiritual transcendental objects: they have not shewn what these spiritual transcendental objects are; they have shewn that we must have a spiritual constitution; they have not shewn what that spiritual constitution is. I do not therefore deny that we have learnt what our forefathers did not know, or did not know nearly as well. I do not deny that it has been the effect of experiments, failures, contradictions, to make us better acquainted with what we are and what we want. I am very thankful, for the sake of mankind, that there have been men who were permitted to make these discoveries, without (obviously, and so far as we know, I mean) seeing the truths which I think answer to them, and which show that Tantalus is not the one type of humanity. But so far from being led by anything that I see or hear of these writers, to believe that they have discovered any substitute for a Revelation of that which is needful for man's highest necessities, I am well convinced that their teachings honestly received will make his cries for one more passionate; and that it will be seen at last, that the book which has always hitherto met the cravings of its readers, and given them that glimpse of the mysterious world which they required, does contain the full declaration of that state which God has established for us, and which we have been toiling all our lives to find.

The second part of the question is very much involved with the first, and for our purpose is perhaps the most important. 'Is not the idea of a spiritual King, an actual Person, superintending and ordaining the movements of the universal and spiritual society, the dream of a past age? Is it not one which a sensible man, who was also an honest one, and used words in their simple straightforward sense, would be rather reluctant than anxious to bring forward? Is it not obvious, that every step in the progress of thought and discovery has taken us further from such a notion as this, and has bequeathed it, as their proper possession, to old wives and children?' I have perhaps implicitly treated this point already; still, I am so anxious to give it a direct consideration, that I will, at any hazard of repetition and tediousness, recur to my former method of proof.

A belief in a direct spiritual government over the life, thoughts, acts, and words, of those who would submit themselves to it, was, we have seen, the third distinguishing peculiarity of Quakerism; the one which produced so many more outward and apparent results than the other two, that in the notions of modern Friends it has absorbed them both into itself. The system of the society appears to be expressly devised for the purpose of giving expression to this belief. Did it then seem to us that this system was falling into decay, because it had borne too decisive and consistent a witness to this bygone notion, or had prevented it from undergoing those changes to which, with the increase of light and civilisation, it ought to have been subject? On the contrary, the essential feebleness of Quakerism appeared to lie in this—that it exhibited the doctrine of spiritual superintendence in an inadequate, inconsistent, and shrivelled form. It testified that sudden thoughts, sudden acts, sudden speeches, oftentimes of the most obviously trifling character, had their origin in divine teaching and inspiration; it virtually excluded what is the most significant, and what Quakers, like all other persons, are obliged to acknowledge as the most significant portion of our life—that which is occupied with calm, orderly, continuous transactions—from the spiritual sphere. Education,

we saw that the Quakers looked upon as most important; education according to the system of the society could not be a spiritual work.

If we turned from Quakerism to that which is most unlike it, to Calvinism, the same inference was forced upon us in another form. A belief in the will of God as the only spring of Good, Order, Happiness, was, we found, the earnest practical life-giving principle in the minds of Calvin and his disciples; whatever brave acts they had done, whatever good thoughts they had uttered, sprang from this conviction. Had they pushed it too far; had their system riveted the notion of a ruling Will in their minds, and so perpetuated it to an age, when, in the natural course of things, it ought to have been abandoned? We were led to adopt exactly the opposite opinion. Their system, by setting aside the idea of a human will, had left the doctrine of a Divine will barren and unmeaning; the idea of a personal Ruler had disappeared, and those who were most anxious to assert the government of the living God, had been the great instruments of propagating the notion of an atheistical Necessity.

But it may be said, 'Though these Quaker and these Calvinistical opinions, concerning the Spirit which works in man, and the absolute Will of God, may involve or be involved in that idea of an actual King of men to which we are alluding, they are not identical with it. That idea evidently turns upon the doctrine of an Incarnation; it asserts that one who is the Son of Man, as well as the Son of God, is the Lord of the world, and, in some higher sense, of the spiritual Society; and it is this doctrine which seems so connected with the oldest fables of the world, that we cannot but think it must give way before the light of truth.' So the Unitarian of the last century thought, and the question we discussed was—How did this opinion, which was the root of their system, affect these principles which really formed the faith of the better men among them?

It seemed to us, that the idea of the unity of God was sacrificed, because the person who was acknowledged as the great object and centre of human admiration, was denied to be one with the Father;

that the idea of the love of God was sacrificed, because it was denied that He had in His own Person interfered on behalf of His creatures; that the idea of our being children of God was sacrificed, because there was nothing to give the name of Father reality, to shew that it was more than a loose and almost blasphemous figure of speech.

Accordingly, in the new Unitarianism, Jesus of Nazareth is beginning to be recognised as merely one of the world's heroes; it may or may not be the most important and conspicuous one. But this belief, this last and highest discovery of the nineteenth century takes us back to that stage of history, in which universal fellowship was impossible; to the time when there was a Grecian Hercules and an Egyptian Hercules; when he who repealed bad laws was the hero of a country, and he who drained a marsh of a neighbourhood; and when men were crying and sighing for someone who should be the head and prince of all these; who should be indeed the Lord of their race; who should rescue the race from the evils to which, as a race, it was subject; who should connect it with the absolute Being of whom their consciences witnessed. Is not this a strange and melancholy relapse under the name of progression!

We have then a reasonable excuse for inquiring, whether there be on this earth a spiritual and universal kingdom, which the different religious systems have not been able to supersede or destroy; which is likely to make itself manifest when they have all perished; and with which we of the nineteenth century may have fellowship.

And as a preface to this inquiry, it seems not unfitting to consider whether there be any traces of a spiritual constitution in the early ages of the world, and whether the books of Scripture afford us any help in interpreting them.

Chapter II. Indications of a Spiritual Constitution

When I was speaking of the Quaker system, I noticed one practical inconsistency which seemed to lie at the root of it, and to affect all

its workings. The member of the Society of Friends ought to be the conscious disciple of a Divine Teacher. But every child born to a Quaker is actually considered and treated as a Friend till, by some act of rebellion, he has deprived himself of the title. Something of the same anomaly we have traced in the Protestant systems. Consciously justified men ought to constitute the Evangelical Church; persons conscious of a divine Election the Reformed: yet neither of these have had the courage to exclude their children from all religious fellowship, to treat them absolutely as heathens. The Anabaptists have made the nearest approach to that practice; but even in them there are very evident indications of timidity and inconsistency.

When we examined the schemes of the world which had been constructed by philosophers, we observed that they had been encountered by a knot, not unlike that which had perplexed the authors of religious sects, and that they had found themselves compelled with more or less of ceremony to cut it. It was next to impossible to organise a universal society, while the distinction of families prevailed. In such a society men must be so many separate units. But there is this glaring fact of family life to prove that they are not units; that they are bound together by a certain law, which may be set at naught, and made almost utterly inefficient, but which cannot be entirely repealed.

I. Now this fact, that men exist in families, which seems so grievously to disturb the inventors of systems, is perhaps the very one which would be most likely to suggest the thought to a plain person, that there must be a moral or spiritual constitution for mankind. We are obliged to speak of every man as being in two conditions. He is in a world of objects which offer themselves to his senses, and which his senses may be fitted to entertain. He is a son, perhaps he is a brother. These two states are equally inevitable; they are also perfectly distinct. You cannot by any artifice reduce them under the same law or name. To describe the one you must speak of what we see, or hear, or handle or smell; to describe the other, you must speak of what we are; "I am a son," "I am a brother." It is impossible therefore to use the word

"circumstances" in reference to the one state with the same strictness with which you apply it to the other. All the things which I have to do with, I naturally and rightly call my circumstances—they stand round me: but that which is necessary in an account of myself, seems to be entitled to another name. We commonly call it a relationship. And this difference soon becomes more conspicuous. We speak of a man having a bad digestion or a bad hearing; we speak of his being a bad brother or a bad son. By both these phrases we imply that there is a want of harmony between the man and his condition. But by the one we evidently wish to signify that there need not be this want of harmony, that he is voluntarily acting as if he were not in a relation in which nevertheless he is, and must remain. This inconsistency we describe by the term moral evil, or whatever equivalent phrase we may have invented; for some equivalent, whether we like it or not, we must have.

It might seem to follow from these observations, that the family state is the natural one for man; and accordingly we speak of the affections which correspond to this state, as especially natural affections. But it should be remembered that we use another phrase which is apparently inconsistent with this; we describe the savage condition, that is to say, the one in which man is striving to be independent, as the natural state of society. And though it may be doubtful whether that should be called a state of society, which is the contradiction of all states and of all society, yet there seems a very considerable justification for the application of the word natural to it: seeing that we cannot be acquainted with a family, or be members of a family, without knowing in others, without feeling in ourselves, certain inclinations which tend to the dissolution of its bonds, and to the setting up of that separate independent life, which when exhibited on a large scale we name the savage or wild life. These inclinations are kept down by discipline, and the affections which attract us to the members of our family are called out in opposition to them; surely, therefore, it cannot be a mistake to describe them by the name which we ordinarily apply to plants that spring up in a soil, uncultivated and uncalled for.

We have here some of the indications of a spiritual constitution; that is to say, we have the marks of a state which is designed for a voluntary creature; which is his, whether he approve it or no; against which, he has a nature or inclination to rebel. But still, most persons would mean something more by the phrase than this; they would ask how you could call that spiritual, which had no reference to religion. Now the histories and mythologies of all the people with whom we are acquainted bear unequivocal witness to this fact, that men have connected the ideas of fathers, children, husbands, brothers, sisters, with the beings whom they worshipped. This is the first, rudest observation which we make upon them. But, when we search further, we begin to see that this simple observation has the most intimate connection with the whole of mythology; that it is not merely a fact in reference to it, but the fact, without which all others which encounter us are unintelligible. You say all kinds of offices are attributed to the gods and goddesses; they rule over this town and that river, they dispense this blessing or send that curse. Be it so; but who are they who exercise these powers? The mythology tells you of relations existing between them; also of relations between them and the objects of their bounty and their enmity. In later ages, when we are studying the differences in the mythology of different nations, it is no wonder that we should notice the character of the soil, the nature of the climate, the beauty or the dreariness of the country, the rains or the inundations which watered it, as circumstances helping to determine the views which the inhabitants entertained of their unseen rulers. And then the transition is very easy to the belief, that by these observations we have accounted for their faith, and that the histories of the gods are merely accidental poetical embellishments. But, if we consider that the worshippers evidently felt that which we call accidental to be essential; that the merging the gods in the objects with which they were connected was merely an artifice of later philosophy; that the circumstances of soil and climate did indeed occasion some important differences between the objects reverenced in various nations, but that the circumstance

of their being parents, brothers, and sisters, so far as we know, was common to all, or only wanting in those which were utterly savage, that is, in which the human relations were disregarded; if we observe that those who endeavour to explain mythology by the phenomena of the world, are obliged to beg what they call 'a law of nature,' alleging that we are naturally inclined to inquire into the origin of any great and remarkable objects which we see; if we will notice how utterly inconsistent it is with all experience and observation to attribute such a disposition as this to men whose feelings and faculties have not been by some means previously awakened, how very little a savage is struck by any except the most glaring and alarming phenomena, and how much less he thinks about them: if we will reflect upon these points, we may perhaps be led to adopt the opinion that the simplest method of solving the difficulty is the best; that it is not our being surrounded with a strange world of sensible objects which leads us to think of objects with which we do not sensibly converse, but that these perceptions come to us through our family relationships; that we become more and more merely idolaters when these relationships are lost sight of, and the other facts of our condition only regarded; that a world without family relationships would have no worship, and on the other hand, that without worship all the feelings and affections of family life would have utterly perished.

II. But is there no meaning in that savage wish for independence? Is it merely the dissolution and destruction of those family bonds which are meant for men, or is it the indication that men were meant for other bonds than these, not perhaps of necessity incompatible with them? History seems to decide the question in favour of the latter opinion. It seems to say, that as there is a worse state of society than the patriarchal, there is also a better and more advanced one; it declares that the faculties which are given to man never have had their proper development and expansion, except in a national community. Now if we examine any such community, taking our specimen from the Pagan world, we shall perceive that the member of it had a more distinct

feeling of himself, of his own personality, than the mere dweller in a family could have. It may seem to us very puzzling that it should be so; for if we look at Sparta or Rome—at any commonwealth except Athens—it seems as if the society were imposing the severest restraints upon each man's own taste, judgment, and will. Nevertheless, it is the manifestation of energetic purpose in particular leaders, and the assurance we feel that there was the same kind of purpose, though in a less degree, existing in those who composed every rank of their armies, which gives the interest to the better times of these republics; as it is the feeling of a change in this respect—of the armies having become a body of soldiers merely, not of men, which makes the declining ages of them so mournful. We have evidence, therefore, coming in a way in which it might least be expected, that this personal feeling is connected with the sense of national union.

Of all men the savage[13] has least of the feelings of dignity and personal self-respect; he is most emphatically a mere workman or tool, the habitual slave of his own chance necessities and inclinations, and therefore commonly of other men's also. He who understands the force of the words, 'I am a brother,' has taken a mighty step in advance of this individual man, even in that respect on which he most prides himself; he is more of a person, more of a freeman. But he is not enough of a person, not enough of a freeman. If he will be more, he must be able to say, "I am a citizen;" this is the true onward step; if he aim at freedom by any other, he relapses into an independence which is only another name for slavery. Now, we may observe several facts, too obvious to escape the most careless student of history, except it should be from their very obviousness, which are

[13]Of course there is no ideal savage in actual existence—no one who is perfectly independent. The North American Indian has so many tribe feelings, that the admirers of savage life, taking him for an example, have been able to contend that it is the very soil for the cultivation of domestic affections. But not to dwell upon the violent exaggerations and distortions of fact which have been necessary for the support of this hypothesis, it is quite obvious that these feelings and affections are just so many departures from savage perfection, so many threatenings of a degeneracy into the social and civilized condition. The true savage is Caliban; the nearest approximation to him is probably to be looked for in New Holland.

closely connected with this. One is, that in every organised nation at its commencement, there is a high respect for family relations, that they embody themselves necessarily in the national constitution; another is, that there is a struggle between these relations and the national polity, although they form so great an element in it; the legislator feeling that each brother, husband, father, is a citizen, and that as such, he comes directly under his cognizance.

In Sparta, we see the principle of family life, though distinctly recognised, sacrificed in a great degree to the Laws. In Athens, we see the legislator, in his anxiety to leave men to themselves, allowing the growth of an independence which proved incompatible both with family relations and with national society. In Rome, we see the legislation so exquisitely interwoven with the family principle, that so soon as that became weak, the commonwealth inevitably fell.

These facts lead us to ask what this legislation means, wherein its power lies, and in what way it comes to be so connected with, and yet diverse from, these relationships? In trying to find the answer to this question we are at once struck with this observation—Law takes each man apart from his fellows; it addresses him with a Thou; it makes him feel that there is an eye fixed upon his doings; that there is a penalty overhanging him. It is therefore, in this point of view, the direct opposite of a relationship by which we are bound to each other, and are made to feel that we cannot exist apart from each other. But, again, we find that the Law denounces those acts which make union and fellowship impossible, those acts which result from the determination of men to live and act as if they were independent of each other, as if they might set up themselves and make self-pleasing their end. The Law declares to each man that he is in a fellowship, that he shall not do any act which is inconsistent with that position. That therefore which is the great foe to family relationship, the desire for individuality, is the very thing which Law, even while it deals with men as distinct persons, is threatening and cursing. A nation then, like a family, would seem to possess some of the characteristics of a spiritual constitution. If we

take the word spiritual in that sense in which it is used by modern philosophers, we have abundant proofs that where there is no feeling of national union, there is a most precarious and imperfect exercise of intellectual power. If we take it in the sense of voluntary we find here a constitution evidently meant for creatures which have wills; seeing that it is one which men do not create for themselves, that is one which may be violated, nay, which there is a natural inclination in every man to violate; and that by the words "bad citizen," we express moral reprobation, just as we do when we speak of a bad father or mother. And if we ask whether there are any religious feelings connected with national life, as we found there were with family life, the mythology of the old world is just as decisive in its reply. If the Homeric gods were fathers, brothers, husbands, they were also kings; one character is just as prominent, just as essential as the other. It is possible that the former may have been the most ancient, and this would explain the notion of scholars that traces of an earlier worship are discoverable in the Iliad. In Homer's time the two characters, the domestic and the kingly, were incorporated, and the offices of the gods as connected with nature, though they might be gradually mingling themselves with these characters, and threatening to become identical with them, are nevertheless distinct from them. The princes of Agamemnon's league felt that there must be higher princes than they; they could use no authority, take no counsel, except in that belief. And though they spoke of these rulers as compelling the clouds and winds, they did not look upon this exercise of power as higher or more real, than that of putting wisdom and spirit into Diomed, and arming Hector for the fight. And hence the leaders were always types of the gods in every country which had attained the forms of a national polity. Wherever these existed, invisible rulers were recognised; a class of men interpreted the meaning of their judgments; they were invoked as the guides in battles; sacrifices were offered to avert their displeasure or to claim their protection.

But a time came, when thoughts were awakened in men's minds of something more comprehensive than either this family or this national constitution. The former belonged to all men; yet in another respect it was narrow, separating men from each other. The latter was obviously exclusive; a nation was limited to a small locality; it actually treated all that lay beyond it, and whom it could not subdue to itself, as aliens, if not enemies. If this exclusion were to continue, there was certainly some nation which ought to reign, which had a right to make its polity universal. Great Asiatic monarchies there had been, which had swallowed all tribes and kingdoms into themselves, but these had established a rule of mere physical force.

Might not Greece, the land of intellectual force, shew that it was meant to rule over all? The young hero of Macedon went forth in this hope, and in a few years accomplished his dream. In a few more his empire was broken in pieces; Greece was not to be the lord of the world: still in the Egyptian and Syrian dynasties which she sent forth she asserted a mental supremacy. But a nation which paid no homage to art or to philosophy swallowed up all these dynasties, and with them all that remained of Greece herself. A universal polity was established in the world, and the national life, the family life, of Rome, perished at the very moment in which she established it.

Was there a religion connected with this universal polity as there was with the family and the national? We find that there was. The Emperor was the great God. To him all people and nations and languages were to bow. Subject to this supreme divinity all others might be tolerated and recognised. No form of religion was to be proscribed unless it were absolutely incompatible with the worship of a Tiberius and a Vitellius. It has been suggested already, that this Roman Empire answers exactly to the idea of a universal world. If there is to be anything different from this, if there is to be a universal Church, we ought to know of what elements it is to be composed, we ought to know whether it also sets aside family or national life, or whether it justifies

their existence, reconciles them to itself, and interprets the problems of ancient history concerning their mysterious meaning.

Chapter III. The Scriptural View of This Constitution

It is commonly acknowledged by religious persons, that the Bible is remarkably unsystematic. Sometimes this admission is made thankfully and even triumphantly; it is urged as a proof that the Bible is mainly intended to supply the daily wants, and to meet the ever-changing circumstances of the spiritual man. Sometimes it furnishes the ground of an argument for the necessity of that being done by others which is not done here; by those who lived nearest the age of the Apostles, or at the Reformation, or in a more advanced period of civilization. Sometimes it is alleged as a reason for denying that there is any book possessing the character which Christians have attributed to this one; for asserting that it is a collection of documents belonging to a particular nation, accidentally strung together, and invested by the superstition of after-times with a fictitious entireness.

All these notions, it seems to me, assume that the words system and method are synonymous, and that if the first is wanting in the Scriptures the last must be wanting also. Now to me these words seem not only not synonymous, but the greatest contraries imaginable: the one indicating that which is most opposed to life, freedom, variety; and the other that without which they cannot exist. If I wished to explain my meaning, I should not resort to a definition; I should take an illustration, and, of all illustrations, I think the most striking is that which is afforded by the Bible itself. While the systematizer is tormented every page he reads with a sense of the refractory and hopeless materials he has to deal with, I am convinced that the person who is determined to read only for his own comfort and profit is haunted with the sense of some harmony, not in the words but in the history, which he ought not to overlook, and without reference to which the meaning of that in which he most delights is not very certain. And, while this sense

of a method exists, the fact that these works were written at different periods, in different styles, and by men of totally different characters, increases the impression that there is something most marvellous in the volume they compose. The most skilful and laborious analyst cannot persuade his disciples to abandon the use of the word Bible, he cannot divest himself of the feelings with which it is associated.

I. Perhaps it may be useful for the purpose at which we are aiming, that we should examine a little into this phenomenon. Everyone who reads the Old Testament must perceive that the idea of a covenant of God with a certain people is that which presides in it. In plain history, in lofty prayers and songs, in impassioned denunciations of existing evil, and predictions of coming misery, this idea is still at the root of all others. Take it away, and not merely is there no connexion between the different parts, but each book by itself, however simple in its language or in its details, becomes an incoherent rhapsody. A person, then, who had no higher wish than to understand the character and feelings of that strange people which has preserved its identity through so many generations, would of course begin with examining into the account of this covenant. He would feel that the call of Abraham, the promise made to him and to his seed, and the seal of it which was given him, were the most significant parts of this record. But one thought would strike him above all: This covenant is said to be with a family; with a man doubtless in the first instance, but with a man expressly and emphatically as the head of a family. The very terms of the covenant, and every promise that it held forth, were inseparably associated with the hope of a posterity. It is impossible to look upon the patriarchal character of Abraham as something accidental to his character as the chosen witness and servant of the Most High. These two positions are absolutely inseparable. The fact of his relationship to God is interpreted to him by the feeling of his human relations, and his capacity of fulfilling them arose from his acknowledgment of the higher relation. A little further reflection upon the subordinate parts of the narrative (which, when this fact is felt to be the centre, will all acquire anew value

and meaning) must convince us, that sensuality, attended of necessity with sensual worship, was the character of the tribes among which Abraham was dwelling; that in this sensuality and sensual worship was involved the neglect of family bonds; that the witness for an invisible and righteous God, against gods of nature and mere power, was, at the self-same moment and by the same necessity, the witness for the sacredness of these bonds. The notion of a Being exercising power over men, seen in the clouds, and heard in the winds, this was that which the world entertained, and trembled, till utter corruption brought in utter atheism. That there is a God related to men and made known to men through their human relations, this was the faith of Abraham, the beginner of the Church on earth. But this truth could not be exhibited in one individual faithful man; it must be exhibited through a family. The rest of Genesis, therefore, gives us the history of the patriarchs who followed Abraham. But what if these, or any of these, should not be faithful? What if they should not maintain the principle of family relationship, or retain a recollection of the higher principle involved in it? What if the world should find its way into the Church? The historian does not wait for the question to be asked him; his narrative answers it. The great majority of the sons of Jacob were not faithful men, they did not maintain the principle of family life, they did not recollect the Being who had revealed Himself through it. Perhaps then, Joseph, the true believer, separated himself from his godless brethren, and established a new and distinct fellowship. Had he done so he would have acted upon the principle of Ishmael or Esau; he would have founded a society which was built upon choice, not upon relationship. The historian declares, that he followed a different course, that he was indeed separated from his brethren, but by their act, not his: that he continued a witness for God's covenant, not with him, but with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; not with an individual, but with a family. According then to the Jewish Scriptures, the Abrahamic family, though cut off by their covenant from the other families of the earth, was so cut off expressly that it might bear witness for the true

order of the world; for that order against which all sensible idolatry, and all independent choice or self-will, is rebellion; for that order in which alone men can be free, because to abide in it they must sacrifice those inclinations which make them slaves; for that order, in and through which, as we might have guessed from the Gentile records, the idea of God can alone be imparted. The promise of the covenant therefore was, that in the seed of Abraham all the families of the earth should be blessed.

II. But, whatever sentimentalists may say about the patriarchal condition of the world, its essential purity, and the misery of departing from it, the Scriptures give no countenance to such dreams. It was part of the promise that the children of Jacob should enter into another state. They were to possess the Canaanitish nations. They were to become a nation. And although the history, in strict conformity to all experience, describes the middle passage between these two conditions as a grievous one, though the children of Abraham are said to have sunk into moral debasement and actual slavery, yet their redemption is connected with a more awful revelation than any which had been imparted, or, as far as we can see, could have been imparted, to them in their previous state; and leads to new and most wonderful discoveries respecting the relations between men and God. The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob declares that He remembers His covenant, and has seen the affliction of His people. But He declares Himself to the appointed guide and deliverer by another name than this—that name upon which the Jewish covenant stands, which is the foundation of all law, I am That I am. And as soon as the judgments upon natural worship, and upon a tyranny which set at naught all invisible and righteous government, had been accomplished, and the people had been taught to feel that an unseen Power had delivered them, that awful code was proclaimed amidst thunders and lightnings, which spoke straight to the individual conscience of each man, even while it reminded him in the most direct and solemn manner that he was related to God and his brethren. I will not enter here into an explanation of the manner in

which the tribe institutions, those which speak of family relationship, were so embodied in the Jewish constitution that they gave a meaning to this law and yet did not deprive it of its awful personal character. That observation must needs strike everyone who studies with the slightest attention the Jewish institutions, as they are described in the Pentateuch. It is more necessary to notice those which led the thoughts of the Jews above the bonds of family and of law, though they were inseparably intertwined with both; I mean the tabernacle, the priesthood, and sacrifices. That these were the shrines of an undeveloped mystery every thoughtful Jew was conscious; but he was equally certain that this mystery was implied in all his acts, in all his family relations, in the national order, in his legal obedience. That there was an awful self-existent Being from whom all law came, was declared by the commandments: the Tabernacle affirmed that this Being was present among His people, and that it was possible in some awful manner to approach Him. The family covenant bore witness that there was a relation between Him and His worshippers; the Priesthood from generation to generation witnessed that this relation might be actually realised, that it might be realised by the whole people, in a representative. The National Constitution and punishments awakened in each person the feeling of moral evil, and taught them that that evil arose from violating his relations with God and his countrymen, and that the effect of it was a practical exclusion from these blessings; the sacrifices intimated that the relation was restored, when he had personally, and through the priest, given up something, not selected by himself as the most appropriate, or the most precious, but appointed by the law; and when he had given up that self-will which caused the separation. Such thoughts were wrought gradually into the mind of every humble and obedient Jew; they were brought directly home to him by the parting instruction of his great Lawgiver; they were confirmed and illustrated by all his subsequent experience, and by the teachers who shewed him the purpose of it.

The national polity of the Jews was in its essence exclusive. We dwell upon this fact, as if it destroyed all connexion between this polity and that of the Pagans, or of modern Europe. But every nation, as such, is exclusive. Athens was exclusive, Rome was exclusive; nevertheless, we have admitted, all persons admit, that more of humanity came out in the exclusive nations of Athens and of Rome, than ever showed itself in the savage tribes of the earth, which have never attained to a definite polity. Before we can ascertain whether the exclusiveness of the Jews was an inhuman exclusiveness, we must find out what it excluded; and here the same answer must be given as before. It excluded the worship of sensible, natural things; it excluded the idea of choice and self-will. The covenant with an invisible Being made it treason for men to choose the objects of their worship. This worship of the one Being was the bond of the commonwealth, and, if this were broken, it was dissolved. The covenant with an invisible Being obliged them to look upon all kings as reigning in virtue of His covenant, as representing His dignity, as responsible to Him; upon all other officers, the priestly, the prophetical, the judicial, as in like manner directly receiving their appointments and commissions from Him. By its first protest it affirmed that there are not a set of separate gods over each territory, various, according to the peculiarities of soil and of climate; but that there is one Almighty and Invisible Being, who is the Lord of all. The God of Israel is declared to be the God of all the nations of the earth; the Israelites are chosen out to be witnesses of the fact. By the second protest the exclusive Hebrew witnessed, that no king, no priest, no judge, has a right to look upon himself as possessing intrinsic power; that he is exercising office, under a righteous king, a perfect priest, an all-seeing judge; that, in proportion as he preserves that thought, and in the strength of it fulfils his task, the character of that king, and priest, and judge, and the relation in which he stands to men, reveal themselves to him; that these offices are continued from generation to generation, as a witness of His permanence who is Lord of them all, and who abides for ever and ever.

As then in the patriarchal period the Divine Being manifested Himself in the family relations, and by doing so manifested on what these relations depend, how they are upheld, and wherein their worth consists: so in the national period He was manifested to men through all national offices; thereby explaining their meaning and import, how they are upheld, and wherein their worth consists. But we are not to suppose that the family relations had less to do with this stage of the history than with the former. As they were embodied in the national institutions, as the existence of these institutions depended upon them, so their meaning in connexion with national life and national sins, and with a Being of whom both witnessed, became continually more apparent.

I need not point out to anyone who reads the prophets, what is their uniform method of awakening the conscience of the Jew, and of imparting to him the highest truths. I need not say that the Lord is throughout presented in the character of the husband of the nation; that acts of apostacy and false worship are constantly referred to as adulteries; and that the greatest pains are taken to convince us, that these are no poetical flourishes or terms of art, by connecting the actual human relation and human offence with the properly spiritual one. Oftentimes the verbal commentator is at fault, from the apparent confusion of the two. He cannot make up his mind whether it is the infidelity of the nation to her God, or of actual wives to their actual husbands, which the holy man is denouncing. And such perplexity there must needs be in the thoughts of all persons who are determined to separate these two ideas,—who do not see that it is the main object of the prophet to show their bearing upon one another,—who will not enter into his mind, by feeling that human relationships are not artificial types of something divine, but are actually the means and the only means, through which man ascends to any knowledge of the divine; and that every breach of a human relation, as it implies a violation of the higher law, so also is a hindrance and barrier to the

perception of that higher law,—the drawing a veil between the spirit of a man and his God.

But how did this idea of a human constitution harmonize, or come into collision, with those attempts at universal empire, which appeared to be the necessary consummation or termination of the ancient polities? The Asiatic monarchies have been sometimes called patriarchal, and beyond a doubt the patriarchal feeling—the belief that the king was a father—did lie at the foundation of them, and did constitute all that was sound and healthful in the acts of the monarch, or the reverence of the people. But if we are to believe the Bible, the king is not merely a father, he is something more; his position has its ground in the acknowledgment of an unseen absolute Being, whose relations to men lead up to the contemplation of Him in Himself. The effort therefore to make the paternal relation all in all is, according to this shewing, a false effort, one necessarily leading to false results. In this case the result is very apparent. The power of the monarch not having any safe ground to rest upon, soon becomes reverenced merely as power. No conscience of a law, which they ought to obey, is called forth in the minds of the subjects or the monarch; he may have kindly affections towards them, which may be reciprocated, but that is all. There is nothing to preserve the existence and sanctity of the family relationship, upon which the sovereign authority is built; nothing to resist the tendency to natural worship, which destroys it; nothing to hinder the monarch from believing that he reigns by his own right. Hence, these so-called patriarchal governments, besides that they awaken neither the energies of the human intellect nor the perception of right and wrong, soon are changed into the direct contraries of that which they profess to be. The father becomes an oppressor of his own people, a conqueror of others; all idea of the invisible is swallowed up in a reverence for him. Ultimately he is looked up to as the God of gods and the Lord of lords. It is no false feeling which leads us to rejoice when these patriarchal kings were driven back by the little national bands at Marathon or Platæa. No one who reveres invisible

more than visible strength, will restrain his pains at that discomfiture. It is a hateful and godless thing to check them, or to stir up our sympathy on behalf of the Eastern tyrant. He who cherishes such a habit of feeling, will not be able to rejoice, whatever he may fancy, when Pharaoh and his host sink like lead into the waters, or when Sisera with his six hundred chariots is put to flight by the prophetess of Israel.

If we look at the history of the Jews, we shall find that their distinct polity was a witness, through all the time it lasted, against these Babel monarchies; that in them the Jew saw that world concentrated in its worst form, out of which the covenant with the Abrahamic family, and with the Israelitish nation, had delivered him. To be like this world, however, to share its splendours, to adopt its worship, was the perpetual tendency of his evil nature, a tendency punished at length by subjection to its tyranny. But it was not merely by punishment that this inclination was resisted. The wish for fellowship with other nations was a true wish inverted; the dream of a human polity was one which the true God had sent to the Jew, though he had been taught how to realise it by an evil spirit. To bring out the true idea of such a polity, to show how it lay hid in all their own institutions, and how it would at length be brought out into full manifestation, this was the great office of the Hebrew Seer. Side by side with that vision of a Babylonian kingdom, which he taught his countrymen to look upon as based upon a lying principle, the contrary of their own, and as meant to be their scourge if they adopted that principle into their own conduct, rose up another vision of a king who did not judge after the sight of his eyes or the hearing of his ears, but who would rule men in righteousness, and whom the heathen should own. And as each new step in the history of the covenant—the first call of the patriarch which made them a family, their deliverance under Moses which made them a nation—was connected with a fresh revelation of the Divine King through these different relations, neither displacing the other but adopting it into itself; this glorious vision would have

been utterly imperfect, if it had not involved the prospect of such a discovery as had not been vouchsafed to any former age. The prophet, trained to deep awful meditation in the law, the history of his land, but above all in the mysterious services of the temple, was able by degrees to see, as one sin after another, one judgment after another, shewed him what were the dangers and wants of his nation, that the heir of David's throne must be a Man, in as strict a sense as David was, capable, not of less but of infinitely greater sympathy with every form of human sorrow than he had been capable of, and yet that in Him, the worshipper must behold God less limited by human conceptions, more in His own absoluteness and awfulness, than even in the burning bush, or amidst the lightnings of Sinai. How these two longings could be both accomplished; how idolatry could be abolished by the very manifestation which would bring the object of worship more near to all human thoughts and apprehensions; how the belief of a Being nigh to men, could be reconciled with that of one dwelling in his own perfection; how unceasing action on behalf of His creatures consists with eternal rest; how He could be satisfied with men, and yet be incapable of satisfaction with anything less pure and holy than Himself; these were the awful questions with which the prophet's soul was exercised, and which were answered, not at once, but in glimpses and flashes of light coming across the darkness of his own soul, and of his country's condition, which even now startle us as we read, and make us feel that the words are meant to guide us through our own confusions, and not to give us notions or formulas for disguising them. One part of his teaching must have been derived from that polity which was the great contrast to his own. The universal monarchs, the Sennacheribs and Nebuchadnezzars, were Men-gods. They took to themselves the attributes of the Invisible; and just in proportion as they did so, just in proportion as they hid the view of anything beyond humanity from the eyes of men, just in that proportion did they become inhuman, separate from their kind, dwelling apart in an infernal solitude.

This black ground brought the perfectly clear bright object more distinctly within their view; they felt that the God-man, in whom the fulness and awfulness of Godhead should shine forth, might therefore have perfect sympathy with the poorest and most friendless, and might at the same time enable them to enter into that transcendent region which their spirits had ever been seeking and never been able to penetrate.

III. Now, when we open the first book of the New Testament, the first words of it announce that the subject of it is the Son of David and the Son of Abraham. As we read on, we find that, according to the belief of the writer, this person came into the world to establish a Kingdom. Every act and word which is recorded of Him has reference to this kingdom. A voice is heard crying in the wilderness that a kingdom is at hand. Jesus of Nazareth comes preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. He goes into a mount to deliver the principles of His kingdom. He speaks parables to the people, nearly every one of which is prefaced with, "The kingdom of heaven is like." He heals the sick; it is that the Jews may know that His kingdom is come nigh to them. His private conferences with His disciples, just as much as His public discourses, relate to the character, the establishment, and the destinies of this kingdom. He is arraigned before Pontius Pilate for claiming to be a king. The superscription on the cross proclaims Him a king.

That there is a difference of character and style in the different Evangelists, and that a hundred different theories may be suggested as to their origin, their coincidences, their varieties, no one will deny. But that this characteristic is common to them all, that the most sweeping doctrine respecting the interpolations which have crept into them could not eliminate it out of them, that it would not be the least affected if the principle and method of their formation were ascertained, is equally true. The kingdom of Christ is under one aspect or other the subject of them all. But this peculiarity, it will be said, is easily accounted for. The writers of the New Testament are Jews; language of this kind is essentially Jewish. It belonged to the idiosyn-

crasy of the most strange and bigoted of all the people of the earth. To a certain extent, the reader will perceive, these statements exactly tally with mine. I have endeavoured to shew that the habit of thinking, which this perpetual use of a certain phrase indicates, is Jewish, and why it is Jewish. But there is a long step from this admission, to the one which is generally supposed to be involved in it, that this phrase is merely connected with particular accidents and circumstances, and has nothing to do with that which is essential and human. According to my view of the position of the Israelite, he was taken out of all nations expressly to be a witness of that which is unchanging and permanent, of that which is not modal, of the meaning of those relationships which belonged to him in common with the Pagans and with us, and which, as every Pagan felt, and as every peasant among us feels, have a meaning, and of the ground and purpose of national institutions and of law, which the Pagans acknowledged, and which most of us acknowledge, to be the great distinction between men and brutes. And since beneath these relationships, and this national polity, the Pagans believed, and we believe, that some other polity is lying, not limited like the former, not exclusive like the latter, I cannot see why we are to talk of the prejudices and idiosyncrasies of the Jew, because he expresses this universal idea in the words which are the simplest and the aptest to convey it. That, say the Evangelists, which we have been promised, that which we expect, is a Kingdom; this Jesus of Nazareth we believe and affirm to be the King. Either proposition may be denied. It may be said, "Men are not in want of a spiritual and universal society." It may be said, "This person has not the credentials of the character which he assumes." But it must, according to all ordinary rules of criticism, be admitted that this was the idea of the Evangelists, and we ought surely, in studying an author, to seek that we may enter into his idea, before we substitute for it one of our own.

I am aware, however, that the objector would be ready with an answer to this statement, and that it is one which will derive no little countenance from the opinions which are current among religious

people, and therefore will have no inconsiderable weight with them. It will be said, "We have an excuse for this attempt to separate the inward sense of the Gospels from their Jewish accidents, in the inconsistency which we discover in the use of those very phrases to which you allude. Do not the Evangelists constantly represent this kingdom as if it were an outward and visible kingdom, just like that of David and Solomon, nay, that very kingdom restored and extended? as something to supersede the government of Herod, ultimately perhaps that of the Cæsars? And do they not at the same time introduce such words as these and attribute them to their Master,"The kingdom of God cometh not with observation," "The kingdom of God is within you," "My kingdom is not of this world"—words which indicate that He taught (at least commonly) another doctrine, which has become leavened with these coarser and more sensual elements? If so, are we not justified in decomposing the mass and taking out the pure ore?"

I think the reader, who has gone along with me thus far, will not be much staggered by this argument. The kingdom of David, the kingdom of Solomon, was distinguished from the kingdoms of this world. It did not come with observation. It stood upon the principle which other kingdoms set at naught—the principle that the visible king is the type of the invisible, that he reigns in virtue of a covenant between the invisible king and the nation, that he is subject to a divine law. This principle, which was practically denied in all the great nations of the earth—denied then especially and emphatically when they became kingdoms (the ordinary, apparently the necessary, consummation of them all)—the Israelitish kingdom existed to enforce. All through the history, the tendency of the nation and its kings to set at naught the constitutional principle, to forget the covenant, is manifest; but this very tendency proved the truth of the idea against which it warred. If this be so, what contradiction was there in affirming that the new kingdom was the kingdom promised to David, the kingdom of his son, and yet that it was in the highest sense a kingdom not to be observed by the outward eye, a kingdom within, a kingdom not of this world?

Do I mean that there was nothing startling in such announcements to all or to most of those who first heard them? If I did, I should be rejecting the express testimony of the Evangelists. They tell us that the leading members of the Jewish commonwealth, and all the most admired and popular sects which divided it, were continually perplexed and outraged by this language. But they tell us also, that these same persons had lost the family and national character of Hebrews, that they perverted the express commands of God respecting the honouring of fathers and mothers, that they had no feelings of fellowship with Israelites as Israelites, but glorified themselves in their difference from the rest of their countrymen either on the score of righteousness or of wisdom; that individual self-exaltation, on one or the other of these grounds, was their distinguishing characteristic. They tell us, in strict consistency with these observations, that these men were never so scandalised as when Jesus spoke of His Father, of His coming to do His will, of His knowing Him, and being one with Him. The idea of a relation between men and their Maker, which was the idea implied in the Abrahamic covenant, had wholly departed from them; and therefore, the hope of a complete manifestation of the ground upon which this relationship rested, the hope which had sustained every suffering Israelite in every age, which was expressly the hope of Israel, could not be cherished by them. Their idea of God was the heathen one of a Being sitting in the clouds or diffused through the universe, entirely separated from His worshippers, incapable of speaking through men to men, only declaring Himself by signs, like those of the red sky in the morning and the lowering sky in the evening. And therefore the king they expected was the counterpart of the absolute Emperor. It is true that the awful words, "We have no king but Caesar," would not have been uttered at any other moment than the one which called them forth; that it required the most intense hatred and all the other passions which then had possession of their hearts, to induce the priests formally to abandon the dream of Jewish supremacy; and that they probably reserved to themselves a right of

maintaining one doctrine in the schools, another in the judgment-hall. Still these words expressed the most inward thought of the speakers; the king of Abraham's seed whom they wanted was a Caesar and nothing else.

But those who amidst much confusion and ignorance had really claimed their position as members of a nation in covenant with God; those who had walked in the ordinances of the Lord blameless, finding in every symbol of the Divine Presence, which seemed to the world a phantom, the deepest reality, and in what the world called realities, the merest phantoms; those who were conscious of their own darkness, but rested upon the promise of a light which should arise and shine upon their land; those who, uniting to public shame a miserable sense of moral evil, looked for a deliverer from both at once; those to whom the sight of the Roman soldier was oppressive, not because it reminded them of their tribute, but because it told them that the national life was gone, or lasted only in their prayers; those who under the fig-tree had besought God that the clouds which hid His countenance from them might be dispersed, that He would remember the poor, and that men might not have the upper hand: these, whether or no they could reconcile in their understandings the idea of a kingdom which should rule over all with one which should be in their hearts, at least acknowledged inwardly that only one to which both descriptions were applicable could meet the cries which they had sent up to heaven. And whatever they saw of Him who was proclaimed the king, whatever they heard Him speak, tended to bring these thoughts into harmony, or at all events to make them feel that each alike was necessary. He exercised power over the elements and over the secret functions of the human body, (of course I am assuming the story of the Evangelists, my object being to shew that the different parts of it are thoroughly consistent, when they are viewed in reference to one leading idea,) but this power is exercised for the sake of timid fishermen, of paralytics and lepers. He declares that His kingdom is like unto a grain of mustard-seed, which is indeed the least of all seeds, but which becomes

a tree wherein the fowls of the air lodge; He declares also that this seed of the kingdom is scattered over different soils, and that the right soil for it is an honest heart. His acts produce the most obvious outward effects, yet their main effect is to carry the persuasion home to the mind of the prepared observer, that a communion had been opened between the visible and the invisible world, and that the one was under the power of the other. His words were addressed to Israelites as the children of the covenant, yet every one of them tended to awaken in these Israelites a sense of humanity, a feeling that to be Israelites they must be more. And all this general language was preparatory to the discoveries which were made in that last supper when, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end,—to the announcements that they were all united in Him, as the branch is united to the vine, that there was a still more wonderful union between Him and His Father, to the knowledge of which they might through this union attain, and that a Spirit would come to dwell with them and to testify of Him and of the Father. All which discourses to men are gathered up in the amazing prayer, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us."

Either those words contain the essence and meaning of the whole history, or that history must be rejected as being from first to last the wickedest lie and the most awful blasphemy ever palmed upon the world. And if they do contain the meaning of it, that meaning must be embodied in acts. The Evangelists therefore go on to record in words perfectly calm and simple the death of their Master and His resurrection. As events they are related; no comment is made upon them; few hints are given of any effects to follow from them. We are made to feel by the quiet accurate detail, "He certainly died, who, as we believed, was the Son of God, and the King of Israel; He actually rose with His body, and came among us who knew Him, and spake and ate with us: this is the accomplishment of the union between heaven and earth; it is no longer a word, it is a fact." And of this fact, the risen Lord tells His Apostles that they are to go into the world and testify; not merely

to testify of it, but to adopt men into a society grounded upon the accomplishment of it. In connexion with that command, and as the ultimate basis of the universal society, a Name is proclaimed, in which the name that had been revealed to Abraham, and that more awful one which Moses heard in the bush, are combined and reconciled.

To a person who has contemplated the Gospel merely as the case of certain great doctrines or fine moralities, the Acts of the Apostles must be an utterly unintelligible book. For in the specimens of the Apostles' preaching which it gives us, there are comparatively few references to the discourses or the parables of our Lord. They dwell mainly upon the great acts of death and resurrection as evidences that Jesus was the king, as expounding and consummating the previous history of the Jewish people, as justifying and realising the truth which worked in the minds of the heathen, "that we are His offspring."[14] On the other hand, a person who really looks upon the Bible as the history of the establishment of a universal and spiritual kingdom, of that kingdom which God had ever intended for men, and of which the universal kingdom then existing in the world was the formal opposite, will find in this book exactly that without which all the former records would be unmeaning.

The narrator of such transcendent events as the ascension of the Son of Man into the invisible glory, or the descent of the Spirit to take possession of the feelings, thoughts, utterances of mortal men, might have been expected to stand still and wonder at that which with so entire a belief he was recording. But no, he looks upon these events as the necessary consummation of all that went before, the necessary foundations of the existence of the Church. And therefore he can quietly relate any other circumstances, however apparently disproportionate, which were demanded for the outward manifestation and development of that Church, such as the meeting of the Apostles in the upper room, and the completion of their number. If the founda-

[14]Acts xvii. 28.

tion of this kingdom were the end of all the purposes of God, if it were the kingdom of God among men, the human conditions of it could be no more passed over than the divine; it was as needful to prove that the ladder had its foot upon earth, as that it had come down out of heaven. As we proceed, we find every new step of the story leading us to notice the Church as the child which the Jewish polity had for so many ages been carrying in its womb. Its filial relation is first demonstrated, it is shewn to be an Israelitic not a mundane commonwealth; then it is shewn that, though not mundane, it is essentially human, containing a principle of expansion greater than that which dwelt in the Roman empire.

And here lies the apparent contradiction, the real harmony, of those two aspects in which this kingdom was contemplated by the Apostles of the Circumcision and by St. Paul. The one witnessed for the continuity of it, the other for its freedom from all national exclusions. These, we may believe, were their respective offices. Yet, as each fulfilled the one, he was in fact teaching the other truth most effectually. St. Peter and St. James were maintaining the universality of the Church, while they were contending for its Jewish character and derivation. St. Paul was maintaining the national covenant, while he was telling the Gentiles, that if they were circumcised Christ would profit them nothing. Take away the first testimony and the Church becomes an earthly not a spiritual commonwealth, and therefore subject to earthly limitations; take away the second, and the promise to Abraham is unfulfilled. In another sense, as the canon of Scripture shows, St. Paul was more directly carrying out the spirit of the Jewish distinction, by upholding the distinctness of ecclesiastical communities according to tribes and countries, than the Apostles of Jerusalem; and they were carrying out the idea of the universality of the Church more than he did by addressing the members of it as of an entire community dispersed through different parts of the world.

But we must not forget that while this universal society, according to the historical conception of it, grew out of the Jewish family

and nation, it is, according to the theological conception of it, the root of "That," says Aristotle,[15] "which is first as cause is last in discovery." And this beautiful formula is translated into life and reality in the letter to the Ephesians, when St. Paul tells them that they were created in Christ before all worlds, and when he speaks of the transcendent economy as being gradually revealed to the Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit. In this passage it seems to me lies the key to the whole character of the dispensation, as well as of the books in which it is set forth. If the Gospel be the revelation or unveiling of a mystery hidden from ages and generations; if this mystery be the true constitution of humanity in Christ, so that a man believes and acts a lie who does not claim for himself union with Christ, we can understand why the deepest writings of the New Testament, instead of being digests of doctrine, are epistles, explaining to those who had been admitted into the Church of Christ their own position, bringing out that side of it which had reference to the circumstances in which they were placed or to their most besetting sins, and shewing what life was in consistency, what life at variance, with it. We can understand why the opening of the first of these epistles, of the one which has been supposed to be most like a systematic treatise, announces that the Gospel is concerning Jesus Christ, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and marked out as the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection of the dead. The fact of a union between the Godhead and humanity is thus set forth as the one which the Apostle felt himself appointed to proclaim, which was the ground of the message to the Gentiles, and in which all ideas of reconciliation, of a divine life, justification by faith, sanctification by the Spirit, were implicitly contained. We can understand why the great fight of the Apostle with the Corinthians should be because they exalted certain notions, and certain men as the representatives of these notions, into the place of Him who was the

[15] τὸ πρῶτον αἴτιον ἔσχατον ἐν τῇ εὑρέσει.

Lord of their fellowship, and why pride, sensuality, contempt of others, abuse of ordinances, should be necessarily consequent upon that sin. We can understand why St. Paul curses with such vehemence those false teachers who had denied the Galatians the right to call themselves children of God in Christ in virtue of the new covenant, and had sent them back to the old. We may perceive that those wonderful words in which he addresses the Ephesians, when he tells them that they were sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, are just as real and practical as the exhortations at the end of the same letter, respecting the duties of husbands and wives, fathers and children, and that the second are involved in the first. We may see what connexion there is between the entreaty to the Colossians not to stoop to will-worship and the service of angels, and the assertion of the fact that Christ was in them the hope of glory, and that He is the head in whom dwell all the riches of wisdom and knowledge. We may see how possible it was for some of the Philippian Church to be enemies to the cross of Christ, their god their belly, their glory their shame, not because they had not been admitted to the privileges of being members of Christ, but because they had not pressed forward to realize their claim. We may enter a little into the idea of the letters to the Thessalonians, however we may differ about the particular time or times of its accomplishment, that there must be a coeval manifestation of the mystery of iniquity and of the mystery of godliness; that the two kingdoms, being always in conflict, at certain great crises of the world are brought into direct and open collision. We shall not need any evidence of the Apostolical derivation of the epistle to the Hebrews, to convince us that it unfolds the relations between the national and the universal dispensation, between that which was the shadow and that which was the substance of a Divine humanity; between that which enabled the worshipper to expect a perfect admission into the Divine presence, and that which admitted him to it; between that which revealed God to him as the enemy of evil, and that which revealed Him as the conqueror of it. Nor is it inconsistent with any previous intimation which has been given

us, that the writer of this epistle should in every part of it represent the sin of men as consisting in their unbelief of the blessings into which they are received at each stage of the Divine manifestation, and that he should with solemn earnestness, mixed with warnings of a fearful and hopeless apostacy, urge those whom he is addressing to believe that the position into which they had been brought was that after which all former ages had been aspiring, and as such, to claim it. From these exhortations and admonitions, the transition is easy to those Catholic epistles which some have found it so hard to reconcile with the doctrine of St. Paul. And doubtless, if the faith which the epistle to the Romans and the epistle to the Hebrews adjured men, by such grand promises and dire threats, to exercise, were not faith in a living Being, who had adopted men into fellowship with himself on purpose that being righteous by virtue of that union they might do righteous acts, that having claimed their place as members of a body the Spirit might work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure, the assertions that faith without works saves, and that faith without works cannot save, are hopelessly irreconcileable. But if the idea of St. Paul, as much as of St. James, be, that all worth may be attributed to faith in so far forth as it unites us to an object and raises us out of ourselves, no worth at all, so far as it is contemplated simply as a property in ourselves; if this be the very principle which the whole Bible is developing, one does not well see what either position would be good for, if the other were wanting. If our Lord came among men that He might bring them into a kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy, because a kingdom grounded upon fellowship with a righteous and perfect Being, the notion that that righteousness can ever belong to any man in himself, and the notion that everyone is not to exhibit the fruits of it in himself, would seem to be equally contradictions. And therefore I believe that without this consideration we shall be as much puzzled by the sketch of a Christian man's life, discipline, and conflicts, in the epistle of St. Peter, and by the doctrine of St. John, that love is the consummation of all God's revelations and all man's strivings, as

by any former part of the book. For that men are not to gain a kingdom hereafter, but are put in possession of it now, and that through their chastisements and the oppositions of their evil nature they are to learn its character and enter into its privileges, is surely taught in every verse of the one; and that love has been manifested unto men, that they have been brought into fellowship with it, that by that fellowship they may rise to the fruition of it, and that this fellowship is for us as members of a family, so that he who loveth God must love his brother also, is affirmed again and again in express words of the other. With such thoughts in our mind, I believe we may venture, with hope of the deepest instruction, upon the study of the last book in the Bible. For though we may not be able to determine which of all the chronological speculations respecting it is the least untenable, though we may not decide confidently whether it speaks to us of the future or of the past, whether it describes a conflict of principles or of persons, of this we shall have no doubt, that it does exhibit at one period or through all periods a real kingdom of heaven upon earth, a kingdom of which the principle must be ever the same, a kingdom to which all kingdoms are meant to be in subjection; a kingdom which is maintaining itself against an opposing tyranny, whereof the ultimate law is brute force or unalloyed selfishness; a kingdom which must prevail because it rests upon a name which expresses the perfect Love, the ineffable Unity, the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Chapter IV. Signs of a Spiritual Society

We have observed the traces of a spiritual constitution for mankind. We have observed that the two parts of this constitution, which are united by family relationships and by locality, depend upon a third part which is universal. We have observed that there are two possible forms of a universal society, one of which is destructive of the family and national principle, the other the expansion of them. The first of these is that which in Scripture is called the world, the latter is

that which in Scripture is called the Church. We have observed that the principles of the world exist in the heart of every family and of every nation; that they are precisely the natural tendencies and inclinations of men; that they are always threatening to become predominant; that when they become predominant there ceases to be any recognition of men as related to a Being above them, any recognition of them as possessing a common humanity. The other body, therefore, the Church, being especially the witness for these facts which it is natural to us to deny, must be a distinct body. In losing its distinctness it loses its meaning, loses to all intents and purposes, though the words may at first sound paradoxical, its universality. The question then which we have to examine is, Are there any signs in the present day of the existence of a spiritual and universal body upon the earth? Do these signs identify that body with the one spoken of in Scripture? Are they an effectual witness against the world?

Section I. Baptism

That there has existed for the last 1800 years, a certain rite called Baptism; that it is not derived from the national customs of any of the people among whom it is found; that different tribes of the most different origin and character adopted it, and when they had received it believed themselves to be members of a common society; that this society was supposed to be connected with an invisible world, and with a certain worship and government; that an immense proportion of all the children in Europe are admitted very shortly after their birth to the rite; that it is generally performed by a peculiar class of functionaries; —these are facts, which it is not necessary to establish by any proof. The only question is whether these facts have a meaning and what that meaning is.

The idea of the Scriptures, so far as we have been able to trace it, is that Jesus Christ came upon earth to reveal a kingdom, which kingdom is founded upon a union established in his person between man and God, between the visible and invisible world, and ultimately

upon a revelation of the divine Name. If then the setting up of this kingdom, and the adoption of men into it, be not connected in the New Testament with the rite of baptism, we may be quite sure that the fact we have just noticed, let its import be what it may, does not concern us. Even though baptism were enjoined as a rite by our Lord Himself, yet if it were appointed in such terms as leave us at liberty to suppose that it was merely accidental to the general purposes of His advent, we cannot prove an identity between the universal society which acknowledges it now and the one which He founded.

Let us then turn to the Gospels that we may see there how far this is the case. One of the first events announced there is contained in these words: "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Then went out to him Jerusalem and all Judea, and were baptized of him in Jordan confessing their sins." This narrative is at least singular: baptism is connected with a spiritual act, that of repentance; with a spiritual promise, that of remission; with the announcement of a kingdom; with an intimation that that kingdom should not merely be composed of the children of Abraham. Supposing it were, as some imagine, a ceremony not known until that time, then it was introduced at the very moment that the kingdom of heaven was to begin; supposing it had been practised, as others say, at the reception of Gentile converts to the privileges of the outer court, then the administration of it to Jews would appear to be a most significant intimation, that they were henceforth to take their stand upon a universal human ground. This baptism then was the preparation for the Gospel. It may, however, for aught that appears at present, have been only a preparation. But Jesus Himself descends into the water, and as He comes out of it, a voice from heaven proclaims Him the well beloved Son, and the Spirit descends upon Him in a bodily shape. The announcement then that the Divine man, the king of men, had really appeared, was, according to the Gospels, connected with Baptism. And this same Baptism they speak of as the beginning of our Lord's

public ministry, and of all the acts by which his descent from above was attested. Yet this might have been necessary to mark the leader; it need not have any application to his disciples. But Jesus preached, saying, "Repent, the kingdom of heaven is at hand;" he appoints Apostles to go and declare that kingdom; and these Apostles baptize. The nature of their message may denote, however, that they were only continuing the dispensation of John, that they had nothing directly to do with that higher Baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire, which John had declared would supersede his own. Our Lord has a conversation with Nicodemus in which He tells him that he must be born again if he would see the kingdom of heaven; because that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; because it was impossible for the fleshly man to understand even earthly things, much more these heavenly things, which He alone could reveal who had come down from heaven, and was in heaven. And this declaration of the transcendental character of the new kingdom is joined to the words, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." Yet perhaps even here there may be a reference rather to the spiritual eye in man, which this ordinance, like those earlier ordinances of the Jews, might be the means of opening, than to the actual gift of God's Spirit which was promised; for it is said expressly, "The Spirit was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." Our Lord appears to his disciples after He had risen from the dead, and He says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth, go therefore, and preach the gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." This language is certainly strange; for it seems as if it could only look forward to the establishment of a spiritual kingdom. But one other point of evidence is still wanting. Did the Apostles, after the glorification of Christ, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, still baptize with water? St. Peter stood in the midst of the disciples, and said to the Jews, "God hath made this Jesus whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ; repent therefore, and be baptized, and ye shall receive the gift

of the Holy Ghost;" and the same day three thousand were baptized. This evidence may perhaps be enough to shew that the writers of the Gospels and of the Acts believed this to be the sign of admission into Christ's spiritual and universal kingdom, and consequently that every person receiving that sign was ipso facto a member of that kingdom. As the son or servant of the Roman commonwealth entered so soon as he was manumitted upon the rights of a citizen, as all immunities and responsibilities appertaining to this character from that hour became his, the young Christian convert who had derived his instruction from the Scriptures could not doubt, that from the time of his baptism he was free of that brotherhood of which his Lord was the head. He could not doubt that whatever language, be it as lofty as it might, described that brotherhood, described his state; that if Christ came to make men sons of God, he was a son of God; if He came to make them members of His own body, he was a member of that body; if He came to endue men with His Spirit, that Spirit was given to him. His baptism said to him, This is your position; according to the conditions of it you are to live. It will not be an easy life. It will be one of perpetual conflict. You will have a battle not with flesh and blood only, but with principalities and powers, with the rulers of spiritual wickedness in high places. But understand the nature of the battle. Your foes are not hindering you from obtaining a blessing; they are hindering you from entering into the fruition of one that has been obtained for you; they will laugh at you for pretending that it is yours; they will tell you that you must not claim it. But in the strength of this covenant you must claim it; otherwise your life will be a lie. I ask anyone calmly to read the Epistles, and tell me whether any other sense than this could be put upon Baptism by those who exhorted men, because they were baptized, to count themselves dead unto sin and alive unto God; by those who addressed men, the majority of whom they did not know personally, some of whom they did know to be inconsistent and unholy, as being in Christ, elect, children of God; by those who conjured their disciples not to doubt, not to disbelieve, that they had been admitted into the

communion of saints, and told them they would sink into apostasy if they did? But then I must ask also, why, if the kingdom of Christ was declared to be an everlasting kingdom, and this sign was fixed as the admission of men into it at the first, and this sign still exists among us, all we who have received it are not in the same position, have not the same privileges, are not under the same responsibilities, as those who lived eighteen hundred years ago? I ask whether Baptism be not the sign of a spiritual and universal kingdom?

Objections. 1. The Quaker

To this question various answers are given. I will consider first that of the Quakers.

It seems to them utterly incredible and monstrous, that a spiritual fact or operation should be denoted by a visible sign. "Either men are livingly united to the Divine Word, or they are not: if they are, the sign is useless; if they are not, it is false. If Christ's kingdom depend upon these outward ceremonies, wherein does it differ from the Jewish? What do the words, that John came baptizing with water but Christ with the Spirit and fire, mean, if both baptisms are equally outward?"

Positions of this kind are so self-evident to the Quaker, that Scripture cannot be suffered to contradict them. It is in vain to allege texts and commandments. These are primary truths which ride over them all, and determine the interpretation of them. If the Apostles did act in opposition to them, the Apostles showed that they were still ignorant and Judaical. Be it so: if these notions are good for anything, if they do not contradict the leading positive truths of Quakerism, let them be upholden at all risks. But that is the point I wish to examine.

We have seen that Fox did not consider it the work of the Gospel to reveal the fact of men's relation to the Divine Word; that fact, he believed, was intimated both to Heathens and to Jews. To the latter it was intimated by a sign. The Invisible Teacher by this means declared to the children of Abraham that there was a union between themselves and Him, warned them of the tendency there was in their fleshly

natures to separate from Him, promised to uphold them against that tendency.

This, I say, Fox acknowledged to be the Divine method in the Jewish dispensation. He never pretended that the union which was made known to the Jew was a material union; if it had been, there would have been no sign, for there would have been nothing to signify. He never pretended that it was a variable union, deriving its existence from certain feelings in the minds of the human creatures who shared in it; if it had been there could have been no sign, for the thing to be signified would have been different each day. So that the appropriateness, the possibility, if I may so speak, of this method, arose from the fact that a certain spiritual and permanent relation was to be made known by it. And yet the reason, according to the Quaker, why this method should be abandoned, is this and this only, that the dispensation of the Gospel has a spiritual and permanent, not a material and transitory, character! Surely this is an inconsistency which needs to be justified by something else than vague declamations about carnal practices, and angry denunciations against the whole of Christendom, from the Apostles downwards, for being guilty of them.

"But it is a false thing to give the sign to anyone who has not the reality." What is meant by the words, has not the reality? Is it meant that the relation is not real? If so, Fox was wrong, for he affirmed that it was real, for all men. Or does the word real refer to the feeling and acknowledgment of the relation? Then this proposition affirms, that it is false to tell a man a truth because he does not believe it. Unquestionably we are guilty of that falsehood; the whole Old Testament dispensation was also guilty of it; Fox and the Quakers themselves are guilty of it.

"But the sign is useless to a man who is truly united to the Divine Word." There are two opinions implied in this language, both of great importance, both very illustrative of Quaker feeling and history. One is that it is nothing to a man that a thing is true, true in itself, true universally, provided he feels it to be true for him; the other is that union with

the Divine Word is all which men require. Now every earnest word which Fox spoke was a testimony against both these notions; first (as I have shewn so often), the truth of the thing was the ground upon which he exhorted men to place their feeling of it; secondly, he declared that union with the Divine Word did not satisfy those Heathens or Jews who perceived it, but that it made them long for something more, for a kingdom of Heaven. See here an evidence for Baptism, which all the history of Christendom could not have afforded, frankly offered to us by those who reject it. Their whole preaching is against Judaism, against the old covenant; and yet they are thrown back upon Judaism, they cannot rise above the great doctrine of the old covenant. But neither can they keep that doctrine; they cannot keep the faith that we are related to the Divine Word; they can only substitute for it certain individual feelings and impressions.

And now, having this thought on our minds, let us compare for an instant our interpretation of the words of John the Baptist with theirs. We say that John came baptizing with water unto repentance, for the remission of sins. Here lay the spiritual meaning of his Baptism. Our Lord's baptism, we maintain, includes this meaning, but it has a deeper one. His baptism is not only unto repentance; not only intimates that the heart has turned to God, and so turning is delivered from sin: it gives the spirit and power whence repentance and every right act must flow; it brings the subject of it under the discipline of that purifying fire whereby the old and evil nature is to be consumed. This meaning of the passage seems to be literal enough, and it precisely accords with the promises and anticipations of the prophets, with the expositions and retrospections of the Apostles. How does the Quaker improve upon it? He makes it the great characteristic of John, that he did baptize with water, and of Christ, that He would not baptize with water. So that the voice crying in the wilderness said this, "Hear, O Israel! rejoice, O ye Gentiles! the glorious time is at hand, which your fathers expected, which the whole universe has been groaning for—the time when signs are to be abolished. The great Prince and

Deliverer is at hand, who will cause that the things of earth shall be no longer pledges and sacraments of a union with Heaven! This is the consummation of all the hopes of mankind, this is what is meant by the Tabernacle of God being with men; by His dwelling with them, and their being His people, and His being their God."

2. The Anti-pedobaptist

The Anti-paedobaptist is; in many respects, strongly contrasted with the Quaker. He attaches a very great value to the baptismal sign. He believes that it is intended to be the witness of a spiritual kingdom. In general, he is remarkable for holding the belief firmly, in which the Quaker is deficient, that men are chosen by God to their place in the Divine — Economy. But he conceives that the admission of those who have no spiritual consciousness or spiritual capacity to this ordinance, is destructive of its meaning; as it exists in modern Europe it has nothing to do with the Kingdom of Christ.

I should be very careful to answer this objection, for it certainly affects the whole of my argument, if it had not been already so fully considered. The issue to be tried between us and the Anabaptists is not whether the existence of such and such a sign indicates the existence of a kingdom, but what that kingdom is which it should indicate. I have maintained, upon the authority of Scripture, that the Catholic Church is emphatically a kingdom for mankind, a kingdom grounded upon the union which has been established in Christ between God and man. I have maintained that it grew out of a family and a nation, of which social states it proved itself to be the proper and only foundation. Supposing this notion to be altogether false, it may be most reasonable to say that a child, an embryo man, ought to be treated as if he were not a citizen of this kingdom. To one who believes it true, such a doctrine must seem absolutely monstrous. Let us take a member of either of the classes out of which the early Church was formed. First let him be a Heathen. He has been struck with the threatenings of coming judgments which were visible in the sins of the Roman empire,

in the divorces, adulteries, incests, parricides of its most conspicuous members. He has felt how little the idea of the gods which was received among his countrymen tended to repress such atrocities. The preaching of some Christian Apostle has awakened him to the fact, that the evil nature from which all these crimes have proceeded is in himself. He hears of a deliverance out of that nature. He hears that God has revealed himself to men as the enemy of all unrighteousness; that He has also revealed himself to men as their Father; that His Son has come down to dwell among men: that He has made himself the brother of our race; that He has claimed the members of it for members of his own body; that He has given them a sign of admission into it; that He has promised them His Spirit. Could he who received this joyful message, and acted upon the command which was involved in it, doubt that he was received into the true human family, that he was taken out of a hateful, anomalous, inhuman world? Could he then dare to say, "This child whom I have begotten belongs to this inhuman anomalous world; he has a human form and countenance, that form and countenance which Christ bore, yet the accursed nature which I have renounced is his proper, his appointed master; the evil society out of which I have fled, is his home; to the evil spirit who I believe has infused his leaven into that nature and that society, I leave him." I am not now reasoning with a person who does not attach any high meaning to Baptism, but with one who believes it to be really the sign of the redeemed covenant family. I ask such a person to consider, what less than this a Christian convert could suppose to be signified, by anyone who told him that he was not to baptize his child, because he could not be sure that it was included in Christ's redemption?

Nor let it be supposed that this is the whole of the contradiction which such a prohibition would involve. Far from it. The idea of the Gospel, as the revelation of truths which are expressed in the forms of family society, and which, to all appearance, are not expressible in any other forms, truths to the apprehension of which he had risen through the feelings which his domestic relations or the consciousness of their

violation had called forth, would seem to him utterly destroyed, all links between human relations and Divine at once abolished, if he might not dare to speak of his child as united to him in a spiritual bond. Again, the idea of the Gospel, as the promise of a Spirit who would awaken all consciousnesses, convictions, and affections, would be equally trifled with, by the doctrine that the existence of these convictions, consciousnesses, affections, was the condition precedent to an admission into the Gospel Covenant.

On this last point, the perplexities of a Hebrew Christian, who was commanded not to baptize his child, must have been still more distressing. His own covenant had been emphatically with children. That which had superseded it was, in all other respects, wider, freer, more directly referring all acts of the creature to the love and good pleasure of the Creator. Yet, without one word of Christ being produced to this effect, I command you not to follow the analogy of God's earlier dispensation, not to suppose that, in my kingdom of grace, infants are accounted human and moral beings as they were under the law—without the record of one sentence to this purpose; with the record of many acts and words which led to just the opposite conclusion, that infants were a most honoured part of that race which He came to seek and save; with the doctrine forming an article of his daily confession, that the Redeemer of humanity had Himself entered into the state of childhood, as well as into that of manhood, the Israelite convert is forced to abandon all the habits of thought and feeling which he had derived from God's own teaching, not because they were too narrow, but because they were too comprehensive for his new position.

The Anti-paedobaptist then, I think, cannot plead, (and this is his only plea,) that the application of Baptism to infants is a strange and perplexing departure from the admitted sense and object of the ordinance. On the contrary, there is some reason, I fancy, for suspecting danger on the other side. It was so reasonable, so inevitable a consequence of the baptismal principle, that infants should be received into the Church—the law of the Church's propagation was

thereby so clearly explained and reconciled with the ordinary laws of God's Providence—that it would be no wonder if another truth, equally necessary, were lost sight of in the eagerness to enforce that which this practice inculcated. It might be forgotten that we baptize children, not because they are children, but because they are embryo men; that to the complete idea of a spiritual blessing, a receiver is needful as well as a giver; that Baptism is not a momentary act but a perpetual sacrament. Before I finish this section I may have occasion to show that some or all of these errors have arisen in the Church, and to their prevalency the rise of a sect of Anti-paedobaptists is, no doubt, to be attributed. But there is found, side by side with Baptism, in all the countries where it is adopted, an institution which is a far more complete testimony against such perversions, than those have been able to bear who set aside the principle out of which they have grown. This institution, not displacing or superseding Baptism, but confirming, as its name denotes, the authority and pledges of that sacrament, declares to the child that He who has guided it through infancy will be with it in the conscious struggles of manhood, and that it has been made free, not only of a particular congregation, but of the Universal Church.

The doctrine of the Anabaptists then, like that of the Quakers, supplies a strong argument in favour of my position, for it shews that, just so far as the operation of Baptism is restricted, just so far does the belief of a human society become impossible.[16]

[16]As the notion that the Baptism now existing in Christendom is invalid, because it is generally performed by sprinkling, and not by immersion, is accidentally connected with the Antipaedobaptist theory, it may be well to say a few words upon it in this place. "The practice," it is said, "of the early ages, so far as we can ascertain, was to immerse; the emblematical character of Baptism as a burial is destroyed by the other practice; if we admit an outward ceremony at all, we cannot afterwards pretend that the mode of performing it is indifferent." I acknowledge that there is truth in each of these propositions. I admit (with, I suppose, the majority of Churchmen) that there is a high probability in favour of the prevalence in early times of that practice which is least likely to have been afterwards introduced, and that most of the facts we know would confirm the opinion. I admit that the word "buried with him," in the sixth chapter of the Romans, is a better argument for immersion, than the words "sprinkled from an evil conscience," in St. Peter, can ever furnish for the modern custom. I admit, that having received a certain form and not another, as the sign of a certain thing, we have no business to give ourselves airs about the unimportance of certain particulars of that which has been prescribed. But here lies the distinction. No particular mode of baptism is prescribed by

3. The Modern Protestant

Next to the Anabaptist comes the soi-disant disciple of Luther and Calvin, the modern Protestant or Evangelical. His doctrine is that there are two kingdoms of Christ, one real and spiritual, the other

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our Lord. It is said, you shall make water the sign; and you shall accompany the use of this water with certain words. It is not said. Thus shall you use it, and in no other way. Now the highest probability, that a practice now existing is different from one formerly existing, does not, I contend, make that practice illegitimate, if it answer to the terms of the law which ordained it. And this rule applies especially to the case of a Universal Institution; we cannot tell that the old practice, however laudable and right, may not have been determined by the circumstances of a particular country or time; we cannot tell that the liberty of modal alteration may not have been contemplated and provided for in the terms of the enactment. A sign which is divinely instituted and meant for mankind, is too serious a thing to be determined by any guesses or judgments about antiquity. They may be most useful as suggestions, they may unfold to us meanings which we have lost; they cannot be produced as condemnatory of that which He who had appointed the sign has not condemned. Least of all must the notion intrude itself, that such or such a sign is not big enough, does not involve self-sacrifice enough; for this is to set aside the first principle upon which the validity of all signs must rest, that the one, be it great or little, which the Ruler has fixed, is the right one, and must denote what He meant it to denote.

What I have said, I hope is sufficiently plain. If not, the case of the ring in marriage may illustrate it. Supposing a ring to be prescribed by any law in virtue of which marriages are performed, a ring is indispensable. But the strongest evidence to prove that rings at weddings had been commonly of gold, and the absence of all evidence to prove that they had been anything else, ought not to be sufficient to make a marriage void, which was concluded with some ring. And this example suggests an observation in reference to the alleged loss of the baptismal emblem, by the use of sprinkling. Supposing it were urged by one, who was impeaching the validity of a marriage which was celebrated with a brass or copper ring, that some notion of purity was implied in the choice of the nobler metal; nay, supposing he were able to produce clear proof that that notion had been attached to it, had even given occasion to the custom, a judge would surely not listen for an instant to such an argument; though he would admit, in the strongest manner, that the idea of marriage implied purity, and that it was the object of all marriage institutions and ceremonies to preserve it. He would at once declare that the emblem, however interesting, however useful for personal meditation, however lawful as the foundation of a custom, was altogether distinct from the sign. The prescribed sign testified that the union between the parties was complete and final; a purely arbitrary sign, having no emblematic value, would do this; and the force of it as arbitrary, as appointed, must not be lost through any consideration of its wisdom or propriety. This reflection is especially needful in the present case. An institution of Divine appointment will necessarily carry in it a profound wisdom, and manifold adaptations to the condition of the creatures for whom it is destined. Such a symbol as water at once suggests numerous hints and analogies, and many more present themselves to an earnest, even though he be not a fanciful, thinker. But the main fact to which Baptism bears witness, our adoption into Christ, must be, after all, the key to these analogies, and not they the keys to it. And that adoption into Christ must be received as a fact, upon the authority of the sign, without the least reference to any apparent likeness in it to the thing signified; else the sign will lose its universality, and be treated as nothing to those who cannot, through deficiency in the faculty of comparison, or any other cause, discover the resemblance.

These remarks are merely intended to shew, that there is no warrant for the notion that the Baptism now existing among us is not formally the baptism which Christ ordained, and therefore the sign of admission into His universal and spiritual kingdom, because the mode of administering it may not be that which His Apostles practised. The question whether any power and what power has a right to prescribe for the whole Church, or for any particular branch of it, a certain mode of performing Baptism, is quite a distinct one, which must be considered in its proper place.

outward and visible. It is highly desirable, perhaps necessary, that young as well as old should be admitted into the latter. Baptism is the appointed mode of admission. What are the privileges of the Gentile court into which, by this ordinance, we are received, they do not precisely determine. Possibly some grace is communicated at Baptism; or if not, the blessings of being permitted to hear preaching, and of obtaining a Christian education, are great, and may be turned to greater use hereafter. But the important point of all is this, to press upon men that till they have been actually and consciously converted they are not members of Christ or children of God. Some disciples of this school believe that these words may be applied to baptized people in a sense; but if you desire to know in what sense, the answers are so vague and indeterminate, as to leave a painful impression upon the mind, that such language is very awful and significant, and yet that it may on certain occasions be sported with or used with a secret reservation.

But those who make these statements say, that they wish to get rid of equivocations, not to invent them. They resort to this hypothesis of a double kingdom, because the plainest observation tells them, that a baptized man may be a very evil man, and because, being evil, they cannot see what he has to do with a kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. Again, they say, "Let people make out what theological scheme they please, we know that we, having been baptized in infancy, did in manhood as much pass from death unto life, as any heathen in the first age could have done." It is not, they contend, fair or honest to suppress either of these facts, either that which is obvious to every man's common sense, or that of which they themselves are conscious; but that this is done, and must be done, if we assume Baptism to be what it is sometimes called—a New Birth—the actual introduction into a spiritual world.

Now I feel as little disposed to deny the melancholy proposition that Christian men are not living Christian lives, as the Jewish prophet felt to pass over the truth, that the name of God was blasphemed

through his countrymen in all lands. The precedents which Holy Scripture furnishes I believe to be strictly applicable to us; that which was the function of the preacher then is his function now; if he who prophesied in Jerusalem was to rebuke men for sin, and to call them to repentance, we in London or Paris are to do the like. The question is, what is the sin which we are to rebuke, what is the repentance to which we are to invite. The Jewish prophet charged his people with forgetting the covenant of their God. He traced up all sins to this sin. He said that the Jew was guilty, because he did not claim the privileges of a Jew, because he did not act as if he was a Jew. Are we to follow this precedent or not? Are we following it when we say, "This covenant is, I will be to you a father, and you shall be to me sons and daughters; you are acting as if you were not in this covenant, you are forgetting it," or when we say, "These titles are not yours, or are yours only in some formal imaginary sense," that is, if we spoke plain English, in no sense at all?

As little do I desire to deny or explain away the other assertion, that baptized men, who have lived without God in the world, are converted to Him by his grace. This is a doctrine which I believe was held as strongly by St. Bernard, Tauler, and à Kempis, I might add by Loyola and Xavier, as by any modern Methodist. These eminent persons did not limit their language to cases of open profligacy (though they by no means excluded such cases); they applied it to laymen or priests, who under a respectable exterior had sought the praise of men more than the praise of God. Whether we have a right to restrict the word to a particular act or crisis; whether every act of repentance is not one of conversion or turning to God; whether we are not apt to forget that every such act must be as much attributed to the Spirit of God as the recovery from habitual thoughtlessness and sin, are questions for serious reflection: but the decision of them does not affect the opinion, that there may be an entire change in the feelings and aims of one who has received Christian Baptism. But by what words is such a revolution to be denoted? I believe the answer may be obtained, by comparing

different approved records of conversions. We shall find a great difference in them. In some we shall hear a man speaking with great horror and loathing of his past years and of his youthful companions. We shall hear another transferring these expressions of loathing to his evil nature, and to himself for having yielded to it, manifesting the deepest affection for all he has ever been acquainted with, owning them to be more righteous than himself, believing that God cares for them as well as for him, certain that what is true for him, is true also for them. The first talks much of the new start he has taken, of his new heart, of his purified affections: the latter rejoices that having discovered the feebleness of his own heart, he has been led to see that there is another in whom he ought to have trusted before, and may trust now. The first speaks of the grace that has been bestowed upon himself; the other of being taken under the gracious guidance of a Spirit, whom he has resisted too long. Granting that these modes of expression may be sometimes intermingled, that there may be a true feeling in those who chiefly use the former, and that there may be error and confusions in those records wherein the latter predominate, yet does not everyone recognize a characteristic, a most practical, difference between them? Would not any experienced person of the Evangelical school feel, that the one kind of language indicated a much more healthful, genuine state of character than the other? But then ought he not to ask himself whether both of these kinds of language are incompatible with the idea of Baptismal Regeneration, or only one of them; and if only one, whether the false or the true? If the words, "then I was awakened," do not imply "I had been asleep;" if the words, "then I came to the knowledge of the truth," do not imply "that which I knew was true before I knew it;" if the words, "I ceased to strive against the Spirit," do not imply that there had been a previous resistance to the Spirit, they are mere cant words, good for nothing, nay, utterly detestable. But, if they do imply all this, they imply just what the believer in Baptismal Regeneration is charged with fiction and falsehood for maintaining.

They presume the existence of a state, which is our state, whether we are conscious of it, whether we are in conformity with it, or no.

It is then not necessary for the vindication of these two facts, that we should adopt the notion that there are two kingdoms, one earthly, formal, fictitious; the other heavenly, spiritual, real. It is not necessary for their vindication, seeing that neither of these facts can be calmly examined, even in the reports of those who insist most upon them, without suggesting the notion, that there must be a heavenly, spiritual, real kingdom, against which all evil men, just in so far forth as they are evil, are rebelling; and into subjection to which all converted men, in so far forth as they are converted, are brought. And therefore, whatever evils have flowed and are flowing from this notion of the two kingdoms, are not justified or compensated for by one practical advantage. How practical the evils are, let the history of Christian Europe since the Reformation attest! I have spoken of the difference between Luther and the Lutherans, even between Calvin and the Calvinists; I have spoken of the way in which Justification by Faith has been turned from a living principle into an empty shibboleth: in which the Divine Election has lost its force, except as an excuse for doubting the existence of our own awful responsibilities. If we trace these miserable fruits to their root, we shall find it, I believe, in this notion. This at least is certain, as I have had occasion again and again to remark, that the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration was held by Luther not in conjunction with that of Justification by Faith (as he might have held any doctrine which belonged to the natural philosophy of his age), but that he grounded the one on the other. "Believe on the warrant of your Baptism, You are grafted into Christ; claim your position. You have the Spirit, you are children of God; do not live as if you belonged to the devil." This was his invariable language, with this he shook the Seven Hills.

What, I ask, have those done who have abandoned this language, and who, while they talk of Luther, would actually denounce anyone who used it as heretical and papistical? The children of Protestant families are told that they have no right to call themselves children of

God. They grow up in that conviction; in maturer years they carry it to its legitimate consequences. They feel that they have no right to use the Lord's prayer, no right to pray at all; that they have no power near them to keep them from temptation; that they have no bonds of fellowship with any, except on the grounds of liking and taste. Gradually as their understandings ripen and their feelings decay, they begin to regard Protestantism as a halfway house between Popery and Infidelity; and whether they shall go back to the one, or on to the other, depends principally upon their circumstances, and upon the predominance of the fancy or of the intellect in their constitution. I speak of the more courageous; in the majority, dull indifference, which is incapable of either resolve, becomes the ruling habit of mind. Thanks be to God, the exceptions to my statement, in all Protestant countries, are innumerable. But I believe it will be found almost universally, that they occur when parents have acted upon the principle which I am maintaining, though in words they have disavowed it; when they have treated their children as if they possessed all Christian titles and privileges, though they did so in utter disregard of their own theory. That, even in such cases, the contradiction has not been innocuous, I think I can affirm with some confidence. A sense of perplexity, of half sincerity, cleaves to the minds of those who most long to keep a clear heart and a free conscience. They do not dare to call themselves by a name which yet they feel they must claim, if they are to serve God or to do any right act. Hence their conduct becomes uncertain, their thoughts are not manly; and, in place of humility, they cultivate a false shame, in which they are conscious that pride is a large ingredient. There are hundreds of young men who will understand my meaning; there are others, I mean ministers of the Gospel, to whom I wish that I could make it intelligible. But at all events, those who feel as I do in this matter, will have bitter cause for self-reproach, if they do not protest in season and out of season, against a notion which, if I be not greatly mistaken, is doing more than all others to undermine the Christianity of the Protestant nations.

4. The Philosopher

Last come our modern Philosophers. Their notions upon this subject are generally indicated by some such language as the following. "Baptism cannot be the sign of a Universal Society, for it excludes Pagans and Mahometans, all but the members of a certain religious sect; Baptism cannot, in any proper sense, be the sign of a Spiritual Society, for it makes no distinction between the most stupid and the most cultivated, the most brutal and the most humane; Baptism, by the very terms in which it is performed, implies the acknowledgment of a doctrine which many Christians deny, few think of, and none understand; Baptism, if we may judge from the words or the ceremonies which everywhere accompany it, presumes the belief of an evil spiritual agency, a belief belonging only to the darkest ages. Baptism was unquestionably a bond of fellowship in certain periods; it did mean something to those who lived in them; but its significance is gone; it is changed into a worthless symbol which may be allowed to last so long as it does not pretend to be anything, but which the moment it endeavours to recover its obsolete importance will be rejected by wise men altogether."

To the first of these objections, that Baptism is exclusive, because merely for those who profess a faith in Christ, I reply,—As against the theologians who look upon Christ merely as the great teacher, this argument has the greatest force: to baptize men into the name of Christ is, if they be right, to receive them into the sect or school of a certain person who appeared in Palestine 1800 years ago. We may prefer Him to one who appeared in Arabia about 1200 years ago, but our taste, which increased information may change altogether, is surely no true foundation for a human fellowship. But, be it remembered, this is not the idea of Baptism as it is expressed in any one formulary which is recognised in any part of Christendom. That idea assumes Christ to be the Lord of men; it assumes that men are created in Him; that this is the constitution of our race; that therefore all attempts of men to reduce themselves into separate units are contradictory and abortive.

Now say, if you please, that this is an utterly false view of things; say that it does not in the least explain the relations of men to each other and the meaning of their history; say that there is no spiritual constitution for mankind or that it cannot be known, or that it is not this. But you cannot say that if it were this, a society founded upon such a principle would be merely one for a party and not for mankind. According to our doctrine we must say to Jews, Pagans, Turks, "There is a fellowship for you as well as for us. We have no right to any spiritual privileges to which you have not as complete, as indefeasible a right. We protest against you, Jews, because you deny this, because you maintain that there is no fellowship for mankind. We protest against you, Pagans, because by giving us different objects of worship, you necessarily divide us according to circumstances, customs, localities. We protest against you, Mahometans, because by affirming the greatest man to be merely a man, you destroy the communication between our race and its Maker; you suppose that communication to exist, if at all, merely for certain sages, not for every human creature. You set up the idea of absoluteness against the idea of relationship; whereas each is involved in the other and depends upon the other; and therefore you make it impossible for the Islamite nations to have any feeling of a humanity, to be anything but slaves."

Again, it is said, that our baptismal fellowship is not spiritual, for that it takes no account of the spiritual differences in men. The dullest clod has the same place in it, as the man who sees furthest into the meaning and life of things. Here, again, it is necessary, that we should recall the objector to the baptismal principle. He may think that we are using a mere phrase, or form of words, when we say that the man or the child is actually adopted into union with a Being above himself, and that the Spirit of Life, of Power, of Wisdom, is given to him. All this may seem to him the merest absurdity. But we do not think it so. And, supposing it were not an absurdity, supposing it were a truth, there would be no pretence for the accusation we are considering. Then we should not only be bearing witness that the great distinction

of all is that between the man who has an eye for spiritual objects, and the man who sees nothing but the ground at his feet; we should not only be bearing this witness, but we should actually be taking men into a position in which they might, if they would, overcome their downward tendencies and attain the highest insight. Unquestionably we do not look out for intellectual or moral aptitudes, and expose the children in whom we do not discover them; we believe that there is an eye in all men which can be opened if the evil will do not keep it closed; that all peculiar faculties and capacities are subordinate to this, and will be best awakened when it is most in exercise. But this doctrine is surely not one to which philosophers of this day can on principle object, however little they may be inclined habitually to act upon it.

The third complaint is, that this universal sign is inseparably associated with the belief of an incomprehensible dogma. Now when we were examining the features of the Unitarian creed, we were led to notice, as the most prominent and striking of them, the assertion that the unity of God is a great primary unchangeable truth, upon which all others must rest, and the acknowledgment of which must be the foundation of unity among men. This affirmation seemed to us of the highest importance; we said that no theories or conclusions or dogmas, let them be backed by what authority, or supported by what arguments they might, could destroy its force, or make it nugatory. But we found that this truth of the Divine Unity, this awful, everlasting primary truth, had been turned by the (so called) Unitarians into a mere notion or dogma, a notion or dogma actually deduced from material considerations and therefore self-contradictory; a notion purely negative, which said to Polytheists, "You ought not to worship many gods," without declaring to them the one God whom they ought to worship; a notion not leading to the adoration of a Living Being, but to a superstitious reverence for the number one, a notion therefore which never could be the symbol of a human fellowship. If then it be true that this unity is at the root of all union among men, if it be the deep foundation upon which the pillars of the universe rest,

one must look not for a rude notional announcement of it, but for a gradual discovery of it, through the forms and relations of human society. Such a discovery I have urged is to be found in the Scriptures; a discovery of which the name revealed to the father of the faithful was the first step; the words, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord," a second; the name into which we are baptized, the final and perfect step. I do not say that this is a progress from the obscure to the intelligible, from the remote to the near; far from it: like all science it is an advance from that which may be apprehended by the Senses or the Affections, to that which is deeper and is only within the reach of the Understanding or the Conscience; then onwards to those amazing abysses which the Reason seeks after, and which she delights, wonders, and is lost. If it were not this, it would not be a revelation of God; but being this, it is, as we believe, not the cold denial and contradiction of all that men have been dreaming of through the different ages of the world, but rather the sweet reconciliation and exquisite harmony of all past thoughts, anticipations, revelations. No Pagan mythology could exist without the acknowledgment of a Something beneath and behind all their conceptions of the gods, too awful to speak of, almost to think of. Each mythology contained also its Heroes of divine and human race, whom men might admire, and with whom they might sympathise. And this was not enough without the dream of an Inspirer, Life-giver; not removed from men, not even a mere object to be beheld and adored, but the source of all their deeper thoughts and longings. How dark and sensualized this faith became—how the absolute Being was regarded as a dreary fate, the Heroes as the fruit of earthly passions and full of earthly crimes, the Inspirer as the god of folly and drunkenness—I need not tell; nor how jarring these forms of belief were in their best estate, how continually seeking for a unity and not finding it. Still, the feelings were really there; expressed indeed, by poets and sages, but only because it was their gift to utter that which was in the hearts of poor men, that which they were obscurely feeling or dimly acting out. Now, if the Name into which we Europeans have

for so many centuries been baptized be, as we believe it is, that which brings all these thoughts at one, separating them from their hateful and degrading additions, raising them to Heaven, and yet establishing a more direct and intimate connexion between them and all the daily transactions of this earth; are we guilty of fencing men off from our Communion by a strange dogma of which they can know nothing, when we tell them that this Name is to go with them from their cradle to their grave; that the grace, the love, the fellowship of this name are to be with them as charms against all perils, light in all darkness, comfort in all sorrow; that it is to bind them with that which was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be; that every homely duty, every act of self-sacrifice, every deed of mercy, will make the vision of it more bright, as that vision will be clouded by every act of sin, every proud thought, every uncharitable feeling; that the more they cleave to this name, the less they will dream of selfish rewards, the more they will long for the day when the sunlight of God's countenance may gladden the whole creation; that the communion of the Father and the Son in one Spirit, as it has been the ground of all their thoughts and hopes, so will be the consummation of them all, to those who shall wake up in the same likeness, and be satisfied with it?

But Baptism implies the acknowledgment of an evil spiritual agent, and this belief is at war with all civilization and philosophy. I am as little disposed to shrink from this charge as from any of the others. Baptism unquestionably has been connected with this doctrine ever since it was practised; it must, I think, be an unmeaning ceremony to anyone by whom this doctrine is denied.

This opinion I ground upon the remarks which have just been made respecting the Baptismal Name. Baptism asserts for each man that he is taken into union with a Divine Person, and by virtue of that union is emancipated from his evil Nature. But this assertion rests upon another, that there is a society for mankind which is constituted and held together in that Person, and that he who enters this society is emancipated from the World—the society which is bound together in

the acknowledgment of, and subjection to, the evil selfish tendencies of each man's nature. But, further, it affirms that this unity among men, rests upon a yet more awful and perfect unity, upon that which is expressed in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Lose sight of this last and deepest principle, and both the others perish; for to believe that there is a Truth, a Unity, a Love, existing under certain forms, and not to believe there is an absolute Truth, Unity, Love, from which these forms have derived their excellence and their existence, is impossible, and has been always felt to be impossible. But is it not equally impossible to the Reason, has not the Experience of mankind proved it to be impossible, to contemplate the antagonist forms of evil, without ascending to the belief of an evil which has impregnated those forms, and which can exist apart from them? So necessary has this conviction been found, not to a few but to all, that the imagination has been continually framing to itself the horrid notion of an evil, which is not merely the source and spring of all that is evil in the actual condition of things, but which is the source of those things themselves, a primary original power, a rival Creator. This Manicheeism, though only at particular seasons it may have been congealed into a system, has been haunting men's minds from the beginning of the world, and is haunting us all still. But whence comes it, and what is the great prop of it? Surely it is this. We cannot deny the facts of misery and evil which thrust themselves upon our notice. We feel that we must refer them to a cause. But not daring to look steadily at the idea of an evil will, and to contemplate it in the light of a perfectly pure and holy will, we fancy that the powers which are exerted for an evil end are evil, that the things which are turned to an accursed use are themselves accursed. Hence the Oromasdes and Arimanes doctrine; hence, too, all the superstitious notions which have peopled nature with malignant influences and objects of dread. How are such dark dreams to be dispelled? Not by setting aside facts; not by outraging the innermost convictions of mankind; not by separating men from one another, as you do most effectually, when you teach

them that the evil which each is to contend with in himself, and the evil which he sees in his fellow creatures, or which he notices in the history of the world, have no common derivation. These outrages upon reason and conscience have been perpetrated again and again by so-called philosophers, but what have they effected? What one dark fear have they removed out of our path? What new bond of affection have they created between the members of the human family? The mockery has gone forth; it has been listened to, admired, adopted; and in the next age all the old superstitions have returned; the Imagination has revenged itself for the denial of an evil Spirit, by turning all the forms of Society and of Nature into evil. Meantime, this Baptism has been testifying to high and low, to men of all countries, languages, customs, that they have a common friend and a common enemy; but that the enemy has been vanquished, has been declared to have no right or property in any human creature, in any one corner of the universe; that his power is conferred by our faithlessness; that while we are claiming our true position we may despise and defy him; that it is only by making a lie that we come under the dominion of the father of lies. And yet it testifies as strongly to the fact, the monstrous fact, that men may be making lies, may be living in a position the most utterly anomalous and unreasonable; that nothing but entire dependence upon the righteous and holy Being rescues any one from this position; that every one therefore has a devil to fight with, as well as a world and a flesh. Get rid of this contradiction, if you can, by the philosophy of denials. We shall continue, with God's assistance, to seek deliverance from it by declaring to men their true state, and by adopting them into it.

To what extent the general charge is made out that Baptism is a bygone symbol, may be inferred from the particular arguments upon which it is grounded. If there be nothing which does not belong to a particular age, nothing permanent, nothing real; if there be nothing to connect together the portions of mankind which are separated by space and time, then the sign is obsolete because there is nothing to be

signified by it. If, on the other hand, all men in all times have sought, and the men of this age above all others are professing to seek, for some common human bonds which were not created to suit a particular period and locality, and which do not change when the notions and theories of that period have proved futile, when the customs of that locality are not applicable, I ask, where is the proof that this sign is not as fresh now as it was 1800 years ago? That men in times of sensuality, of luxury, of religious exclusiveness, of philosophical pretension, become impatient of it, I willingly admit. What better argument do I want than this, that it is a true thing, a witness for that which is spiritual, real, simple, universal? Thanks be to God, that He has not left eternal truths, which concern all men, to the custody of the wise and prudent of the earth; that He has embodied them in forms which from generation to generation have been witnesses of his love to the humble and the meek, and which all the contradictions of pride and self-will only help to illustrate and interpret.

The Romish System

I have stated why I look upon Baptism as the first sign of the existence of a Catholic Church or Kingdom of Christ in the world. I have considered the different objections to that view of it. But in the course of these remarks I have alluded to a class of persons who are most earnest in proclaiming the fact that there is such a Church, and equally earnest in maintaining that Baptism is the only induction into it. I have intimated that, nevertheless, I differ most widely with these persons, and believe that the dignity of Baptism was asserted against them by the Reformers of the 16th century. I am then, I conceive, bound to consider the doctrine respecting Baptism which is professed by the Romanists, and to give my reasons for not adopting it.

The common phrase that the Romanist regards Baptism as an opus operatum, is one which may be liable to much perversion. An intelligent defender of the system would protest earnestly against some opinions which might seem, at first hearing, to be implied in it. "To

suppose," he would say, "from our use of it, that we look upon a baptized person as incapable of falling into sin or losing heaven, would be to contradict monstrously and ridiculously every notion which our doctors have inculcated in their writings or our priests enforced in their practice. The disciples of the Reformation complain of us for our vigilance and self-suspicion. It is our strongest conviction that a dereliction of baptismal privileges is at once most possible and most awful." But having guarded himself by this explanation he would, I think, be most ready to admit the phrase as legitimate, and to unfold, in some such words as these, the sense of it: "By baptism," he would say, "we receive the benefits of the redemption which Christ wrought out for us. We become new and holy creatures. The work is finished: we have received the highest blessing which God can bestow upon us. Henceforth our business is, by the use of all the means which the Church prescribes, to keep ourselves in this state of purity. We shall not preserve it altogether; we shall be committing frequent venial sins, which, after confession and penance, will, we have a right to hope, be forgiven us. But we may, by constantly availing ourselves of the prayers and communion of the Church, preserve ourselves from those mortal sins which would utterly rob us of the Divine blessing. Should a sin of this kind have been committed, or should there be any fear that it has been committed, we may still have just such a hope of restoration as is an encouragement to the most unabated earnestness and diligence in seeking for it by the appointed methods."

Now it will strike the reader at once, that in certain points this explanation corresponds exactly with the one which I have given. First, as to the effect of Baptism. I have contended that Baptism affirms a man to be in a certain state, and affirms the presence of a Spirit with him, who is able and willing to uphold him in that state, and to bring his life into accordance with it. Secondly, as to the sin of men. I have contended that this consists in their voluntarily refusing the blessings of God's covenant. Thirdly, as to the means by which we are most likely to be kept in the right way; I should say, as the Romanist does, by

abiding in those ordinances, whereby we maintain a communion with our brethren and with God. Where then does the difference between us begin? I answer, at the threshold of these very statements. A man is brought into a certain state. The point is, what state? I have said, and I know the Romanist would not in words contradict me, into a state of union with Christ. But this state, I have contended, precludes the notion that goodness, purity, holiness, belongs to any creature considered in itself. To be something in himself is man's ambition, man's sin. Baptism is emphatically the renunciation of that pretence. Man does not, therefore, by Baptism, by faith, or by any other process, acquire a new nature, if by nature you mean, as most men do, certain inherent qualities and properties. He does not by Baptism, faith, or by any other process, become a new creature, if by these words you mean anything else than that he is created anew in Christ Jesus, that he is grafted into Him, that he becomes the inheritor of His life and not of his own. That, being so grafted, he receives the Spirit of Christ, I of course believe. But I contend, that the operation of this Spirit upon him is to draw him continually out of himself, to teach him to disclaim all independent virtue, to bring him into the knowledge and image of the Father and the Son. Upon these grounds, I have maintained, against our modern Protestants, that the sin of a baptized man consists in acting as if he were not in union with Christ, in setting up his own nature and his own will, and in obeying them. That is to say, his sin consists in doing acts which are self-contradictory, in assuming to be that which he is not, and never can be, in denying that he is that which he is and ever must be. What follows? Surely that faith in this union is a duty, the greatest of all duties, and that it can never cease to be a duty. A man has no right to believe a lie. Sin leads him to do it; sin brings him into a condition of mind in which a lie seems truth to him. It may bring him into a condition of mind in which lying becomes the element of his being, in which truth is absolutely closed from his eyes. The possibility of this sort of mortal sin I cannot doubt, either while I meditate upon the awful tendencies of atheism, which there

are in every one of us, or while I read the Epistle to the Hebrews. But supposing this awful condition had actually taken place in any man, it could not change the fact in the least degree; it would establish the fact. Is the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews less earnest in his exhortations to faith than the other writers of the New Testament? Does he less invite men to enter into God's rest? Does he separate these exhortations and invitations from his warnings respecting the peril of apostasy? or does he not make that peril one of his main arguments why every one of those whom he addressed should claim his privileges as a citizen of the New Jerusalem?

For precisely the same reason I attempted to shew that the Evangelical or modern Protestant notion made repentance impossible. If we are not allowed to call ourselves children of God, how can we be told to arise and go to our Father? If we are not to do this, what does our repentance mean? It can be nothing but a sinful selfish struggle after the blessings of corn and wine and the fatness of the earth, which we think we have lost; not a humble confession that we have made light of our birthright, and are no more worthy to be called sons. The repentance of the world may be produced by the desire or effort to obtain an assurance that we are members of God's redeemed family; the repentance which leadeth to life must be the confession of the unbelief, ingratitude, hardness of heart, which have led us to slight a love which has been bestowed freely, and which has never ceased to watch over us and to struggle with us.

Now the doctrine of the opus operatum leads, I think, by a more circuitous, but also by a more certain, route to those practical results which seem to me to make our Protestant systems so dangerous and objectionable.

When it is said that a baptized man loses his baptismal state, it is inevitably implied that this state was one of independent holiness and purity. We do not, as I have again and again urged, cease to be children because we are disobedient children. If therefore Baptism were looked upon as the adoption into the state of children, and if its virtue were

believed to consist in this, the notion we are considering would be impossible. But it is supposed that the man acquires something for himself in the instant of Baptism, that he is endowed with heavenly virtues, that he is in himself, separately considered, a new creature. By this opinion the Romanist supposes that he exalts Baptism. He seems to me utterly to degrade it and rob it of its meaning. He turns a sacrament into an event, supposes the redemption of Christ to be exhausted by a certain gift, while the Bible represents it as bringing men into an eternal and indissoluble friendship. He thinks that he promotes a safer, holier, more watchful feeling. It seems to me, that just so far as this opinion becomes the governing one of our lives, it undermines holiness, watchfulness, safety. For it turns the whole of life into a struggle for the recovery of a lost good. If this struggle is pursued honestly, there is no holiness in it, for it is purely selfish, it is not, cannot be, prompted by love. But in most men there arises a cruel sense of contradiction. They are commanded to repent; they feel that they cannot repent, for their consciences tell them that lamentation for the consequences of sin, present or expected, is not repentance; hence a craving for indulgences, a habit of unbelief, a despair of holiness. Which of these conditions of feeling is a safe one for a human creature to be in? But the Romanist thinks that at all events he is honouring the Church by this notion. To me it seems that he is destroying the very idea of the Church, denying its necessity. For he makes it appear that the blessing of Baptism is not this, that it receives men into the holy Communion of Saints, but that it bestows upon them certain individual blessings, endows them with a certain individual holiness. How then is self-renunciation and fellowship as members of the same body possible? And if these are impossible, what is the Church?

It will be admitted, I hope, that I have not imputed to Romanists anything which is merely an excess or exaggeration of their creed upon this great subject. There is a system of which this doctrine forms an integral part. But do I therefore mean to affirm either that this doctrine is only to be found in Romanist writers, or that the one I

have defended is not to be found in them? I believe that if I brought forward any such propositions I should be easily confuted. On the one hand it might be proved, by extracts from the Fathers, that the doctrine of an opus operatum did mingle itself in their minds with that of our being grafted into Christ; on the other by extracts from Anselm, from Hugo de St. Victor, from Bernard, from Aquinas, nay from eminent Romanists of the present day, that the very idea which I have endeavoured to express has been unfolded by them, only with infinitely more eloquence and unction. All this I believe most fully. So far from wishing to hinder the theological student from making such observations, I would do my best to force them upon his attention. I would labour to convince him, that whenever any great spiritual principle has been strongly revealed to men, a material counterfeit of that principle has always appeared also; that they have dwelt together in the minds of the best and wisest men; that if we seek for the one we must turn to their devotional exercises, to the occasions when they were most cultivating fellowship with God and most forgetting themselves, to those parts of their writings therefore which their disciples often study the least; that if we seek for the others we shall find them in elaborate controversial treatises, those which supply the best materials for theorems, the most ready formulas, the most convenient weapons of argument and ridicule against opponents; that the first remain for the delight and consolation of humble Christian people in all ages; that the last gradually shape themselves more and more into a definite system; that they are supposed to be bone of each other's bone, and flesh of each other's flesh, till some great crisis arrives, in which it pleases God to demonstrate the difference of the causes by the difference of the effects, to show that one had proceeded from Him and the other from the devil. Let the reader then not be dismayed if he find the very highest authorities alleged in support of the doctrine of an opus operatum; let him not be surprised to find it in any age or in any part of the Church, (especially in any which had greatly undervalued sacraments) reappearing and asserting its claim to be identical

with the Scriptural and Catholic idea of it. Let him not be terrified by being told, when he attempts to discriminate between them, that he is setting up his own judgment against the opinion of doctors and the testimony of antiquity. Let him say boldly, I am doing no such thing; I am simply determining that I will not believe the doctors against themselves; that I will not suffer myself to be cheated of a transcendent truth which they have taught me, a truth which was evidently dear to their inmost hearts, a truth which they felt was derived from the teaching of Christ himself and bound them to the Apostles and Martyrs of all times, a truth which they acknowledged was contrary to all their carnal apprehensions, and was only preserved to them by the continual teachings of God's Spirit; because they have elsewhere, while arguing with adversaries, while attempting to make a principle tell upon the hopes or fears of men who were incapable of entering into its true meaning, while drawing conclusions from Scripture by their private judgments, while apologizing for some fungus which the maxims of their age had confounded with the tree upon which it grew, produced a plausible explanation of this truth, an explanation forgotten in every moment of higher inspiration, and proving itself the less Divine the more it is tried by its fruits. It is easy to accuse those of wanting humility who have courage to act upon this determination. I believe that the proud system-seeking, system-loving intellect within us, disposes us to embrace the doctrine of the opus operatum; that the humble and contrite heart craves for a deeper principle, and, finding it, is obliged to part with the other for the sake of it.

NOTES TO VOLUME I

NOTE A

In the text the Quaker expresses his belief "that the catechumens in the primitive Church were not taught something wholly different in kind from that which they learnt after their baptism," "that they were not reasoned with upon those selfish motives which it must have been the object of their after initiation to cure them of." It is probable that many passages may be produced from the Fathers to refute this opinion; to show that they did sometimes resort to selfish arguments, upon the plea that pure things are meant for the pure. Such a practice is so very plausible, so very flattering to our spiritual pride, and therefore has prevailed so much in all later ages of the Church, that one must expect to find the seeds of it in the earliest. From the excellent principle, that milk is for babes and meat for grown men, an economist might easily pass to the notion that there are some constitutions which are not even fit for milk, and that to these some liquid drawn from the muddy streams of the world, or distilled from its poisonous herbs, may be fitly administered. But that this was not the habitual and deliberate opinion of these ages, may, I think, be very clearly inferred from the short treatise of Augustine, "De catechizandis rudibus."[17] This valuable book was addressed to a Carthaginian deacon, who had complained of the difficulty which he found in preserving the cheerfulness and freedom of his own mind while he was engaged in catechizing. The remarks which St. Augustine makes upon this subject well deserve the attention of all teachers, whether in the pulpit or the school-room. It is not however for their sake, that I refer to this little work, but that the reader may see in what spirit a Bishop of the fourth century would have addressed a young heathen who was only preparing for admission into the Church.

[17] St. Aug. Op. tom. vi. p. 191, ed. Benedict.

Having stated his views respecting the method in which the historical parts of Scripture should be exhibited to the candidate and how the coming of Christ should be shewn to be the end to which they are all pointing, he goes on to say,

> "Qua autem maior causa est adventus Domini, nisi ut ostenderet Deus dilectionem suam in nobis, commendans eam vehementer; quia cum adhuc inimici essemus Christus pro nobis mortuus est? Hoc autem ideo, quia finis precepti et plenitudo legis caritas est; ut et nos invicem diligamus, et quemadmodum ille pro nobis animam suam posuit, sic et nos pro fratribus animam ponamus; et ipsum Deum, quoniam prior dilexit nos, et Filio suo unico non pepercit, sed pro nobis omnibus tradidit eum, si amare pigebat, saltem nunc redamare non pigeat. Nulla est enim maior ad amorem invitatio, quam preevenire amando; et nimis durus est animus, qui dilectionem, si nolebat impendere, nolit rependere. Quod si in ipsis flagitiosis et sordidis amoribus videmus, nihil aliud eos agere qui amari vicissim volunt, nisi ut documentis quibus valent aperiant et ostendant quantum ament, eamque imaginem justitiae pretendere affectant, ut vicem sibi reddi quodam modo flagitent ab eis animis, quos illecebrare moliuntur; ipsique ardentius aestuant, cum jam moveri eodem igne etiam illas mentes quas appetunt sentiunt: si ergo et animus qui torpebat, cum se amari senserit excitatur, et qui jam fervebat cum se redamari didicerit, magis accenditur: manifestum est nullam esse maiorem causam qua vel inchoetur vel augeatur amor, quam cum amari se cognoscit qui nondum amat, aut redamari se vel posse sperat vel jam probat qui prior amat. Et si hoc etiam in turpibus amoribus, quanto plus in amicitia? Quid enim aliud cavemus in offensione amicitiae, nisi ne amicus arbitretur quod eum vel non diligimus, vel minus diligimus quam ipse nos diligit? Quod si crediderit, frigidior erit in eo amore quo invicem homines mutua familiaritate perfruuntur: et si non ita est infirmus ut haec illum offensio faciat ab omni dilectione frigescere, in ea se tenet qua non ut fruatur, sed ut consulat diligit. Operae pretium est autem animadvertere, quo modo, quamquam et superiores velint se ab inferioribus diligi, eorumque in se studioso delectentur obsequio,

et quanto magis id senserint, tanto magis eos diligant, tamen quanto amore exardescat inferior, cum a superiore se diligi senserit. Ibi enim gratior amor est, ubi non aestuet indigentiae siccitate, sed ubertate beneficentiae profluit. Ille namque amor ex miseria est, iste ex misericordia. Jam vero si etiam se amari posse a superiore desperabat inferior, ineffabiliter commovebitur in amorem, si ultro ille fuerit dignatus ostendere, quantum diligat eum qui nequaquam sibi tantum bonum promittere auderet. Quid autem superius Deo judicante, et quid desperatius homine peccante? qui se tanto magis tuendum et subjugandum superbis potestatibus addixerat, quae beatificare non possunt, quanto magis desperaverat posse sui curam geri ab ea potestate quae non malitia sublimis esse vult sed bonitate sublimis est.

"Si ergo maxime propterea Christus advenit, ut cognosceret homo quantum eum diligat Deus; et ideo cognosceret ut in ejus dilectionem a quo prior dilectus est inardesceret, proximumque illo jubente et demonstrante diligeret, qui non proximum sed longe peregrinantem diligendo factus est proximus; omnisque Scriptura divina quae ante scripta est ad prenuntiandum adventum Domini scripta est; et quidquid postea mandatum est litteris et divina auctoritate firmatum, Christum narrat, et dilectionem monet: manifestum est non tantum totam Legem et Prophetas in illis duobus pendere preceptis dilectionis Dei et proximi, quae adhuc sola Scriptura sancta erat cum hoc Dominus diceret, sed etiam quaecumque posterius salubriter conscripta sunt memoriae mandataque divinarum volumina litterarum. Quapropter in veteri Testamento est occultatio novi, in novo Testamento est manifestatio veteris. Secundum illam occultationem carnaliter intelligentes carnales et tunc et nunc poenali timore subjugati sunt. Secundum hanc autem manifestationem spiritales, et tunc quibus pie pulsantibus etiam occulta patuerunt, et nunc qui non superbi quaerunt, ne etiam aperta claudantur, spiritaliter intelligentes donata caritate liberati sunt.

"Quia ergo caritati nihil adversius quam invidentia; mater autem invidentis superbia est; idem Dominus Jesus Christus, Deus homo, et divinus in nos dilectionis indicium est, et humanus apud nos humili-

tatis exemplum, ut magnus tumor noster majore contrarie medicina sanaretur. Magna est enim miseria superbus homo: sed maior misericordia, humilis Deus. Hac Ergo Dilectione Tibi Tamquam Fine Proposito Quo Referas Omnia QUÆ Dicis, Quidquid Narras Ita Narra Ut Ille Cui Loqueris Audiendo Credat, Credendo Speret, Sperando Amet."

These last words are tolerably decisive as to the opinion of Augustine, respecting the manner in which the character and purpose of God, and the object of the Gospel, should be set before those who have not yet been received into His covenant. In this point of view his remarks would seem to me chiefly important to missionaries, who are acting directly upon the minds and consciences of heathens. I should never have dreamed of arguing the question at all in reference to those who have been brought up in a Christian country; who believe that they are struggling for a higher idea of Christianity than that which prevails among their countrymen generally, whose fathers did actually, as I think, maintain a fundamental Church principle which was in great hazard of being forgotten, and have transmitted to their descendants at least the form of that principle, with much, I allow, of its strength and vitality gone out of it, but on the other hand hallowed by feelings of old association and reverence. To deal with such men as if they stood upon the same ground with heathens, because they have not been baptized, seems to me a wilful denial of the effects which God's covenant has produced upon a society which it has encompassed for a thousand years, under pretence of doing honour to the sign of that covenant. In quoting then St. Augustine, I mean merely to prove, that even upon this hypothesis we are not warranted by the practice of antiquity, in treating Quakers as if they must receive baptism, before we can speak with them respecting the principles and end of the Gospel. Whoever produces the maxim ἅγια ἁγίοις in opposition to the mode of reasoning which I have adopted with the Quaker, is not attacking me but St. Augustine.

Nor will he make his case better, if he should plead that the heretic who adopts parts of the Gospel and rejects the rest, and who lives under the shadow of the Catholic Church, is really in a worse condition than the heathen, and must be treated as one who has sinfully sacrificed all his powers of spiritual apprehension, and can only be appealed to by arguments addressed to his sensible experience. For then we shall produce the two books of Augustine, 'De Moribus Ecclesiæ Catholicæ' et 'De Moribus Manichæorum;'[18] books written for the express purpose of convincing those who had been seduced, by what St. Augustine knew from his own experience to be the most fatal of all heresies. I allude to this work the rather, because there are many passages in it, which might lead one to suppose that he would in this particular case have adopted the maxim against which I am contending. For instance, in one place he says, speaking of the manner in which the Manichæans treated the Old Testament,

> "Dicendum est vobis, Non est vestrum ista intelligere. Non parum mihi cogniti estis. Crassas omnino mentes et corporeorum simulacrorum pestifero pastu morbidas ad divina judicanda defertis, quæ multo altiora sunt quam putatis." And again, "Poteram pro mea mediocritate discutere singula, et eruere ac demonstrare quæ accepi, in quorum excellentia et altitudine plerumque verba deficiunt: sed quamdiu latratis, non est faciendum. Non enim frustra dictum est, Nolite sanctum dare canibus. Ne succenseatis. Et ego latravi et canis fui, quando mecum jure non docendi cibo sed refellendi fustibus agebatur. Si autem in vobis esset caritas, de qua nunc agitur, vel etiam si fuerit aliquando, quantam cognoscendæ veritatis magnitudo desiderat, aderit Deus qui ostendat vobis neque apud Manichæos esse Christianam fidem, quæ ad summum apicem sapientiæ veritatisque perducit, qua perfrui nihil est aliud nisi beate vivere, neque esse uspiam, nisi in catholica disciplina." And again, "Unde illud exoritur, quod ab initio satagimus, nihil in Ecclesia catholica salubrius fieri, quam ut rationem præcedat auctoritas."

[18]August. tom. i. p. 512. ed. Benedict.

From these passages one might easily infer that Augustine would appeal only to such low hopes as these low minds could reach, would give nothing but fleshless bones to these barking dogs, would insist upon their submitting to the authority of the Church, before he treated them as capable of hearing any reason. How stands the case? He declares at the outset of his treatise, (c. 2.) that he will appeal only to those scriptures which they themselves recognise, and will try the Church by those moral signs which they hold to be sound: (c. 3.) that though according to the true order of nature, authority ought to precede reason, he should nevertheless call upon them to receive nothing, for which he did not produce a reason. Adding, "Delectat enim me imitari quantum valeo mansuetudinem Domini mei Jesu Christi, qui etiam ipsius mortis malo, quo nos exuere vellet, indutus est." And to what kind of reasons does he appeal? He inquires what the Summum Bonum is, he shows what an appetite there is in man after it, he proves that God must be the good, and that the knowledge and love of God must be the eternal life, which men are craving. These are the principles from which he starts, and to which all that he says about the Scriptures, and the Church, is referred. And he does not speak of these matters in a cold dry spirit, as if he were addressing men before whom he was afraid of exhibiting any deeper emotions; his words often rise almost into a rapture, though he never for a moment loses his intellectual clearness, or his human affection.[19]

I think then that in abandoning the argument from safety, and in appealing to the principles which are still acknowledged by those who have wandered the farthest from what I believe to be the order of the Catholic Church, I am acting in the spirit of these passages. The other method seems to me to be formed from an incongruous combination of the hardest maxims and precedents of the early times, with the most vulgar of our own. It is an attempt to graft Paley upon Chrysostom, to establish ancient Christianity by the help of the Stock Exchange.

[19]See especially the passages between the eighteenth and twenty-sixth chapters of the first book, —a noble piece of Christian Ethical Philosophy.

NOTE B

The following passage from Tittmann's Meletemata Sacra, (pp. 27—29.) will explain the allusion in the text.

"Nobis quidem inde a longo tempore visa est atque etiamnum videtur maximas veritatis notas habere sententia ea, quam innuimus loc. cit., deinde vero dudum prolatam fuisse vidimus a Laur. Valla, Not. in N. T., cujus verba infra scripsimus,[20] et Beza, Not. ad h. l; nostris temporibus autem in primis exornatam à I. A. Cramero, Beyträge zur Beförderung theol. Gelehrsamkeit, P. i. p. 232. et Gabr. Chr. Beni. Moschio, Erklär. der Evangel. P. i. p. 289. probatam quoque Jo. Aug. Ernesti, Bibl. Theol. Nov. T. iii. p. 129, sqq. Scilicet, ut dicamus breviter, nec repetamus quæ e V. T. disputavimus loco citato, vocabulum λόγος arbitramur denotare promissum, usurpatumque esse loco τοῦ λεγόμενος, quod plane æquipollet vocabulo magis usitato ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ejusque usurpandi causam repetitam esse, partim ex more illorum temporum in cogitando denominandoque Servatore, partim ex usu loquendi, partim a consilio Joannis in scribendo hoc libro, partim denique a consuetudine Domini ipsius in se describendo. Primum enim mos illorum temporum, et ex ipsa rei natura, quoniam Servator erat tum futurus, et ex consuetudine V. T. receptus, fuit hic, ut Messias diceretur ὁ ἐρχόμενος, quo quidem nomine in T. V. appellatus est κατ' ἐξοχήν, et quemadmodum Cyrillus Hieros.[21] innuit, ex loco Gen. xlix. 10. in N. T. autem eodem nomine insignitus legitur sæpissime, veluti Matth. xi. 3. ubi Joannes Baptista quæri ex eo jussit, σὺ εἶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ἢ ἕτερον προσδοκῶμεν; et apud ipsum Joannem, cap. vi. 16. xi. 27. Unde Judæis, in primisque Christianis, neque incognitum plane nomen esse potuit, neque inusitatum in consuetudine vulgari. Deinde quod λόγος Evangelista dixit loco vo-

[20]Sunt autem hæc: ὁ Λόγος benedictum illud semen declarat, de quo Adamo, Abrahamo, Isaaco, Jacobo, Davidi, et electis omnibus, locutus est Dominus, quasi sermonem, seu Promissum, Dei voces.

[21]Catech. xii. p. 261. ed. Prenot.

cis λεγόμενος, id quidem offendet neminem, consuetudinis loquendi Scripturarum sacrarum vel leviter peritum: constat enim, vocabula abstractorum pro concretis centies adhiberi, idque non raro factum esse alias quoque in denominando Domino nostro; veluti quando σωτηρία appellatur loco σωτήρος cap. iv. 22. item ζωή et φῶς, aut apud Lucam, Ev. ii. 25 et 30, σωτήριον et παράκλησις τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. Nec dubitationem habere potest, vocabulo λόγος tribui posse eam vim quam diximus, quoniam vocabulum Hebraicum quod Græco respondit, Græcumque ipsum Rom. ix. 6. sexcenties in locis de promissione dictum extat, atque ab interpretibus Græcis translatum reperitur ἀγγελία et ἐπαγγελία, veluti Prov. xii. 25. atque adeo λεγόμενος idem sit et esse possit, quod ἐπαγγελλόμενος. etiam in loco Sap. xviii. 15, Angelus divinitus promissus et ablegatus λόγος Θεοῦ appellatur, de quo vid. Schleusneri Spicilegium Lexici in interpr. Gr. V. T. Spec. i. p. 75. Ac plane eandem vim vocabulum λόγος obtinet in reliquis libris, Joannis nimirum, 1 Ep. i. 1. ubi Dominus appellatus est λόγος τῆς ζωῆς, id est, promissus auctor felicitatis; et Apoc. xix. 13, in quo loco dicitur λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ, hoc est, a Deo promissus. Tum porro consilium Joannis in scribendo Evangelio, cum fuerit hoc, ut demonstraret, quemadmodum supra vidimus, Jesum esse promissum exspectatumque Messiam; facile quisque videt quam aptum sit ei consilio, quamque accommodatum vocabulum τοῦ λόγου, hunc ipsum promissum Messiam exprimens. Ad extremum, quod in primis notabile est, Domino ipsi in sermonibus omnibus in hoc libro commemoratis, solenne fuit, se appellare legatum a Patre, Patrem vero mittentem, seque describere tanquam eum qui missus a Patre, profectusque in has terras venerit, atquead eundem rediturus sit; veluti cap. vi. 38. xvi. 28. xiii. 3. reliqua; quo innuere volebat manifeste se esse τὸν ἐρχόμενον, hoc est, Messiam promissum exspectatumque. Atque hæc consuetudo Domini videtur fuisse causa precipua usurpandi hujus vocabuli alias in hac re paulo insolentioris. Itaque sensus verborum priorum est hic: promissus Servator eatitit ante rerum omnium initia, tanquam scriptum fuisset hoc modo, ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λεγόμενος σωτήρ."

These remarks would be comparatively unimportant if they merely expressed the opinions of an individual critic, even of one so respectable as Tittmann. But the reader will perceive that he is able to produce a fair list of authorities upon his side, some of them dating as far back as the Reformation, some numbered among the scholars of the last age. All these, with more or less reservation, subscribed to an interpretation, which if it were applied to any passage in any uninspired author, would have been rejected by every one of them with indignation and disdain. Now there must be a reason for this. Men who have studied the laws of language could not talk in this way about substituting the abstract for the concrete, or produce such utterly inapplicable parallels from other parts of Scripture, and then resort to the insolent critical dogma that 'no one who is in the least degree acquainted with the language of the Bible can be offended' by such a departure from all ordinary principles and usages, if there were not some deeply rooted habit of thought and feeling with which the simple mode of rendering the words is at variance. What this is, perhaps, we may for a moment be puzzled to discover; for the feelings of the writers near the time of the Reformation were, in many respects, directly opposed to those of their successors in the two following centuries. But if we remember the great eagerness which there was among the writers of the earlier period, to assert the distinction of the Bible from all other books, and above all to cut it off from any fellowship with philosophy, we need not wonder that they should have desired wholly to separate the use of the word upon which the Gospel of St. John turns, from the same word as it is employed by Plato and by Philo.

The early Socinian writers perceived the fact, which the orthodox Protestants had determined to overlook, and made use of it to prove, that if this expression imported something abstract and impersonal in either of the uninspired writers, it must have the same import in the sacred ones. That those who replied to them should take fresh pains to assert the special signification, and should pronounce the effort to connect it with any other as profane and heretical, was to be expected.

Then came the time when the classical writers began to be spoken of with respect; when the ordinary Protestant commentator was rather glad to look upon Scripture as containing a new and expanded form of heathen morality, and when the descendants of the Polish Socinians began to exercise an important influence on theological opinion. In such a time, one might have looked for a reversal of the former decrees, for a rather excessive willingness to find out an analogy between St. John and the Heathen or Jewish teacher. But by this time Platonism had been just as much exhausted of its meaning as Christianity. So far as any heathen philosopher was found to have laid down fine maxims about virtue, he was respected as a Christian, minus the belief in Christ. But when he uttered anything which savoured of a feeling and recognition of mystery, the reverence for him disappeared; here his paganism or false philosophy was thought to have obtruded itself. A new merit was discovered in the Gospel, that it put an end to such dreams, and brought everything within the region of common sense. As this feeling belonged both to the believers and to the deniers of the old Creeds, it was not wonderful that the former should be glad of any expedient for proving that St. John, though he asserted a strange dogma, was perfectly free from all taint of mysticism; and that the latter should have endeavoured to evade the authority of his words, by alleging that he certainly did show symptoms of a tendency which the enlightened of all parties had agreed to denounce. In our own day, the evangelical protest against mere heathen morality, and the terror of the new attempts to exhibit Christianity as only one out of many forms of religious faith and opinion, have led to the same desire for an exclusive interpretation, which prevailed for different reasons in former periods. Tittmann's interpretation, therefore, is very likely to be a popular one among religious people both here and abroad.

But can we be honouring Scripture, while we are consciously attempting to find strange and tortuous explanations of its most awful and characteristic passages? Ought not every theological student to suspect himself, if he feels that he is inclined to take refuge in this

or any similar contrivance for evading the ordinary force of words? I do most earnestly press this thought upon those whom it may most concern, because it seems to me that the recovery of a sound spiritual theology among us depends mainly upon the temper of mind in which we apply ourselves to the study of St. John's Gospel; upon the way in which we connect it with Old Testament history and prophecy, and upon our willingness to acknowledge that it does interpret to us the history of God's dealings with men in all time. The more I look at the different directions which men's thoughts are taking in this day, the more it seems to me that this is the subject to which we ought to devote ourselves; and the right meditation upon which may save us from a thousand confusions, and help us to bring the most apparently opposite feelings into reconciliation.

The three following notes may perhaps help to explain my meaning, and may enable the reader better to understand the purpose of all my other hints.

NOTE C

It had always been the impression, I believe, upon the minds both of ordinary readers and of scholars, that the Comedian of Athens intended to represent Socrates as a Sophist, who was corrupting the old spirit of Greece with modern philosophical refinements. Upon this view of the case, Aristophanes, though he may have entirely mistaken the character and objects of the person whom he was ridiculing, will still confirm the impression which we derive from other sources, that he was emphatically a moral teacher, that he meddled with physical speculations only just so far as they illustrated his principles concerning the life of man, that his great effort was to awaken men to self-knowledge. A teacher who asserted that a constant conflict was going on in man between two principles, one drawing him upwards, one dragging him to earth, might easily be represented as keeping a right and a wrong reason, and being able upon all fitting occasions to make the latter predominant. One who urged his pupils to study the meaning of words, might be plausibly accused of inventing the most subtle and aerial distinctions. One who wished to guide them through the thick coming thoughts and fancies which the teachings of the sophists had stirred up within them to a solid foundation, might easily be suspected of administering to the growth of self-consciousness, and so of interfering with simple and practical life. These charges are just such as any man coming into a vicious state of society, and seeking to reform it, not by preaching about the past, but by actually entering into the present, and endeavouring to discover a way out of its confusions, must always incur. It is the best proof which can be afforded of the talent of Aristophanes, that he so clearly understood the kind of work in which Socrates was engaged; the best excuse for his character, that he confounded him with persons who deserved all reprobation, and

whom he was, by a very different course to that which the Comedian followed, refuting and exposing.

But a modern editor of Aristophanes, Mr. Mitchell, whose English notes, whose criticisms, and whose previous translations, are likely to make his work very popular, has promulgated an entirely new theory upon this subject. He maintains that the notion of the objects of Socrates which we obtain from either of his disciples, or from tradition, is utterly false; that he was primarily, and almost exclusively, a physical philosopher, that as such he is ridiculed in the Clouds, and that the hero of that part of the play which seems to describe him in another character, is really not Socrates but Euripides!

The last hypothesis will, I should think, be a much more effectual confutation of this ingenious scheme, than any arguments which can be brought against it. To prove his point against the philosopher, Mr. Mitchell is obliged to destroy our respect for the genius of his own favourite poet. For he represents this his most elaborate composition as utterly deficient in unity of purpose or principle, as nothing but a collection of incoherent lampoons upon two persons, who it would appear were not even connected by a common object or by the same class of pursuits. One can scarcely imagine a more satisfactory confirmation of the common opinion, that Socrates was what Xenophon and Plato (much as they differ in the character of their minds, and in their ways of regarding their master) both represent him to have been, than that which is supplied by this desperate effort to set it aside.

So far as the assertion in the text is concerned, these remarks might be sufficient. But I cannot help perceiving that Mr. Mitchell's remarks on this point are in strict accordance with those which he is everywhere endeavouring to propagate, respecting Greek philosophy generally, and that he is availing himself, it seems to me most mischievously, of Christian feelings and prejudices in support of them. In a passage of his Preface to the Clouds, he gives it as his opinion, that the highest honour which Pythagoras ever received was to be made 'the hero and object of ridicule in one of Lucian's unmatched dialogues.' He

speaks of him and of Epimenides and Empedocles as 'impostors' and 'charlatans.' And having assumed that Socrates belonged to the same class of thinkers with them, and received much of his teaching from the Italian school, he leaves his readers to draw the inference that he was an impostor and charlatan also.

As our notices of Pythagoras, though sufficient to show that the greatest among the Greeks regarded him with respect and admiration, are rather scattered and miscellaneous, my readers may wish to know something of the process by which Mr. Mitchell arrives at his conclusions respecting him. Perhaps they may suppose that he collects the remarks respecting him, which are to be found in Plato and Aristotle, that he then resorts to Diogenes Laertius, and finally avails himself of any hints which Cicero either from Greek or Italian sources may be able to supply. No, our author disdains all these vulgar methods. His authorities are derived from a period subsequent to the Christian era. He takes the life of Apollonius of Tyana by the sophist Philostratus. He finds that this mythical hero equipped himself in the cast-off garments of the Samian, inventing, he fairly confesses, some stories, but in all probability "finding others ready made to his hand;" the chief ground for this last opinion being that 'the immortal Lucian' believed or feigned to believe them. Out of these materials Mr. Mitchell constructs a Pythagoras, and thence by the easiest process imaginable (his former hypothesis being admitted), a Socrates.

I entreat my reader to verify these assertions, by turning to the preface of which I have spoken: for I do not ask him to believe on my authority that any scholar conversant with the laws of historical evidence, has adopted such a course for discovering the character and merits of an ancient teacher. It is quite superfluous to observe in what way the precedent might be applied to other cases. Of course if any Father or Apostle has been chosen for the subject of a biography by an Italian monk of the last or present century, who has discovered his relics and wrought miracles with them, that biography must henceforth be received as genuine; upon the strength of it the Father or

Apostle of it must be pronounced an impostor or charlatan, provided only Voltaire or some other immortal Lucian of the West has adopted it as the warrant for his jests. Nevertheless Mr. Mitchell's statements will in many quarters be eagerly received. There are some who seem to think that the proof of the Divine origin and worth of Christianity depends upon the mean estimate which we form of all the wise men whom Greece produced in its best days; that if we can but succeed in wiping out the respect for them, no matter by what means, there is a tabula rasa on which we may inscribe all the feelings and principles of the New Testament. Alas! what a tabula rasa! one on which scorn, scepticism, indifference to all earnest hopes, unbelief in any principle, have been written in the deepest characters beforehand! These are the preparations for the Gospel! These are the habits of mind which we are to foster in order that we may feel our own nothingness, and our need of a Divine Teacher, and may believe that we have one! That facts are against such a notion; that the sceptics and scoffers of the ages after Christianity had been proclaimed, were not the men most ready to receive it; that those who were most earnestly and truly holding fast that which they had, seeking for God by every light which Mythology or Philosophy threw in their way, were those who most welcomed the voice of the messenger bringing good tidings, and saying, Behold your God—this is certain. Nevertheless in the teeth of the clearest evidence of this kind, we suppose that we are proving Christianity to be that which all men want, by proving that all those who showed they did want it were imposing upon others or upon themselves.

The ground for such a suspicion is however the point upon which I am most anxious to speak. It is this: whenever these heathen philosophers perceived a great moral principle, the knowledge of which they believed might be for the good of ages unborn, they said they were inspired. Now that they were ignorant of the conditions, under which spiritual life and wisdom are communicated: that the belief of being taught from above produced an intoxication which at times carried them into extravagant courses; that it may have ultimately engendered

a vanity which was the parent of real impostures, I make no doubt. But I ask, is it safe, in spite of all these facts, to say that honesty of purpose, and real positive wisdom, were the fruits of delusion and falsehood? All that is sincere in my mind revolts against such an opinion. Good produces good, lies bring forth lies; what there was of deceit in these men led to evil results, kept up a superstition which was ultimately exposed and which carried away much sound faith along with it; but they did some good, great good. Did this come from any hollowness and trickery? Μὴ γένοιτο! It must have come from deep and wise counsels; earnest meditations; loving feelings. And whence came these? Are we, just because we are Christians, to say it was pretence and cheating to affirm that they came from the source of all truth and good? Are we, just because we know that not only rains and fruitful seasons, but all holy thoughts, good counsels and just works have a Divine Author, to say that the dim recognition of this truth by elder men was actually a crime; that they would have been better and wiser if they had taken the honour to themselves? Yet we must charge this humility upon them as a sin, if we are determined to adopt the Pelagian doctrine, that the good which was in these men had its root in human nature, existing apart from God, and not in the teachings and impulses of the Divine Word.

NOTE D

The reader will find in Mr. Coleridge's "Aids to Reflection," most valuable passage on the subject of Mysticism, in which the two senses of the word to which I have alluded in the text are finely and accurately distinguished. The instances which are there referred to, as illustrating the way in which a profound apprehension of the law and mystery of our own being, derived either from the simple study of the word of God, or from that study improved by reading and cultivation, may connect itself with notions and allegories suggested by the fancies of particular minds, are those of Boéhme and Fénelon. They are most happily chosen—the one as exhibiting the most perfect type of Protestant, the other of Romish, mysticism. But the instance of Philo is perhaps more striking and important than either. No one who looks into his writings can fancy for an instant that he was not a laborious student of the Bible. To no one does the charge often preferred against spiritualists of undervaluing the Scriptures, and substituting for them the wisdom which they had derived from some other quarter, apply less than to him. He evidently regarded his own sacred writings as more precious than all other books together. He evidently traced up all his thoughts and discoveries to the light which he had received from them. Nevertheless it is true, that Philo's Scripture readings would most utterly confound anyone who had been used to look at the text with simplicity. Such a person would not, I think, be inclined to say: (as nine out of ten who are not simple readers, but who bring to the study all the artificial notions and habits of their own time, certainly would say,) 'All this is mere stuff and nonsense.' He would perceive that there is something in it to which such words are very inapplicable indeed; nay, that there is a continuous stream of thought through every part of his exposition, by following which, we become convinced that the

records he is speaking of have an internal unity. At the same time, I am quite sure that the best and truest reader will be conscious of most restlessness and impatience, when he finds the records of a simple practical life, turned into a set of high-flown conceits and allegories about the different moral virtues, and the sensible and rational part in man.

How then are we to distinguish the solid and the real from the fantastic in these remarkable books? It seems to me that the position of Philo supplies the answer. Nowhere so well as in Alexandria could a man learn what were the feelings and necessities of men, especially of thoughtful men, in the heathen world, what it was that philosophers were seeking after, what was requisite to satisfy their inquiries. Nowhere so well as in Alexandria could a man find anything which should interpret to him the simply domestic life or the national feelings and sympathies of the Jewish people. Going with the advantages which one kind of knowledge gave him to the study of his Scriptures, he found everywhere hints of a Divine Teacher, who was guiding men out of the ways of sense, out of slavery to visible appearances, into the acknowledgment of an unseen Being. He knew how the reason in man had striven against the impressions of sense, had striven to realize an object answerable to itself; here he found the other side of the picture. Here was the Reason of God leading that higher faculty which he had imparted to His creature to seek after Him and to find Him. Going with his ignorance to the same books—the real practical conflicts, the human doings, the outward crosses of those whom they speak of, became to him mere pictures and images of certain mental feelings and operations; he could recognise the world of human relations, only as an image world; he was utterly unprepared for the mystery of the Word made Flesh. The first class of his thoughts connect him with the most thoughtful men of all times, living in a position the most unlike his own; the latter connect him with them indeed so far as this, that they as well as he have been prone to read their own circumstances and states of mind into the universal book; but those circumstances

and states of mind being different from his, there is little in their speculations to support his, or in his to afford an excuse for theirs.

My object is not to give the reader any account of Philo's Scriptural allegories, nor even to show how the acknowledgment of the Divine Word is worked into the whole tissue of his thoughts. My wish is merely to illustrate the way in which he represents the Word as a Teacher; in which he connects that teaching with the Reason of man; in which he describes it as universal. The other side of the subject, his hints respecting the relation between the Word and the Absolute Being, are in the strictly theological sense more important. But I shall allude to them here only so far as they illustrate the point which belongs strictly to the history of Quakerism. I pass over then his assertion that the Divine Word was at once the framer of things and the image after which they were framed, (see the book on the Mosaic history of Creation, c. i. beginning προλαβὼν γὰρ ὁ Θεός to ch. v. πρὸς ἀλήθειαν ἀγαθόν,) and all other passages which refer to the physical universe, even though they may speak of an intellectual (noetic) universe as the type of this. Nor will I dwell upon his comment on the words, "and the Lord God took the man whom he had made, and set him in the Garden, to till it and to watch over it"—where he speaks of a distinction between that mind which was merely formed (πλασθείς) and that which was created, this last being "a pure reason, unparticipant of corrupt matter, enjoying a purer and more untainted constitution, which pure reason God apprehends, not suffering it to go from Him, but placing it as the watchman and governor of the different virtues which He has planted and made to bud around it." (Allegories, Book i. § 28.) Nor will I more than allude to his remark, which supplies an important limitation to the former words, that Cain and Abel represent "two opposite and conflicting opinions, the one whereof refers all things to the reason, as if it were the guide of thought, of feeling, of motion, of power; the other refers to God as being His workmanship. With which two opinions, he adds, the same soul travails. But when they are brought forth, they must needs be divided, since it is utterly impossible

for such enemies to dwell together." (On the sacrifices of Cain and Abel, § 1.)

Such passages as the following are more directly to our purpose, and will be a key to the others. It is taken from a treatise on the "Husbandry of Noah," which is of course allegorized after the author's usual fashion.

> "Wherefore it is needful that our Reason, like a goatherd, or cowherd, or shepherd, or keeper of cattle generally, should have rule, choosing that which is convenient before that which is pleasant either to itself or to the inferior creatures. Nevertheless, that the different portions of the soul are not left ungoverned, but have the blessing of a faultless and altogether good Shepherd, under whose conduct it is impossible that the council of thoughts should be disturbed and scattered, we must attribute, finally, and we might say exclusively, to the oversight of God Himself. For so it is shown to be of necessity under one and the same order, in that it looks up to one Overseer, since the being obliged to serve many different rulers is an intolerable calamity. And so good a thing is this office of the Shepherd, that it is rightly ascribed not to kings only, and to wise men, and to souls purified for the highest mysteries, but to God the universal Ruler Himself. The authority for this is not some insignificant person, but a prophet, a psalmist, whom we may well trust. For he speaks thus, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, and I shall not want.' Let each man say the same in his own part and measure; for this is a song which it is comely for every godly man to meditate and sing over with himself, and which at the same time properly appertains to the whole universe. For water, and air, and fire, and whatsoever vegetables or animals are in these, things mortal, and things Divine, the nature of the heavens, the courses of the Sun and Moon, the movements and harmonious dances of the other Stars, as if they formed one sheepfold, doth God, as Shepherd and King, guide according to order and law, setting over them his true Word, his first begotten Son, who is ready like the viceroy of a great king to receive and to render up the care of this holy flock. Let then the whole world, that greatest and most perfect sheepfold of the true

> God say, 'The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.' Let each say the same individually; not with that voice that comes through the tongue and mouth, which spreads through but a little portion of air, but with the far-reaching voice of the mind, which touches the very boundaries of the universe."

I do not quote this passage for the sake of its style, which is perhaps somewhat inflated, but as a fair exposition of the idea which is expanded through the whole treatise; the idea, I mean, that the living Word is the shepherd and teacher of the inner man; ordaining the whole constitution of the mind, and holding direct and continual converse with it. In precisely the same spirit is the following passage from another work.

> "But it is a fearful thing for the soul to ascend into the contemplation of The Being by itself, not knowing the way, and at the same time lifted up by its ignorance and boldness. Great are the falls which happen from such defect of knowledge and foolish daring. Wherefore Moses prays that he may have God Himself for his guide in the way which leads to Him. For he saith, 'If thou wilt not go with me, lead me not up from hence.' Therefore every movement without the Divine direction and oversight, leadeth to evil. And it were better to remain here below, leading this confused beggarly mortal life, as the greater part of men do, than having lifted ourselves up to heaven, through boasting to be turned back and confounded, which calamity has happened to multitudes of sophists, who have fancied that wisdom consisted in the invention of persuasive words, not in the most true faith of things. Perhaps also something of this kind is signified. 'Do not lift me up on high by giving me wealth, or fame, or honour, or power, or whatever else belongs to the things called good, if Thou wilt not Thyself accompany them.' For these oftentimes procure the greatest curses and blessings to those who have them—blessings when God Himself is the guide of the mind; curses, when He is not. For to multitudes those things which are called goods, have been the causes of intolerable evils: but he that followeth God uses as the fellows and comrades of his journey those λόγοι whom

> it is customary to name angels. For it is written 'that Abraham went with them leading them on the way.' O beautiful equality, when the guide is himself guided, giving what he receiveth, not one thing in place of another, but the very same thing reciprocated! For while he is not yet perfected, he useth the Divine Word as the leader of the way. For the oracle is, 'Behold I send My angel with thee before thy face, that he may keep thee in the way, that he may lead thee to the land which I have prepared for thee; give heed to him and hearken to him, disobey him not, for My word is in him.' But when he hath come to the highest point of knowledge, vigorously running on, he will measure his paces with him who was before leading him in the way. For both will become followers of God, the universal Guide." (On the Migration of Abraham, § 31.)

Whatever may be thought of the somewhat startling words with which this passage concludes, no one, I think, can read them without feeling more clearly and strongly what the purpose of the Epistle to the Hebrews, especially of the first chapter, is, and at the same time without obtaining a clearer light, respecting that form of Gnosticism, which connected itself with Jewish ideas. These Λόγοι or angels, ministers of God and to man, the Jew could recognise in his Scriptures; might not Jesus be one of these? Neither absolutely Divine nor absolutely human; but belonging to a middle race between Godhead and Humanity? The writer of the epistle meets this opinion. He proves that the Scriptures speak of one who is not one of the Λόγοι but the Λόγος, not a Son of God but the Son of God. And then he goes on to shew how this Son of God verily apprehended not the angels but the seed of Abraham. The remark of course is familiar to all students of theology. But it may not be wholly useless to suggest it to younger men, as one of the proofs that all the Scriptures become unintelligible and incoherent, when the idea upon which I am dwelling is lost sight of.

The following extract from the treatise, "On the confusion of tongues," has the same kind of value. Philo has been speaking of the words, "The tower which the sons of men have builded." He supposes

some jester to ask, why this phrase should be used, for who else but sons of men were likely to build cities and towers? He answers, that these words were not used carelessly or without a meaning. By them it is intimated, that the builders of the tower were men who were pursuing a multitude of objects, and had lost sight of the one Creator and Father of all. He then adds,

> "But the truly wise are fittingly called the sons of the one God, as Moses confesses, where he saith, 'Ye are the sons of the Lord your God;' and again, 'God that begat thee.' And this belongs to those who have fashioned their souls to think, that that which is in itself pure and beautiful is the only good, which is set up as the opposite fortress to that of pleasure, and serves for its subversion and overthrow. And though a man may not yet be fit to be called son of God, yet let him strive to fashion himself after his first begotten Word, the eldest of the angels; the archangel of many names; for He is called 'Beginning,' and 'Name of God,' and 'Word,' and 'The Man according to the divine Image' (ὁ κατ' εἰκόνα ἄνθρωπος), and, He that looketh upon Israel.' * * *. For though we are not yet reckoned sons of God, yet we may be called so of 'His eternal Image'—'the most holy Word;' for this most venerable Word is the image of God."

So in a very cabalistic commentary upon the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, he says, in reference to the words, "he divided not the birds:"

> "For the word of God, solitary and monadic in the multitude of things that have become, and that are to perish, remaineth uncompounded, ever wont to ascend upwards, and studying to be the companion of the One. Wherefore there are these two undivided natures, that in us of Reason, and that over us of the Divine Word. But being undivided, they divide innumerable other things. For the Divine Word hath divided the things in nature, and hath distributed them all. And this reason of ours, whatever things or bodies it hath reasonably taken in, these it distinguishes by innumerable ways, into innumerable parts, and never ceaseth from its dissections. And this comes to pass through the likeness which it hath to the Creator and Father of the whole. For the divinity being unmixed,

> uncompounded, without parts, hath been to all the world the cause of mixture, combination, apportionment. So it is fitting that those things which are like to it, to wit, the reason in us, and that which is above us, being without parts and undivided, should be able, with mighty force, to divide and discriminate each of the things that are." (Who is the Inheritor of Divine things?) Sect. 48.

There is a very striking passage in the early part of the first book on Dreams, which I would recommend to the attention of the reader, as an illustration of the way in which Philo connected the idea of Science or Knowledge, with submission to the Divine guidance. So far from looking upon Science as something directly opposed to Faith, he speaks of it as being the direct opposite of Sense; a very remarkable thought indeed, which he might have received from Plato, but which certainly seemed to him in strict harmony with the teaching of his own lawgiver and prophets.

The evidence respecting Philo's opinion of the universality of the Divine teaching is not to be gathered from particular passages, so much as from the whole spirit of his books. In all the language which I have quoted there is a constant reference to the teaching of the Word, as having reference to man. There is an absence of any attempt to limit the blessing within his own nation. In an indifferent Jew, or one who set but little store by his own Scriptures, looking upon the heathen writers as more profound or advanced than they were, this would have been natural. But with his extraordinary admiration and deep study of the Jewish writings, a study and admiration implying too the greatest thankfulness for their original separation, and for the ordinances which distinguished them from other people, one might have expected to find indications here and there of the feeling which characterized his countrymen generally. It is evident, however, that his acknowledgment of the wisdom and knowledge of God, as the great objects and rewards of human search, and the highest gifts the Creator can bestow, led him to look upon the Jew who, as he believed, had all facilities for this pursuit, as in a far higher condition than he

would have been, if he had had the right to treat other men as utterly outcasts and aliens. We are not, however, left to conjecture or inference upon the subject. There is an especial treatise on the thesis, that 'every virtuous man is a freeman.' In this treatise he lays it down as a maxim, supporting himself by a line of Sophocles, that "'he only is free who hath God as his guide." § 3.

And then when he has expounded the conditions and characteristics of freedom, he meets the question, where have such men as you imagine ever been, or where are they now? He answers, that men, however rare, are to be found who excelled in virtue; followed God as their only guide; lived according to the right law of nature, who were not free only themselves, but inspired their neighbours with free thoughts. Such men he discovers in Greece among the 'seven wise men;' among some of the philosophers of the Eleatic School; in India among the gymnosophists; in Persia among the magians. From his express words, and from the habitual tone of his thoughts, it is evident that he did not look upon these men as wise or good, in virtue of any intrinsic quality, or because each man might be saved by his own religion, but because, amidst whatever perplexities and contradictions, they followed the one Guide and Shepherd, who had revealed himself to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob; that unseen and everlasting Word, who had entered into covenant with the Jews, and had brought them out of sensible idolatry, into the light and liberty of His children.

NOTE E

In some recent English attacks upon the Fathers (I do not refer to that of Mr. Taylor, who has taken a somewhat different line) the charge of adopting the Quaker doctrine respecting the Logos, was put very prominently forward. But these writers did not know how strong their case was. They fancied that the Greek Fathers were merely advancing this notion as one among a great number of others. They should have said boldly, "This heresy is not one which these teachers took up accidentally; it is woven into the very tissue of their thoughts; their minds were infected by it to the very core. You might as easily take away the doctrine of Justification by Faith out of Luther, as this doctrine out of them." Such language as this would have been perfectly true, and it would have brought matters much more directly to an issue. If, for instance, instead of giving a number of extracts, all certainly much to the point, but still leaving room for the hope that the general tone of thought in the first three centuries might be sound, they had given an analysis of the Pedagogus of Clemens, or indeed of any of his other writings, or had availed themselves of those which the present Bishop of Lincoln has introduced into his lectures, they would have left their readers without a doubt, that the acknowledgment of the Divine Word as the invisible teacher of man in all periods, was involved in the very conception of Christianity which belonged to these Fathers; that if this acknowledgment be heretical, Clemens, and the Church generally, which did not condemn him but sympathised with him and regarded him as one of its greatest lights, were habitually, wilfully, radically heretical. Let such an opinion be but stated in terms, together with the ordinary defence of it, that by this doctrine the authority and inspiration of the Scriptures are set at nought; and we, who believe this principle to be involved in every part of Scripture, who cannot see

any grounds for its authority and inspiration when it is denied, who attribute much of the lifelessness of the Church in our day, much of the feebleness of our theology, much of our strife and division, to the habitual disregard of it, will be able frankly to state the grounds of our belief, and by God's grace, to encounter any consequences which may follow from the profession of it.

In speaking of Philo, I have stated why I think one of these consequences is not the necessary adoption of all the different theories, respecting the interpretation of passages in Scripture and of symbols in nature, which have been promulgated by him, and by those who have acknowledged the presence of an invisible teacher. Of course, I cannot be so inconsistent as to deny the application of the same principle to the study of the Fathers. I have stated in another part of these volumes, why I suppose they, just as much as Philo, must have been without the means of entering into the practical life of the Hebrews. I do indeed discover in them a very different tone from that which I find in him; all that difference in tenderness, consciousness of evil, a readiness to acknowledge themselves in the character of sinners, rather than to claim that of saints, sympathy with men more than with philosophers, which we might expect from those who acknowledged a teacher who had taken human flesh, who, as Clemens expresses it, "assists us in all things, both as man and as God; putting away our sins as God; training us not to sin as man." Above all, I can trace in them a sense of unity and fellowship, as members of one body, as inhabited by one Spirit, as worshipping the one Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, which is a contrast rather than a resemblance to the isolated esoteric temper of the theosophist. But as to the outward relations of life and society, it seems as if their knowledge must have been very much on a level; and therefore one cannot be surprised to find the same habits of thought in one as in the other. The hypothesis which has been put forward in a late publication, that the cabalistic interpretations of Scripture by the early Fathers, may have been communicated by a special revelation, is surely one of the most gratuitous

that was ever propounded by a theological writer. Its plausibility to students who have been used only to "modern Protestant divinity," arises from the feeling, "this is so unlike anything which other persons say, that it must have been given directly by some Divine authority." But when we turn to a sage of an earlier time, who to all appearance never received the Gospel at all, who at any rate has never been reckoned among the teachers of the Church, and find precisely the same tone of thought prevailing in him, nay, probably a number of the very thoughts themselves, which are supposed to have been specially imparted to the Christian sages, or to have been sacred traditions of our Lord's own words; when we find again in the writings of those whom our patristic schools most despise—of Protestants and Quakers—a tendency of the same kind, nay, oftentimes most curious resemblances to the actual cabbala of the first ages, we may surely inquire whether such thoughts do not belong to human nature under certain circumstances and conditions of it, though they of course presume that nature not to be untaught from above.

The Fathers, I apprehend, would have disdained altogether the kind of honour which their admirers are seeking to put upon them. Believing their hearts and reasons to be under the teaching of the Divine Word, believing themselves to be created and constituted in him, they will have been much more disposed to regard their thoughts respecting nature and scripture as spiritual intuitions, than as authoritative traditions. That they may have been tempted to attach great sacredness to these intuitions, to speak of them as if they were certain, is very true. Everyone who has them feels them for the time to be certain; he cannot feel otherwise. And hence the value of that corrective which was supplied to this dangerous but inevitable conviction in the acknowledgment that those things only were stable and everlastingly true for man which belonged to the whole Church, not those which were the utterance of individual minds. These two principles, balanced and harmonized, seem to supply the true witness and protection against both ancient and modern fanaticism, against

both ancient and modern formality. The Divine and Everlasting Word is the teacher of each man; his guide through the sensible into the spiritual, through the individual into the universal. In each man there is according to the temper and habits of his age, a continual tendency to mix that which is sensual with that which is spiritual; that which belongs to the idiosyncrasies of his own mind with that which is permanent and for all. These utterances are not meant to be stifled. They remain as witnesses of what each age is; the truth which that age was especially to defend and develop, could not be seen if they were withdrawn. Then certain men of each particular age say, that what belongs to them is true and perfect; and other men rise up to show how much deeper wisdom was taught by a former age. Each would stamp with sacredness that which belongs to the fleeting accidents of a particular period in the world's history. But He remains who is the Father of the ever-lasting age, the perpetual Guide of the spirits of all who will obey Him—he remains by the fixed records of His own revelation, by the fixed ordinances of His own Church, by the order and succession of His own natural universe to teach His servants how to discriminate between that which belongs to the constitution in which He has placed them, and that which belongs to their own, or to other men's apprehensions of it. Take away the belief of his presence, and the teachings of antiquity, yea the written Scriptures of God themselves, become but oppressive restraints upon the spirit, unable to raise it above its own modes of thought only imparting to it a miserable sense that it ought to rise, and cannot. Losing the conviction, that the whole Church is under His guidance, we at one moment affirm that we will believe nothing but what antiquity tells us, or nothing but what the Bible tells us; the next moment we are the sport of every dreamer, who affirms that he has the Spirit which the Bible and the Fathers spoke of. For he speaks to something within us which tells us that we are meant to follow a living and not a dead voice, and because we will not receive the truth which is implied in that witness, it becomes to us a mischievous falsehood. We do not acknowledge the Word, the

great distinguisher between light and darkness, truth and falsehood, "the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart," who unrolls the volume of experience, and binds times and seasons together, and therefore the Spirit who is the knitter together of hearts, who would bind us into one family, and lead us into the knowledge and enjoyment of the Divine and ineffable Unity, seems to us a Spirit of division, who enters our minds that He may exalt us in our own conceits; may lift us up one against another, may make us heady, high-minded, "lovers of ourselves more than lovers of God."

NOTE ON PART I. CHAPTER II. SECTION IV.

When I speak of the final result of the experiment of pure Protestantism, it must be distinctly understood that I do not suppose those who are called Protestants in Germany, in Holland, in Switzerland, to have lost the blessings which they possessed before the Reformation, or those which were claimed for them then. I mean, merely, that the systems called Lutheranism, Calvinism, Zuinglianism, have had their day, and that the time of their extinction is at hand. No persons are more alive to this fact than Germans. Hence their eagerness to consolidate the professors of these systems into an "Evangelical Church;" hence their desire to reconcile the ideas of the Eucharist prevailing among the Lutheran and the "Reformed," by mutual concessions; hence their willingness to tolerate, for a time, subjection to the State, if it will but deliver them from a sectarian position. The existence of such feelings must be a sufficient proof to all who are not themselves spellbound by some system, that the descendants of the Reformers are not deserted by the Head of the Church, and that He may be preparing for them blessings which the great men of the sixteenth century sighed for, but were unable to attain. I will not anticipate the latter portion of my book by explaining what these blessings are, or how they may operate as a cure for the evils under which Germany was groaning long before the Reformers arose to help her and purify her. Still less will I enter upon the practical question, by what means these blessings may be recovered. One thing is clear; those who think and feel the unfortunate ecclesiastical position of Protestant Germany, are also the most determined not to abandon the principles of the Reformation. Some who may have been affected by Austrian or Bavarian influences may dream of recovering the position in which they were

before Luther appeared; but all men who are really in earnest, and who know what they mean, will repel such a thought as at once a folly and a sin. The idea that there must be a progress and not a retrogression is one, which the German mind is full of, and which I should be very sorry to drive out of it. The only question is, about the nature of the progress. Beginning in the spirit, the Reformation has, in the most grievous sense, been made perfect in the flesh. Its principles have found no clothing but one of system, which has stifled them; or one of a State organization, which stifles the minds and energies of those who profess them. The progress Protestants should desire is surely one towards an organization, which shall not be an artificial but a vital expression of that which is the faith of the nation. If it should be found that the ecclesiastical organization which Germany once possessed, though corrupted and deadened by the denial of Christ's direct superintendence over it, is of this vital character, the recovery of it will not be less a growth than the acquisition of some newer one would be. Nay, it will be far more a growth; for the one will belong to the proper history of the land; the other will be some fantastic dress, fashioned like the institutions of Napoleon, according to the maxims of an age, and therefore an intolerable burden to all who look beyond it, and feel they have a portion in their fathers and in their posterity. Their Protestantism will make the old Catholicism new and living; the Catholicism which possesses this quickening element will, by degrees, extinguish the Romanist counterfeit of it; the States, which no civil arrangements have been able to consolidate, will become one through their unity of faith, and the words of the poet will be fulfilled, that wherever his tongue is spoken, and God in Heaven praised in it, there the German will find his fatherland.