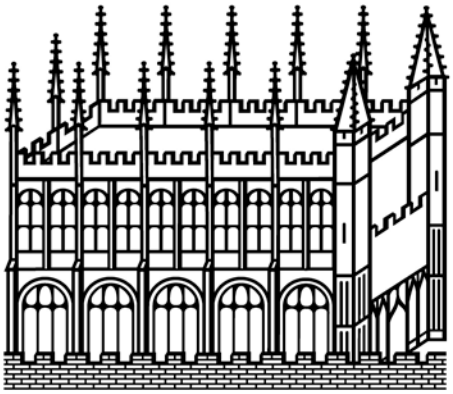

THE

GOSPEL OF COMMON SENSE:

OR

MENTAL, MORAL, AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

IN HARMONY WITH

SCRIPTURAL CHRISTIANITY.

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

THE theory to be developed in the following pages may be thus briefly stated :—

1. Some of the evils which afflict humanity might obviously have been averted by moral rectitude, and of these it may be affirmed without doubt, as possibly it may be of all others, that they are at once the fruit and punishment of sin. Yet it is equally undeniable that personal wickedness is not always visited upon the head of the particular offender: sometimes, at least in the present life, he escapes altogether; and oft the sorrow he has invoked falls upon others more heavily than upon himself. But the inequality thus notoriously existing in the individual relationship does not exist in relation to the world at large. As between God and total humanity, embracing all time, rewards and punishments are administered with judicial strictness: mankind,

as a whole, suffer the fitting punishment of their aggregate guilt; and are rewarded, as a whole, in exact accordance with their aggregate obedience. The hypothesis justified by these and similar facts is that the race is an organic unit, standing to God in a corporate moral relation; and that pain and sorrow, although awarded to the race-unit judicially, as the equivalent of its deserts, are thereafter distributed among the members of the race on other principles, *i.e.*, according to laws shaped out of the conflict between good and evil, and which have the triumph of good for their ultimate end. One of these laws is, that the highest natures suffer the most keenly. We see this daily in the pangs consequent upon refined sensibility and tender affection; and if the action of the law be more silent, it is certainly not less real, in the anguish produced by deep moral sympathy. To this cause are obviously to be attributed the sublimer sorrows of the world's Redeemer. Because our Lord Jesus Christ was the highest moral exemplification of human nature, He became necessarily, through the operation of the law we have referred to, the Man of Sorrows. And in the chain of sequences thus subjected to intellectual examination, we have the rationale of the Christian Sacrifice.

2. Again: because humanity is a unit and stands to God corporately in a relation of merit or demerit, Christ, as one of the brotherhood of humanity, elevated it to His own position in the Divine regards. Standing before God as the King and Representative of the race, He, by virtue of the moral sympathy which pervades the human brotherhood, entered into the consciousness of their guilt as if it had been His own; and the sentiments with which it affected Him—the Son of God—in the presence of His loving Father, brought the repentant human into absolute and conscious reconciliation with the Divine. By virtue of the same moral sympathy through which Christ entered into the consciousness of our guilt, all who seek to imbibe the spirit of Christ enter into the consciousness of His righteousness; and in this we have the rationale of Justification by Faith, or peace of conscience through trusting in Christ.

If asked whence we derive this theory, we answer that it is a rigorous induction from those revealed and intuitive moral facts to which evangelical orthodoxy yields a catholic concurrence. Thus harmonized, they mutually confirm each other, upon the principle that there is a uniformity in truth which gives to every well-constructed

and self-supporting hypothesis a *primâ facie* probability, thereby adding new weight to the arguments on which its separate component positions rest. Of course we do not profess in this small volume to adduce the independent proofs of each of such positions; for had we done so, a thin duodecimo would have speedily swollen into a thick octavo, and the special object we have in view would have been in danger of being lost sight of among collateral issues. We begin by assuming the authenticity of the Gospel history, and the universality of certain moral facts which are familiar within our own circle of observation; and these preliminaries being granted to us, the hypothesis we have constructed thereupon is, we submit, the only method by which they can be harmonized. If we have succeeded in producing a true harmony, the consequence, we repeat, will be that, the truth of *any one* of its component parts being demonstrated, the others will derive, from their simple co-existence therewith in a self-supporting theory, a new evidence. How far we are correct in hazarding this assertion, and whether the theory produced is valid, are points to which, in the interests of truth, we invite critical inquiry.

It will be seen that the post we seek to occupy stands midway between the two extreme parties

into which the religious world is at this moment divided: the party of progress, not always wary progress, on the one hand; and the conservative, if we may not even say, retrogressive party, on the other.

From the first of these we dissent in this most important particular. Their reductions into harmony—real or fancied—are the product of the logical and imaginative faculties, exclusive of the conscience; and are reconstructions of phenomenal truth only, irrespective of our moral intuitions. Now, does not such a method omit the most essential element of the problem? Ought not truth which comes to us from without to be brought into unison with that which comes to us from within? It cannot properly be said, except by those who deny altogether the intuitional origin of our moral ideas, that no attention whatever is to be given to the inward until we have first settled the outward, for that would be contrary to the very principle on which the reductions proceed. As already intimated, the principle is, that since truth must of necessity be one and uniform, all excrescences adverse to uniformity ought to be removed. If this principle be acted upon with regard to historical probabilities and phenomenal truth, why stop there? Why not, as should be done with

every sound principle, carry it through, so as to embrace facts of consciousness as well as of observation and testimony? No theory can be true which is at variance with any *one* ascertained fact. A solitary variance destroys the ideal uniformity; hence that is to be regarded rather as a miserable discord than as a true harmony which, however plausible it may be in outward semblance, distorts external truth into antagonism with our moral instincts. This, Rationalism does. The claims of conscience, it must surely be admitted, appeal to us as strongly as the uncertain suggestions of a dramatic fancy; and if such be the case, how is that great moral fact to be disposed of which no watchful observer of the operations of his own mind can fail to recognize, viz., that in proportion as we yield implicit obedience to the dictates of conscience, it becomes more imperious in its demands, and places before us a loftier standard, so that instead of being quieted in our consciences by our progress in virtue, every step in advance renders us more unquiet? How, with such a fact before us, is the authority of conscience to be reconciled with the obligations of virtue and with the necessities of man's moral nature, unless by the harmonizing efficacy of the Christian Gospel?

Turning from the one party to the other, we confess that we cannot contemplate the proceedings of those with whom we are in more substantial agreement, without grave dissatisfaction. The author of the following pages is a layman; and, like all men engaged in the active business of life, has strong prejudices in favour of what is natural and common-sense-like, as opposed to what is artificial and out of keeping with general laws. Neither High Churchism nor Scepticism commends itself to the practical Saxon mind: the one is mystical, effeminate, puerile; the other is too exclusively disposed to cavil. The Evangelism of the pulpit, however, earnestly addressed to the heart and conscience, always engages popular attention; and it is not unreasonable, therefore, to conclude that Evangelism contains in it elements adapted to attract man's moral nature. Yet when out of the pulpit, and put into the shape of systematic theology, it is often, by the assertion of moral fictions, made repellent, except to divines of the polemic stamp; just as the legal fictions which pervaded till recently our juridical procedure, made it repellent to all except the black-letter lawyer who revelled amid its quirks and quibbles.

Judging from the dogmatic tone of many of our leading theologians, we doubt whether they can

be thoroughly aware of the extent to which dissatisfaction with their scholastic system affects the intelligent youth of this nation; even among such as have been educated under favourable influences, and who are themselves active members of religious society, both in and out of the Establishment. To attribute this to the disturbing influence of recent publications, would be a great mistake. The cause lies deeper. It lies—not in "the enmity of our carnal nature"—only zealots speak so—but in the inaptitude of English practical-mindedness to accept a mystical style of religious thought, whether High Church or Low Church; and the consequent necessity to which our intelligent religious youth are driven, of seeking refuge in some section of Broad Churchism.

However much men in authority may wish to the contrary, the times, beyond all doubt, demand the revision of old creeds; and the object of the author of these pages is to indicate the way in which, without abandoning a jot of real gospel truth, we, Evangelicals, may bring up our theology to the level of our facts; strip it of the fictitious; clothe it with the real; present it, for intellectual investigation, in a form challenging criticism; fire, rather than quench, its enthusiasm; and, if one may use so high-sounding a word, give

to orthodoxy a "philosophy," by reducing it into conformity with the moral laws which govern God's universe, and with which the cultured conscience of humanity is in ever-advancing accord.

Why adhere so tenaciously to the mediæval delusion, that theology is not capable of being reduced into harmony with science, but is necessarily a mere system of dogmas? Why is the idea scouted that religion has any alliance with philosophy, and that it admits of being investigated, like other branches of human knowledge, with such success that the more thoroughly it is investigated, the more impregnably will it stand? Why insist still upon the dark-age hypothesis, that religion is something occult and mystical, and that religious teaching has been divinely intrusted to a privileged order of men, and no others; in a manner analogous to that in which the mysteries of ancient heathenism were intrusted to its priests? We confess our inability to submit to views so narrow and exclusive. Unless orthodoxy can be elevated into an inductive moral science, a philosophy in the best and highest sense, it will never become mankind's rightful heritage; but, like charity doled out by its authorised almoners, will remain stinted to the few. Such is not the spirit of Christianity. Its spirit is bolder. We have

no sympathy with those who would muffle up Christ's religion as an antiquated nurse muffles up the babe when she walks with it abroad, lest it suffer from the world's chilly breezes,—and by such excessive care, frustrates her own purpose. Christianity needs no such effeminate nursing. It has roughed its way through tempests fiercer far than any that can now assail it; it courts a freer atmosphere,—full discussion. And we venture to affirm that come such discussion when it may,—if only it be rightly conducted,—the distinctive truths of the Christian creed will come forth out of the furnace of controversy, as did Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego out of the flames prepared for their destruction, with not even the smell of fire upon their garments.

One of the common missiles thrown against advanced religious thought, is to charge it with novelty. But there are two kinds of novelty. There is a novelty which merely restores to its ancient beauty what has been defaced by comparatively recent innovation. Of this, the history of our Church architecture affords not a few singular examples. And were our Church creeds to be submitted to a similar searching scrutiny, it would be found that, beneath the lath and plaster of modern reconstruction, there lies concealed a

simple grandeur, the discovery and exhibition of which, better than all laboured defences, would erect a bulwark against the attacks of Scepticism, and advance Christian truth. On the question of novelty, therefore,—or, as we should prefer putting it, of restored antiquity,—we crave permission to introduce the following extract from a former work, as a reason why we have a claim on the attention of those with whom the holding by antiquity is regarded as the supreme virtue.

"The capital error in modern evangelical teaching consists in making subjective justification to depend upon objective justification, instead of making both subjective and objective the equally direct and immediate results of the atonement of Christ. What is really one operation is by means of this misconception divided, in thought, into two operations. First, God, it is said, in consideration of the atonement justifies. And secondly, the completion of this objective justification is, in some way, either by a direct mystical communication, or by an indirect logical inference, revealed to the individual conscience.

"All schemes of justification of which peace with God is the root idea, may be synthetised, either into the hypothesis we advocate, or into the one we have just described. Let us then assume that one of these two hypotheses is certainly true. And as they cannot both be true, but one of them being proved true, the other must be false, the question for our present consideration will be—*Which* is the true theory?

"To the first theory, we may give brief expression in this formula—Christ's righteousness *is* our justification.

"The second theory may be thus expressed—Christ's righteousness *is the procuring cause of* our justification.

"The sole difference consists in justification being retained within, or removed beyond, the sphere of consciousness.

"When it is said that Christ's righteousness is the procuring cause of our justification, objective justification is meant, or justification *in foro Divino*. The proceeding is thus transferred to a tribunal remote from our consciousness, and we know nothing of what takes place except by a direct oracular communication, or an indirect inference. Then, after such communication or inference has been made, the persuasion thus acquired that we have been objectively justified—and not the work of Christ—becomes the *immediate* basis of our peace of conscience. This error we deem fatal to the hypothesis. It teaches the conscience to rely for its peace on other than a moral basis—not directly and immediately upon the Scriptural foundation, the perfect righteousness of Christ, but upon an empirical persuasion wrought in the mind either oracularly and mystically, or intellectually and logically. Whatever removes the righteousness of Christ from the sphere of morals and out of the reach of consciousness, annihilates the doctrine of justification by faith, and thus annihilates the Gospel.

"According to the theory we advocate (and which we take to be *the grand* OLD *evangelical theory*), Christ's perfect righteousness is the subject matter of immediate consciousness, and such righteousness consciously ours is *in itself* justification. It is analogous to the consciousness of innocence, and places subjective justification in the same relation to objective justification as innocence would have placed it. The scheme of Divine 'reconciliation' is accordingly not pardon uttered and heard, but perfect righteousness in Christ consciously enjoyed and confidently pleaded."

The present volume is made up of three parts, each of which has already appeared in print, but is now revised and slightly extended. The first part was published in the "Eclectic and Congregational Review," the second in "Meliora," and the third as a separate work. They are here collected, because their combination is essential to the full development of the author's scheme. True, the same object might have been accomplished by recasting the whole into one consecutive treatise; but this would have been a useless labour, and advantages are secured by reproducing each paper in its original form, which otherwise would have been lost.

Encouraged by the very flattering reception given to some of those parts on their separate publication, the author indulges the hope that their joint reappearance will not be deemed obtrusive; but that the effort thus made to construct a harmonious theory of evangelical religious thought, without unorthodox innovation, will be kindly welcomed, and not prove wholly unproductive of advantageous practical results.

I.

THE CENTRAL IDEA OF THE ATONEMENT—REVIEW OF THE BROAD CHURCH THEORY.*

We have no intention to attempt the hopeless task of giving, within the compass of this article, an exhaustive view of the Christian sacrifice. Our purpose is more concentrative and definite. We aim only at striking out its central idea; and are well assured that, if this could be agreed upon, different sects might, without injury to our common faith, attach to it immaterial appendages; and, without affording to any one class ground for imputing the "denying of the Atonement" to any other class, and thus unchristianising their fellow Christians, it might be permitted to some to ornament with flowers and evergreens that Cross which others prefer retaining in its stern simplicity. Thus far, therefore, we have no difference with the reverend author of the tract before us.

* *The Atonement as a Fact and as a Theory.* By the Rev. Francis Garden, Sub-Dean of Her Majesty's Chapel Royal, etc., etc. With Comments by another Clergyman. pp. 37.

Let us see how much farther we can go with him. Our design probably will be best accomplished by availing ourselves of his labours as far as is possible, and eliminating all notions, put forward by himself and his not very harmonious commentator, which would destroy the consistency of the hypothesis he has, in other more apt and more happy passages, sought, not altogether unsuccessfully, to rear.

"The word atonement," says Mr. Garden, "means *reconciliation, bringing together*, making *to be at one.*" After favouring us with this explanation of the proper meaning of the word, he adds: "in ordinary acceptation among us, however, it stands as a general term for the whole notion of Christ's death on the Cross, as effecting our deliverance." This is no doubt true. Nothing is more common than, by a figure of speech, to substitute the object of the enterprise for the enterprise itself, when we desire to give to its multifarious elements succinct expression: hence, when "we mean the whole work whereby our Lord wrought out our deliverance on the Cross," we select, in order to give brief utterance to our meaning, the word Atonement; that being the point towards which all our lines of thought converge—the object which the mighty work we

meditate upon aims to secure. But what, we return to ask, is the true nature of that object? It is bringing God and man together, making them *to be at one.*

Now to the accomplishment of such a union, two things were necessary. First, God's reconciliation to man; and this implies satisfaction. Secondly, man's relief from an oppressive fear of God; and this implies Redemption—deliverance from the love of sin and from its conscious guilt.

"According to Coleridge, Christ's work on our behalf is never named from anything in itself, but from its known effects upon us. The analogies to sacrifice, redemption, satisfaction of a debt, are all to be sought in those effects; never in their cause. That cause is an act which belongs to the sphere of transcendents, a mystery into which we may not look, and which we must not dare to attempt explaining. But it has effects which are very analogous to the effect of the appointed sacrifice, in the reinstatement of the Israelite in his national position and privileges; to the effect of adequate ransom, as procuring the freedom of a captive; to the effect of complete payment by another, as my discharge from a debt which I could not liquidate myself."

Without committing ourselves to these views, we will first fix our attention upon that effect of Christ's work which consists in the Divine satisfaction or God's reconciliation to man: and with regard thereto we gather out of our author's pages

the following passages, wh ch, if defective in fulness and breadth of expression, embody, nevertheless, the germs of a right theory, and such as, notwithstanding Mr. G.'s protestations, develop logically into thorough evangelicalism. But this process of development we reserve for subsequent consideration. At present we confine ourselves to quoting Mr. G.'s own words :—

"Sin involved, according to Anselm, a debt to God, with the payment of which God's essential attribute of justice did not permit Him to dispense. It was paid for us by Christ's human obedience—that obedience which was even unto death. . . . . It was not the death separate from the previous human life, but the whole susception of humanity by the Son of God, and presentation of that humanity in spotless holiness to the Father—a holiness which received its crowning manifestation in the death on the cross—which Anselm regarded as the payment of the debt which humanity owed. . . . . Christ's sacrifice of Himself was indeed a satisfaction to Divine justice, and that in a far higher sense than is furnished by any mere notions of paying a debt, or enduring a penalty. The righteousness of God has an entire satisfaction in the work of Christ Jesus. The Supreme reason, the perfect mind of the Father, sees there that on which He can pour forth a full tide of complacency and approval. There were barriers which the Divine justice no doubt placed between God and sinful man: for perfect justice can never be on terms with sin; can never call things other than what they are; can adopt no legal fiction in order to treat the sinner as if he were not a sinner. These barriers are broken down by Christ's sacrifice.

Man is thereby brought to God. God's justice sees man presented to Him, such as He designed man to be, and is satisfied."

But the word Atonement, interpreted in the sense of mutual reconciliation between God and man, involves something more than satisfaction to God's justice. Man must be redeemed from that moral condition under the influence of which he looks up to heaven with terror. Hence, redemption is another idea involved in the complex word, Atonement—redemption from what?

"About the oldest church theory, and one which has had the longest ascendancy, is that which represents the claim on us to have been the devil's; and Christ's suffering, bloodshedding, and death, to have been purchase-money and ransom paid to him, whereby we have been redeemed from his hold on us. This theory, at least as old as Origen, lasted till the time of Anselm, if indeed it did not partially survive him. It will, I imagine, be set aside as altogether untenable by every school in the modern church."

Mr. Garden's commentator, however, views this matter somewhat differently. His words are:—

"I cannot abandon so readily as the writer seems to do, that doctrine respecting the redemption from the evil spirit, which, he says, was overthrown by Anselm. . . . . Though I would never speak of Christ's blood as redemption-money paid to the devil, I do maintain that a deliverance of men by their true Father from an evil power who had claimed them as his subjects, underlies all the lessons in the Bible concerning redemption."

The clergyman who writes this comment refers to Bishop Hooper as an advocate of the theory of redemption from Satan; but on turning to that prelate's "Treatise on Christ and His Office," we find passages like the following, in close connexion with those to which the commentator alludes:—"Faith layeth nothing to gage unto the justice of God but the death of Christ, and thereupon claimeth mercy and God's promise—the remission of sin, and desireth God to justify and deliver the soul from the accusation of the law and right of the devil, which He is bound to do for his promise'-sake. And although with this remission of sin He giveth likewise the Holy Ghost to work the will of God, to love both God and his neighbour, yet *the conscience, burdened and charged with sin, first seeketh remission thereof.* For this thing the conscience laboureth and contendeth in all fears and terrors of sorrow and contrition. It disputeth not what virtues it bringeth, wretched soul, to reclaim this promise of mercy; but, forsaking her own justice [or righteousness], offereth Christ dead upon the cross and sitting at God's right hand." These words of Hooper, together with the following from the Hebrews (ii. 14), offer the true exposition of the supposed pre-Anselm theory:—"Forasmuch

then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." The fear of death here referred to cannot be the natural instinctive fear which impels us to seek to prolong life: it is the guilty fear of an awakened conscience. Hence, according even to the pre-Anselm theory, as well as according to the present evangelical theory, deliverance from conscious guilt on the part of man, besides satisfaction on God's part, is necessary to complete the idea of mutual reconciliation or atonement.

And Mr. Garden's theory leads to the same result. Witness the following passage:—"*The sin of the world is taken away*, and all who will avail themselves of it can occupy a position in which man is righteous, and may serve God in holiness and righteousness, *without fear*." We understand these words to mean that every earnest-minded man may now say:—"God's justice having been satisfied, I need no longer despair of mercy as being incompatible with the relations between a Perfect Ruler and my imperfect obedience. In Christ, I stand before God as righteous, and

offer to my loving Father the tribute of a heart that desires to love Him." In a similar tone is the language of Mr. G.'s commentator :—

"They have found in the doctrine that 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them,' the fullest assurance of that transcendent fact of which Coleridge speaks, that fact which cannot be set forth in any terms of logic, but which *commends itself to the consciences of human beings* as the very ground of a spiritual economy, of an active fellowship for human beings. . . . . We cannot afford to lose any of these aspects (given in the tract) of this great truth. The third is a witness against the notion that anything short of an actual endurance of human sorrow, an actual endurance of human evil by the Son of God, *can content creatures who are conscious of guilt, or can relieve them from the burden of it.*"

Having thus placed ourselves in harmony with Mr. Garden and his clerical friend, in regard to the object of the work of Christ, *i.e.* to make atonement, and having shown that, in order thereto, two things were necessary,—first, to satisfy the justice of God, and secondly, so to present such satisfaction to the conscience as thereby to dispel guilty fear; we will next proceed to the consideration of the method by which this magnificent design has been accomplished. Our author thinks he finds "the one governing view of Christ's work, to which all others are

but subsidiary and accidental," in the idea of sacrifice.

"But what is sacrifice? St. Augustine tells us that every work is a true sacrifice which, looking at God as the end of all good, is done in order that we may cleave to Him in holy fellowship. St. Thomas Aquinas: that a sacrifice is something done to the honour due to God, and with a view to propitiating Him. And Christ's work he pronounces to be a true sacrifice because, eminently proceeding from love, it is eminently acceptable to God. In truth, when we look at the whole genus, of which burnt-offerings, sin-offerings, thank-offerings are the several species, we are forced to regard the generic idea as that of offering and making over a gift to the unseen object of prayer and worship. The nature of the gift would of course vary in each species with the thoughts wherewith each species was severally connected. The details of the transaction in a sin-offering would naturally bear a reference to sin, its shame, its woe, and its death. The idea of a transfer of the sin of the offerer from himself to the victim might occur naturally enough—and that in a rite of which the general application to Christ's death is so obvious that we cannot help making it—without perhaps being therefore warranted in applying that particular idea. Still, I say, the general idea of sacrifice is that of a gift, of surrendering up to another's possession that which was *outwardly* at least in our own."

We request attention to the word "outwardly," which we have italicised in the above quotation, because it recognises a feature in the symbol analogous to that element in the true sacrifice the perception of which is deemed, both by our author's

friend and ourselves, to be of vital importance, namely, its objectivity. The reason why it is necessarily objective is suggested in the next quotation. It consists in this,—that man has not within himself what would enable him to render from himself—out of his own will, love, and obedience—the "entire and flawless" offering, which the All Perfect One requires:—

"But gift to God! What is, what can be, a gift to Him! That which we can buy with our gold, that which we can seize with our hands, that which we can bring to an altar, that which we can solemnly offer there, is surely no gift to Him. Even to a heathen deity I suppose it was felt that such could be no gifts: that they could only pass for such by a strong effort of the symbolizing imagination. And much more must the same have been felt, when the object of worship was the unseen Jehovah. . . . At last comes One in whom the matter of the oblation and the form are united: whose gift is the inward, essential sacrifice; who said, Lo! I come to do Thy Will. And, He does it perfectly. The gift of His own Will and of His own Being to the Will of His Father is entire and flawless. There is no point at which the offerer pauses. The self-surrender stays not till the very life has been offered. The obedience is carried on until it becomes an obedience unto death. Short of that point, the sacrifice wonld not have been complete; there would have been something kept back. But all is complete; nothing is kept back; all faith in and all love to the eternal Father, all sympathy with the brethren, receive their full expression in the sacrifice which began with the utterance, *Lo! I come!* and was consummated when

Jesus bowed His head and gave up the ghost. In gazing on that, we are gazing on the Only Gift ever offered to God which, for its own sake, God could regard with complacency; in which, for its own sake, God could take delight."

It is matter for surprise, that the school of theologians from which these tracts emanate should suppose themselves to be removing difficulties and giving more precise and accurate expression to the central idea of Christ's sacrifice, when they speak of it as the surrender by Him of His own will, entire and flawless, to the will of His Father; instead of adopting the ordinary phraseology, quite as accurate and more full and comprehensive, whereby His sacrifice of Himself is represented as consisting primarily in His perfect active and passive obedience, and His yielding Himself to be given up by His Father to suffering and death. Both modes of expression involve the idea of vicarious punishment, as we shall show hereafter. But whether they do or do not, nothing is gained by substituting the volition for the act.

Every one understands that a life of perfect obedience implies a will fully surrendered: and the air of precision assumed in speaking of the will, rather than of the life, serves no purpose but to foster pretensions to more correct modes of

thought; utterly untenable, and unworthy of the eminent men by whom they are put forth.

But we take leave to deny that sacrifice, as just explained, is really the central idea in this great doctrine. The central idea is that which unveils the connexion between the means and the end, between sacrifice and atonement, between the work of Christ and the mutual reconciliation between God and man which that work was destined to achieve. It is in the solution of this problem that the chief difficulty lies; and so great is this difficulty that high authorities dispute the possibility of its solution. Coleridge, we have seen, considers it to "belong to the sphere of transcendents, to be a mystery into which we may not look, and which we must not dare to attempt explaining." Butler, also, expressed similar views. Mr. Garden, however, and his friend are much bolder:—

"Our Lord's redemptive act is indeed mysterious; but I cannot help thinking that more of itself is revealed to us than is allowed by Coleridge; I cannot help thinking that we are enabled and enjoined to look at and into itself, instead of merely contenting ourselves with its effects. . . . The writer of this Tract says, I think very truly, that Coleridge loses sight of the idea of sacrifice, and that by doing so he makes the atonement less of a *revealed* mystery than the Apostles and the Church teach us that it is."

We add, in corroboration of these sentiments, that if man's conscious reconciliation with God be, as we have contended, an element in the atonement effected by the Christian sacrifice, our belief of our reconciliation must have an intelligible basis; and that basis is the very solution of which we are in quest. Practically, earnest consciences arrive at it, in the present day, in the same manner in which the Tract describes it as having been attained under the ministry of "the Evangelical teachers in England during the last century."

"It is not correct to fasten upon them any special theory of the atonement. They spoke to the hearts of their hearers. They spoke to their conscience of sin. They set forth the Lamb of God, who taketh away sin. They dwelt upon all these expressions which point to the bearing of sin, to the endurance of the chastisement for sin. They could not doubt—they had the strongest internal assurance—that these passages expressed the divinest, the most life-giving truth."

And speaking as they did, and as all earnest Gospel ministers still speak, in language dictated by the "strongest internal assurance," the truth was flashed home to the hearer's conscience, and became to him a ground of joyous confidence; not as the result of an intellectual analysis but as its prelude. Any inquiry like that which we are now

prosecuting, can only be engaged in successfully, after we have "received the reconciliation:" the problem then presented to our minds being somewhat in this form:—"That which gave satisfaction to God's justice redeemed also my conscience from guilty fear: what was it that did so? and what is it that, despite a deepening sense of imperfection, keeps me still in peace, confiding in God as a loving Father? It is Christ's ever-offered sacrifice. But how does that sacrifice operate to produce in me the peace I feel?" Mr. Garden's answer to this inquiry is as follows:—

"We may see how the union of Christ with his brethren, renders this gift propitiatory in its effects upon them. For it is human nature which He has offered up in spotless sacrifice to the Father the whole race is represented in Him. He is the Head and the Root of all mankind. Therefore, mankind now stands accepted before God, and every sharer in the kind may at once plead and occupy the righteous position which has been won for it by the accepted sacrifice of its Great Representative."

We presume that when our author speaks of the Lord Jesus Christ as "the Head and the Root of all mankind, and its Great Representative," he means that such is the relation in which the Son of God stands to the world, uniquely and by special Divine appointment. But it would very much aid this aspect of Christ's relation to hu-

manity, if it could be shown that the entire race, according to the established order of things, constitute a moral unit; and that, besides the individual responsibility of each, there is a general and aggregate or corporate responsibility of the whole. For then it would follow, without violence, that Christ as the Head and Representative of the race, might personally undertake its corporate responsibilities, and that, on the other hand, the race might participate in the result of His personal achievements. We do not know whether Mr. Garden intends to convey some such idea as this; we think he does. "It is," says he, "human nature which He has offered up in spotless sacrifice to the Father; the whole race is represented in Him." How represented? By special appointment, or natural relationship, or both? Was His position analogous to that of a monarch of a great empire, who first, in consequence of a social unity that belongs to a nation, and next, by virtue of his office as Head of the unit, is authorized to represent the nation in all matters relating to the commonweal? Did Christ when on earth, and does He still, first, by reason and in consequence of the moral unity of humanity, and next by virtue of his office as the King and Priest of humanity, represent it in all matters relating to

human salvation? If this conception do nothing more than approximate towards the grand central idea we are in search of, it may be of great service in cancelling the differences that arise between the reason and the conscience, and in arming earnest Christians with weapons to repel querulous and sceptical attacks.

And another result will follow; one which Mr. Garden appears not to have apprehended. The representative of a nation is expected to echo the national sentiment; he must feel the burden of its distresses, and sacrifice his time and talents to promote its prosperity. So, the representative of humanity must enter into the woes of humanity with loving solicitude; He must "bear their griefs and carry their sorrows, be wounded for their transgressions, and bruised for their iniquities." Is this not vicarious? It is not a fictitious, but a real and natural transfer. And are not all the physical sufferings and mental troubles which men are called to endure in this world, and the sorrows transferred to their Representative, the consequence and punishment of sin? If there had been no sin, there would have been no sorrow. True! individuals do not rejoice or grieve, they are not prosperous or in adversity, in proportion to their personal merits or demerits.

But that is because the relations between sin and its present punishment are not adjusted as between the Divine arbiter and each individual, but as between Him and the race-unit: then, as the rain, although strictly apportioned in its total supply to the earth's requirements, is, nevertheless, distributed unequally, so it is with good and evil. Still, this inequality of distribution does not affect the principle—that suffering is the punishment of sin. Hence, we do not quite understand, nor, as far as we do understand, can we appreciate, such sentiments as these—"though suffering may be connected with sin, love can embrace it as a privilege." Wherever suffering falls, it falls in the character of sin's punishment; corrective in relation to the world, but still punitive, and designed to stir us each up to do our part in ejecting out of humanity that moral evil which is the cause of its suffering. Christ, as our brother man, suffered. The physical sorrows that fell upon Him were not different in this respect from others' sorrows; they were the punishment of mankind's sin, and in this light He viewed them and felt them. The world's ordinary sorrow lighted upon Him though guiltless, in common with the rest of humanity. But besides these ordinary sorrows, there were others which fell upon Him as their

special victim. His perfect conscience was affected with the sins of the race in a degree in which no other human conscience had ever been or could be. How any one, entertaining, like Mr. Garden, opinions tending to these conclusions, can hesitate in pronouncing our Lord's sufferings and death to have been sin's vicarious punishment, appears to us quite marvellous. The premises which he himself lays down lead necessarily to the conclusions against which he protests.

Reverting to Mr. G.'s pages for the special purpose of detecting, if possible, the origin of this anomaly, we find it, as we imagine, in the confusion attending his adjustment of the relations between sin and its punishment. This confusion appears in several particulars.

First, he confounds that which is of the nature and essence of sin with the punishment of sin. It cannot, with any accuracy, be said that the moral insensibility and spiritual death which follows upon persistent evil-doing is its punishment: rather it is indicative of advanced criminality. The deeper a man plunges into sin, the more insensible does he become to its wickedness; and therefore if a guilty conscience were sin's *only* punishment, its punishment would decrease with its progress. Our consciences condemn us, not in

the degree in which our guilt increases, but in the opposite degree. As our guilt becomes more and more aggravated, our consciences condemn us less: as our moral culture progresses, and our instinctive or conscious standard of goodness and duty rises higher, our consciences condemn us more.

Again, Mr. G. does not distinguish between punishment visited upon an individual, and punishment visited upon a community. Hence the following language:—

"Though it be undeniable that Aquinas recognizes a penal element in our Lord's sufferings, he connects it with the thought of identification with us, rather than with that of substitution for us; and between these thoughts there is a mighty difference."

Identification with us in suffering! What is that but vicarious suffering, in the sense in which the word "vicarious" is used by all sober writers on the subject? Christ is not our substitute in suffering in such sense as that *all* the sorrows consequent upon sin have been completely transferred —He alone enduring them, and we relieved. But, suppose a rebel battalion to have been ordered to be decimated, and that some one on whom the lot falls is personally guiltless: although this is strictly a case of identification in suffering, is it

not also, in some sense, a case of substitution? So, Christ, the innocent, becomes one of earth's sons; and the earth, for its aggregate sins, is visited with general woes, which in their distribution alight heaviest upon Him, the innocent One—is He not the vicarious victim of others' sins?

And, thirdly, Mr. G. omits to notice another distinction very necessary to be made in this discussion. Its nature will best appear after we have quoted the words which prove that he has overlooked it.

"The *Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani*, cried out from the cross, is surely at no variance with what I say. We dare not, while we reverently listen to it, shape dogma out of that cry. Independently of the fact that the Psalm to which it refers us is no utterance of despair, but of perfect filial affiance in God expressed out of the depths, the very use of the first possessive pronoun, *my* God, gives the clue to its interpretation."

But what is "the clue to its interpretation," what "the dogma," which, despite Mr. G.'s protest, we cannot avoid "shaping out of that cry?" It is, that intense mental and bodily anguish, caused by the sins of others and by our conscientious sympathy with the heavy guilt of those we love, may nevertheless coexist with personal "filial affiance." Our consciences may be heavily

laden with the sins of others, and our souls be overwhelmed with sorrow on their account; and yet our personal trust may be unsullied, our own hope bright as the light. What difficulty, then, is there in such cases in conceiving of a perfectly holy Being bearing the burden of others' guilt? To call such a burden "misery" is a misnomer. Sin's punishment is *misery* only when inflicted upon the hopelessly impenitent, the spiritually dead. Wherever there is a spark of spiritual life, corrective punishment is pregnant with hope; and wherever borne for others in the spirit of self-sacrifice, the present sorrow is, in the event of success, far outweighed by the future joy.

Nor is this confusion of thought in Mr. Garden's own mind more remarkable than is the discrepancy between him and his co-operative commentator—a discrepancy not in unimportant points of detail, but on matters of vital signification. The author extends the merits of Christ's sacrifice to "every sharer in the kind." His commentator limits their benefit to "every baptized child." Now, this is a difference which indicates totally different theories. The first is a human theory, based on facts: the latter is a church theory, based on ceremonies. The one is natural, the other artificial. And yet the writer who bases his creed on these "artificial

arrangements," exclaims against his evangelical co-religionists on the alleged ground that their "arrangements" are "artificial"—an imputation which, although possibly well grounded as against individuals, is totally groundless as against the great evangelical class at whom the javelin is hurled, since every thoughtful member of that body is well aware of the vast importance of planting the Cross on what every human conscience must recognize as the rock of righteousness.

There is but one other point to which we would direct a few remarks ere we conclude. We are unable to satisfy ourselves as to what Mr. Garden's views are with reference to the mode in which we are to appropriate to ourselves the benefits of Christ's work. His commentator is less reserved. According to him, we become partakers of Christ's passion by receiving the Eucharist. If the Eucharist, on its reception, be regarded as a symbol of truth, and not mere material elements, and if it convey to the understanding and conscience spiritual life, we should see in this statement no cause for difference; and the pointing to it is valuable, as indicating unmistakably the objectivity of that in which the conscience is required to repose its trust. On this question of objectivity more than any other, that section of the Church, known as

the Broad Church, appear to us to be in danger of erring. Where do they find the foundation for a quiet conscience? Do they find it in themselves? In what form? There are numerous passages in Mr. Garden's tract which demonstrate the impossibility of the human conscience deriving repose from introvision, and yet he is wholly silent where one would have wished him to have been specific. *A Gospel without an objective sacrifice is no Gospel, and he whose theory of atonement is not something outside of himself may well be said to "deny" it. It is because within ourselves we can find only sin, while without—in Christ—there is solid ground on which the conscience can confidently repose, and because, as experience proves, our distrust of self and trust in Christ both increase* in pari passu *with advancing moral culture, that Christianity alone, of all religious systems in the world, inspires at once* PURITY AND PEACE.

II.

THE MORAL UNITY OF HUMANITY, THE BASIS OF VICARIOUS MERIT AND SUFFERING.

Our object in this article is to develop the idea of mankind's moral unity. With the questions of the origin and antiquity of the race we do not intermeddle. All we require to have admitted to us is, that ever since the commencement of history mankind have been, and are now, a distinct, well-defined species, possessing, among other distinctive features, moral agency and responsibility; and that the world is under moral government. Let our readers grant this, and then take issue, if they will, upon the question whether the only kind of moral responsibility existing is that which is personal to each man; or whether, besides that, there does not also exist, as we affirm there does, a corporate responsibility of entire humanity.

There are two modes of working out this problem. The one is by the inductive process—collecting facts and evolving thereout the principle

they embody. The other is to assume the principle, and test its truth by inquiring how far it accords with life's actual phenomena. We will adopt the latter method; both because it is the approved method of conveying that which induction has already been made use of to discover, and because it allows of greater concentration of thought—a condition which, even if space were no consideration, it is desirable to observe.

Our hypothesis, then, is—That humanity stands to God in a relation of corporate responsibility, and is capable of corporate merit or demerit, and of its conscientious conviction; and that the happiness or misery of the world, as a whole, is determined by its corporate moral character. The antagonist proposition is — That each human being is responsible for himself only, and that to hold him responsible, in any way, for the voluntary acts of another would be palpably unjust, and at variance with our primary moral convictions. We hope to be able to demonstrate that the latter portion of this adverse statement is as unsupported as its commencement; and that mankind's intuitive moral convictions support the view we advocate.

I. But before proceeding with the moral portion of the problem, we will prepare the way for it by

a few extracts from a paper in "Macmillan," written by Dr. Felix Eberty, which places in a very clear light the fact of mankind being *socially* one organic body.

"Of all earthly creatures there is none that fulfils its destination in greater or closer association than men. The task they have to perform cannot be accomplished either by one single man or by an association of single men, nor even by one or several human generations; but humanity in general—that is, the totality of all men who lived, and who live now, and who are to live afterwards—has the vocation to build up that one vast and everlasting edifice, whose foundation was laid by Adam, the first of men, and whose completion even the last of all men shall not live to see, because its dimensions are as endless as eternity. . . . .

"An isolated human individual as such, apart from all other human beings, can only be a fit subject for the physiologist or the anatomist. The metaphysician can contemplate one single man only in such a manner as the natural philosopher contemplates a single bee. This little insect, as an individual, would be perfectly unintelligible to the naturalist, for all its qualities and faculties, and the whole structure of its little body, are such as that in beehives alone they can be developed and made use of. No single bee alone is able to build a cell, or to gather wax and honey; it wounds beasts and men, and rushes with its sting on the defenceless drone. Such an isolated bee is an unemployed, cruel, bloodthirsty little thing; whereas, on the contrary, the republic of a beehive, with its constitutional queen, shows us a community representing all that is order, industry, and conviviality; but to learn this we must not dwell upon the contemplation

of the individual, but we must rise up to the survey of the whole, otherwise we never shall understand in how much the individual forms an organical part of the entire. As with the bee, so with man. To contemplate man properly, we must look at him in his state of community of labour.

"This community of labour is so immediately and so deeply founded in human nature from its beginning, that an isolated, and at the same time perfect man, cannot be conceived. We should certainly proclaim that man alone to be a perfect man, whose corporeal and mental faculties were all developed and worked out to the utmost of their perfectibility; but this is a claim almost contradictory to the nature of the single individual; for if we suppose a man totally and perfectly isolated from all other individuals of his species, such a man could not even be a rational being, but at the utmost could be proclaimed to be a being endowed with the possibility of attaining rationality. A rational being must necessarily be able to have thoughts. Thoughts cannot be formed without a language; for without words it is not only impossible to utter thoughts and to communicate them, but even to think at all. Feelings only and sensations may be had and uttered without articulated words—such feelings and sensations as we may attribute to unthinking animals. But for thoughts, words are the same as the body for the soul; and the human mind is quite as unable to have thoughts or to utter them without words, as the soul of an individual can manifest itself through words and actions without a corporeal body. Now, words and language cannot exist without the pre-existence of a manifold conversation and co-operation of different men; and one isolated rational man, therefore, without any previous communication with other men, is the product

of a mere abstraction, contradictory to human nature and to the results of experience.

"And if man requires contact with other individuals of his species in order to become a rational being, as distinguished from a being merely endowed with the possibility of acquiring reason, how much more does he require such a contact if his other talents and faculties are to be developed to perfection! If, for instance, a man has talents for some art or handicraft, he not only requires a teacher to instruct him—because, without such instruction, he will never come farther than to coarse experiments and unskilful results,—but he requires further the help of all those trades and professions which prepare the materials to which he is to give an artistical shape.

"Not only does each man require society in order to his personal development: when developed, each man has his particular niche in society—work which no one but himself can do.

. . . . "It may, perhaps, be difficult, in the daily and trivial occurrences of life, to show that even there the individuals do not act as mere indifferent unities among other unities of the same species, but that every one of them is a particular and essential organical part of mankind, having each his own particular task, and that what he does cannot be done in the same way by any other man living. But in those things which appear to us more important, it is easier to explain how entirely each individual nature has a character of its own, and is necessary in its own place. Thus, it will not be disputed that if Schiller had not written his *Wallenstein*, or Shakespeare his *Hamlet*, no other man on earth would have composed these poems with the same words, or the same disposition of action. Now, an eminent poetical production operates on the thoughts and sentiments of the hearers and readers,

and not seldom awakes in their minds resolutions fraught with influence on their future way of thinking and acting. All such consequences would not have taken place if the poetical or rhetorical work in question had not been brought to light; and so the mental disposition and the improvement of thousands would have undergone an alteration, had not this one individual poet or artist presented us with his work. And in the same manner, though on a smaller scale, every one of us is working and operating within his narrow compass, doing the work specially allotted to him.

.... "Thus each one works into the hands of the other, and so we perceive the unity of all who seem to wander in separate walks, every one by himself, apparently unmindful of the others; whereas truly all of them are as many branches of the great tree of humanity, springing from the same root, from the hidden depths of eternity. So floats the blossom of that poetical water-flower, seemingly unconnected and free on the liquid level, and floating meets her sister-blossom; and nobody but an experienced botanist knows that these apparently separate and independent flowers, which each float alone and so freely, 'are rooted closely side by side in the bottom of the lake.'"

So much for the social organization of the race. That being understood, we proceed, as we proposed, to carry the matter further, and prove the existence, not merely of a social, but also of a moral oneness.

II. It would help us to a ready demonstration of our theme, were we permitted to assume it to be a law of humanity, that virtue and happiness are

indissolubly associated. For that they are not indissolubly associated in individual examples is too clear for argument: consequently, it is not in the individual example that this law of humanity is exhibited. Where else, then, are we to seek it, except in the corporate relations of aggregates—the relations between God and the race?

Such, we say, would be our argument, if the indissoluble connexion of virtue and happiness were conceded. But as all our readers will not yield this to us, and as we are not dependent upon the concession, we must seek a basis of argument in external facts. Now, no fact can be more certain than that, in individual cases, virtue and present happiness are frequently dissevered. If, however, the principle we have laid down be a sound one, it will follow from it that in proportion as we deal with masses, instead of with individuals, we shall approach nearer and nearer to a constancy of relation between happiness and virtue; until at length, by eliminating disturbing influences, we reach a sufficient aggregate whereby to demonstrate their coexistence as a universal law. Let us refer, by way of illustration, to the law which regulates the earth's irrigation. We know that the earth is as much dependent upon the rain for its vitality as upon the heat of the sun, and that these

must be supplied in proportionate degrees: and we know also that the moisture drawn up by evaporation from our rivers, lakes, and oceans is in proportion to the application of the solar heat—demand and supply being thus made self-regulative. Yet this general law, which, in its aggregate operation, is strict as any mathematical corollary, becomes in the distribution of its results apparently most capricious—the shower often descending on soil already saturated, while, elsewhere, the parched ground gasps for it in vain. In like manner, while it may be quite true that, as a general law, moral evil is the cause of physical evil, and that the world's miseries in the aggregate are in accordance with its moral condition, it may be, and is, equally true, that Heaven's blessings and curses descend upon the just and unjust with as apparently little relation to their individual object as in the case of the capriciously-descending shower.

This, then, being a state of things warranted by our principle, to what extent does it coincide with actually existing phenomena? Is there anything to justify the conclusion, that although, as we well know, prosperity does not always follow in the wake of individual moral worth, the companionship of these two is more and more constant in proportion as we deal with increasing aggregates?

In order to obtain a satisfactory answer to this question, we have but to ascend from the individual example of suffering virtue to the condition of virtuous men *as a class*. What is the universal testimony of the civilized world with regard to the relation between happiness and virtue? Do not all human laws, all religious teaching, all our untainted literature—our novels, our dramas, as well as the graver pages of avowed moralists,—affirm, without a dissentient voice, that, however it may be with individuals, virtue as a rule produces happiness, and vice leads as certainly to woe?

Again: is it not the fact that nations have ever become great, powerful, glorious, and free in proportion as they have maintained truth and justice, and repressed crime? It is needless to burden our pages with historic examples; for unless the world's history have forced this fact upon the attention of every ordinary student, it will be useless to dwell upon it. We want evidences so clear as to be indisputable; and we apprehend that the one we now adduce is of that description. All history demonstrates that, however virtue may suffer in the cases of individuals and of small communities, or as a temporary exceptional incident, there is an indissoluble conjunction observable between national morality and the national weal.

But if virtue and happiness be invariably combined in aggregates, why not also in individuals? To this question we have already suggested the answer; and in answering it now more fully, we hope to give point to the argument.

Each individual is not, to the extent commonly supposed, a microcosm—a little world in himself, embodying in his own limited experience all the principles found in operation in the world at large. The relation between humanity and God, out of which arises the unvarying union of virtue and happiness, is not a relation made up—like a bundle of equal-sized rods—of a number of similar individual relations. Humanity is not an arithmetical addition of integers, but a body constituted, after the fashion of the human body, of adapted members. Hence the law applicable to humanity as a whole is true in its rigid strictness in relation only to entire humanity, and but partially true when applied to sections; gradually dwindling into inappropriateness when applied to individuals. As applied to individuals, it is like a shivered mirror sparkling brilliantly in some of its fragments on which the light fortuitously falls, but in others deprived of all reflective power. The consequence of this disseverance is, that between the parts of the whole in their relation both to God

and to each other, new laws come into operation. Let us look, for illustration, to the incidents of an Alpine tour. As between the tourist and general laws, the exercise and scenery produce ecstatic enjoyment. But this is true only of the man as a whole: how does the case stand in reference to particular parts of him after a few hard days' toil? His feet are sore, his joints ache, his face is blistered, his eyes are inflamed. So, while in relation to humanity as a whole the law immutably prevails that virtue and joy walk hand in hand, yet, inasmuch as it is to the whole only that this law is applicable, and not to its detached parts, it is quite compatible with our general proposition that, as in the case of the fatigued pedestrian, there coexists with exalted general joy very much of particular sorrow.

Remarkable is it that in the writings of ancient sages passages oft occur which show extraordinary depth of thought, and make us wonder that these have not ere this become household words, instead of being buried still in musty volumes unnoticed and but little known. Of this description is the following quotation from the stoic Epictetus, which, although a very free translation, does nothing more than convey the meaning of the original:—

"A man," says Epictetus, "is a part of a common-

wealth: what, then, doth the character of a good citizen promise? It promises to hold no private interest adverse to the general good; but to do as would the hand or foot, which, if they were possessed of reason, and could comprehend the constitution of nature, would never act as members of the body except with a reference to the whole. If the members of the body are to be considered as so many unconnected individuals, I will allow it to be natural for the foot to assert its right to be always clean; but if you regard it as a foot, and not as an unconnected agent, circumstances require that it should walk in the dirt, tread upon the thorns, and sometimes even be cut off, for the good of the whole. So, if you were an unconnected individual, completely severed from human society, it might be natural that you should live to old age, and be ever healthy and happy; but if you are to be regarded as a component part of social humanity, then it is fit and natural that you should, for the sake of the whole, be at one time sick; at another, take a voyage to sea and encounter the storm; at another, suffer hunger and thirst, or endure adversity and insult; and probably, at last, die before your time."

The man that could write thus must have had in his mind the entire hypothesis we are now seeking to unfold: so that, instead of being novel, as some might imagine, it may boast an origin coeval at least with the first century of the Christian era. While modern thought looks upon the sufferings of virtue as an anomaly, a mystery, something to be reconciled with justice only on the supposition of a future recompense, the sage,

with a wider range of vision, more correctly regarded it as a natural and necessary result of man's social and moral unity in a world in which virtue has to do battle with evil. Nor were Christianity's earliest propagators less decidedly of the same opinion. Did it lie within our present range of discussion, it would require but little effort to prove that the most subtle and sublime doctrines which St. Paul enunciates are spontaneous evolutions of his cardinal maxim, that "we are members one of another."

III. Again: were it to be granted that all the events that happen in the world, including the voluntary acts of moral agents, are evolved one out of the other, and so mutually dependent as to become in effect a continuous chain of necessary sequences, the result, of course, would be that a unity would be established which could not fail to render humanity one great responsible whole. But a concession so extensive as this we do not require. The acts of voluntary agents, it may be said, introduce new elements into the series—forces which may operate either in accordance with or adverse to the original direct force. The stream glides on, but not between banks that exclude the access of foreign waters: at frequent intervals, quiet streamlets from the neighbouring

plains, and now and then gurgling mountain torrents, pour their liquid treasures into the mighty reservoir; and on it goes with these additions, rushing, foaming, sometimes between a narrowing deeper channel, then widening into a vast shallow estuary. But notwithstanding all those vicissitudes, does not the stream still continue one? So, humanity is not less one because at every new birth, and on the putting forth of every self-determined volition, there is added a new element of strength. However independent the new element may have been in its origin, it no sooner mixes with the flowing tide than its independence ceases. Thenceforth it is hurried on or retarded, lifted or submerged, according to the exigencies wherewith it has become conditioned.

Few are the sins, if in truth there are any, which are the exclusive product of an individual mind, and which have been in no way contributed to by others. There are, first, in the catalogue of contributory causes, those hereditary tendencies for which parents, and no doubt more remote ancestors, are responsible. Then there are habits formed in early life; and for these not only parents, but other members also of the domestic circle, including nurses and governesses, are more or less

accountable. Then there is the instruction received in youth; and here is brought in the mighty power exerted over the youthful mind by schoolmasters and schoolmistresses: to all which are to be added the influence of juvenile associations, and the inducement and pressure of ten thousand varying circumstances, leading onward to the particular act complained of, as their all but necessary climax. Hence there is no denying that every man's moral character is modified, if not absolutely formed, by his associations. And as little, therefore, can it be denied that no moral action, good or bad, is the sole product of one mind. But if this be so—if every voluntary act of every individual be more or less contributed to by others,—how can it possibly be maintained that responsibility is ever individual only, and never corporate? On the contrary, what action is there that is not corporate? Does the murderer in the dead hour of night steal into the quiet chamber of his sleeping victim, and, prompted by the greed of gain, stab to the heart the unconscious father, and rob his orphan children of their only means of support? Ask where that villain was born, in what den of infamy he first drew breath, where he was educated, and by what steps he has been matured into the hardened criminal you now

witness? We may find that his grandsire was a clergyman; that his father, strictly educated in childhood, rushed in youth into the vortex of prodigality; that his mother was a ruined beauty; that, untrained to industry, he began life as a timid pilferer, but that, rendered bold by successful thieving, he dared the law, was caught in its meshes, and was converted by imprisonment among felons into a reckless ruffian. We see thus how many acts of many individuals have contributed to give existence to the character we now contemplate, and, by creating the agent, to produce his crime. It would be mere evasion to say that the crime is only the crime of him who premeditates it, and that the unintentional contributors thereto have no share in its guilt. That may be so for purposes of punitive justice before an earthly tribunal; but our present inquiry has reference to the proceedings before a Divine tribunal. Even human laws attribute to offenders the criminality of results in which their conduct necessarily terminates—holding that every man must intend that which is the inevitable consequence of his actions. We ask no more than that this well-settled principle be ceded to us. However untraceable for practical ends, there has been in the case supposed a slow but sure progress

from act to act through at least three generations of voluntary agents tending directly to terminate as it has done. But are the immediate actors the only culpable parties? What are we to say respecting the more remote events by which they in their turn were influenced and determined? What do we see but a series of concentric circles spreading wider and wider over the troubled waters—as when a projected stone having disturbed the centre, thence to the far-distant shore not a drop remains unmoved by the eddying wave.

To make this point clearer, we will again review the case of any great criminal:—how has that man been made a criminal? He was born in abject poverty; and his early days were spent in familiarity with scenes of brutal sensuality. Whose fault was that? Surely not his: he could not help the circumstances of his birth. The associations of his boyhood repressed the misgivings of his moral nature, and he was taught, both by precept and example, that it was a clever thing to steal without detection, and that stealing was some men's legitimate calling. To that example he yielded. We admit that he willingly and sinfully yielded: our object is not to excuse him, but to inculpate others along with him.

Then the police were set upon his track. He was put into prison, tried, sentenced, punished. Branded as a criminal, to him reform became next to impossible. He was known as a thief, and could get no industrial employment. Becoming through necessity a thief by profession, he was again caught, transported, and ere long came back a returned convict, hardened in crime, desperate. Does he at length, going from bad to worse, stain his hands in blood? What wonder if he do? And whose is the crime? Not his alone, but that of society together with him,—society which predetermined his early circumstances, which neglected him, despised him, would not give him work, and compelled him to steal to support life. And yet, after hounding him on to a felon's death, society hangs up his dead body on the gibbet, and instead of feeling afflicted with its own share in the guilt, ostentatiously points him out as a warning, a beacon—a beacon to whom? to men who, like himself, are driven on time's lee-shore by circumstances which not they single-handed, but society alone, can control.

It has been observed by a scientific writer of eminence, that there is not a single event which takes place in the world, be it only the flight of a bird through the air, or the tread of a camel

across the desert, but leaves behind it permanent results, extending through all time. Thus there are fossil remains that have had impressed upon them the wash of the wave, the rain-drops, the footprints of animal life—insignificant events once, when they happened myriads of ages ago, but how significant now in the hands of our geologists! As in these examples, so in everything, nature treasures up to this hour, imprinted upon her in ineffaceable lines, all the events of her past history. Nothing that ever happened has been obliterated, nor can be. Mundane affairs always record themselves: they write their own tale, photograph their own image, exist still in the altered form they gave to physical nature at the moment they occurred. Now, if this be an allowed scientific truth, how beautifully does it coincide with and confirm another truth equally indisputable! As no occurrence in nature is ever effaced, so neither is any human action. There is not a single word spoken, nor a single work performed—nay, not even a single thought entertained, nor passion indulged,—but it leaves itself indelibly written on the individual man, on humanity as a whole, and oft on physical nature herself, through all succeeding time.

This truth, though perhaps startling, is so self-

evident that it scarcely needs enlargement in order to its more distinct utterance. We have only to ask, What is the effect upon the world's history of any great event—say any great battle, such as Waterloo or Solferino? Do not such great events manifestly impress their image upon all humanity's future? But what is a great battle composed of? Is it not the aggregate of individual movements, so that every individual movement comprehended in the general idea, forms a letter in the inscription engraved thereby on time's tablet? Or let us select for illustration some well-known historical era: let it be the revolutionary struggle in our own country during the latter half of the seventeenth century. Let us mark the successive stages of that struggle, and observe how one begat the other. First, there was the despotism, the absolute church and divine-right pretensions, and the total want of trustworthiness of the First Charles. That gave rise to the sturdy Puritans—men of the Hampden stamp—to Cromwell and his troop of yeomen; stern in principle, religious in their language and feelings, but conventional in their practice and visionary in their hopes. Then came the Civil War: What followed upon that? Can the religious character of a nation be maintained at a

high level amid the excitement, storms, and passions of civil warfare? Impossible! Consequently, when the nation became involved in the wars of the Commonwealth, its high puritanic tone subsided; and those who had, at the commencement of their public life, been good and spiritual men, became, in the fierceness of the conflict, unspiritual, formal, hypocritical. Then, out of this backsliding and hypocrisy sprang a reaction: for what was it but the disgusting hypocrisy of the latter days of the Commonwealth that provoked the reckless licentiousness of the Restoration? That again, in its turn, awakened a reverse reaction; and the extreme elements were, at length, tempered down into the revived English moderate and practical spirit of the Revolution of 1688. Thus in each of these great national changes one produced the other; not as mathematically as any physical cause produces its appropriate effect, but in the strict order of moral causation. And so it has been—although not always so easily to be traced—throughout all preceding and all subsequent ages of the world's history, and in all nations. Has not the character of the present generation of mankind been formed elementally by the last? And was not the character of the last generation formed, in many of

its leading features, by the generation which preceded it? and so on in retrogression: and do not we who exist together in the generation that now is, contribute to influence and modify the characters of each other? If this be so,—about which there can be no doubt,—we have only to carry out the same idea more in detail, and it must necessarily issue in giving operative force to each individual, however obscure, and to each individual's every act, word, thought.

What we are in danger of, whenever we thus treat of great public events, is the forgetting that, instead of being simply events, they are really the composite acts of many individual actors; and that to analyze the act and apportion to each actor his separate part is not only practically impossible but theoretically inconceivable. This mingling of minds to produce one act gives to every separate link in the chain of events a corporate character; but when, in addition thereto, each stage of progress, instead of continuing a separate link, intermingles with its successor like a dissolving view dying away in that which follows, the character of the final result becomes in a still stronger sense corporate. We call it an event, thus concealing from ourselves its true origin; but, instead of an event, it is a voluntary moral act. Whose act?

A national act. But a nation is a section of humanity formed and influenced in its national character and acts by antecedent and contemporary nations: everything national is world-wide—human—having entire humanity for its base.

The conclusions to which the preceding reflections have led us would be equally well arrived at by contemplating the history of any great reformer, statesman, or warrior. How are such men created? Without denying that individual attributes of character place the last stone on the edifice, we are surely safe in asserting that its foundations were laid and the superstructure reared in influences that have probably struggled for centuries against difficulties, and reached at length their full development in the age that gave birth to the master-mind with whose name their triumph is now historically associated. To assert that he was their author is to reverse the order of causation. As when the argument pursued for some time by one skilled in eloquence prepares his auditory for the last stroke, and the oration, wound up at length by a powerful appeal, falls with resistless force, scattering the difficulties in the way of immediate action and arousing to high resolve; so is it when nations, prepared by all their past history, are

aroused to strike off the fetters that enslaved them —the relation of bygone centuries to their final uprising being in nothing different from the relation that subsists between the orator's previous arguments and his last appeal.

And let it be observed, all that we have said is not less applicable to the corporate character of virtuous actions than it is to that of vicious ones. No man has the right to attribute all the merit of his virtue to himself. And it is strongly corroborative of this assertion, that no thoroughly good man attempts it; and that if any one having good points in his character make too strong a claim to be praised for his goodness, this assertion is universally felt to be a weakness. Ask any virtuous man what he considers to have been the origin of his virtue, and he will unhesitatingly enumerate a multitude of influences which have contributed to his character's virtuous formation; and after concluding such enumeration, he will be found unwilling to appropriate even the residuum of merit to himself: he ascribes it to a source that is divine. What is the inference to be drawn from such facts? Is it that virtue has really no human habitat, and that man is nothing more than a piece of soft clay which unseen powers mould as they will?—or rather, is it not a more rational conclu-

sion that the power which creates virtue has a dwelling-place in humanity, and that it is by virtue of this embodied power (which, like vegetable life, has its seat, not in this branch nor in that, but in the entire tree) that the branches all retain moral life, and at least the power of production, while here and there the pendent fruit indicates spots where, on particular branches, the power resident in the whole tree has been specially put forth?

IV. But it may be said, and said with truth, that wherever there is moral responsibility, there will be the intuitive consciousness of merit or demerit; and that if each of us be really implicated in mankind's corporate acts, our consciences ought to give us some intimation thereof. We grant that such should be the case: and we contend that it is so as an actual fact. But it is not such a fact as will at once force itself on every one's attention. It lies hid. Even the sense of personal demerit exists only in minds that have some degree of moral culture. Higher culture awakens a keener consciousness of evil: but it requires a higher culture still to inspire a sense of responsibility for the vice around us. Only the highest culture can make the whole truth unmistakably perceptible.

If good men suffer for the crimes of the bad, it

is tolerably clear that the moral administration under which such things happen sees no injustice in it. And yet there would be injustice, were there no other law of humanity but that of personal reward for personal merit, and personal punishment for personal demerit; for that virtue does so suffer is beyond dispute. All suffering that has a human origin, and which any conceivable progress would correct, springs, by the very terms of the supposition, from moral evil; and yet virtue so suffers. To attempt to get over the difficulty by misrepresenting the future state as a scheme for correcting earth's present errors, is to reduce the moral governmeut of the universe to a level with that blundering procedure from which not even English judicature has been wholly free, but which nevertheless fails not to call forth strong expressions of public condemnation. To recall a man from transportation who has been punished wrongfully, and to compensate him for the wrong done to him, is felt, however liberal the compensation given him, to be at best but very wretched justice. It is an insult to the Divine government to suppose that such is the kind of justice *it* administers. In opposition to such a notion, we have contended that the sufferings of virtue happen as a consequence of the law of humanity which

attaches reward and punishment to mankind's corporate character: yet even this can only be true in combination with its sister-truth; that such a law is a just law, and ought to commend itself to our consciences as just.

To say that virtue suffers *through* evil, but not *for* it, is to make a distinction without a difference, and affords us no help. All moral rewards and punishments are in pursuance of a law that works out its end in a chain of natural sequences. Whether there be more direct visitations from Heaven, we neither affirm nor deny: all we say is, that if they happen, they are the exception and not the rule, and that no such direct visitation is required for the purposes of our argument. Nor is it necessary that we give in our adhesion to any particular theory in relation to the origin of moral evil, and as to the distinction between it and natural evil. Take even the lowest ground, and assume the only difference between natural evil and moral evil to be, that the latter is a wilful violation of the dictates of nature, and that the former is nature's revenge. Adopt, we say, even this view, and let it be allowed that all punishment of evil is self-inflicted and corrective; it is not deprived by that circumstance of its character as punishment. We would refer, for example, to

those visitations of cholera which we had in this country a few years ago. Is it not notorious that in many towns and localities the virulence of the disease was attributable to drunkenness and sensuality, and to the debility and filth consequent thereon? Who, under these circumstances, would hesitate to pronounce it to have been vice's punishment? But although vice might give existence and impetus to the plague, it did not assign bounds to its ravages. Once abroad, the pestilence fell upon the moral equally with the immoral; upon the thoughtful and frugal equally with the reckless spendthrift; upon the pious and benevolent equally with the profane. Was that which was, strictly speaking, punishment when it fell upon the immediate culprits, any less a corrective or a punishment—we may call it which we like—when it fell more widely? If viewed in the light of a corrective, does not its wider extension teach us that the virtuous are as much bound to aid in the work of progress as are the vicious? And if viewed in the light of a punishment, it but teaches the same lesson—that the virtuous owe a duty to their vicious neighbours for the neglect of which they suffer. Again: do not the calamities of war originate in some act of injustice and wrong? In such cases, war is crime's punishment: yet who

suffer? Not always the most criminal, nor generally so: it is oft the innocent on whom vengeance falls most terribly. We mean the personally innocent; for, corporately, all may be said to be implicated. Do you ask where is the justice of such a procedure? We answer, that on the principle of national responsibility there is no injustice to be complained of. The crime being national, the punishment is also national; the offence being corporate, the blow is also corporate: the hand steals, the back is smitten: there is unity in the culprit, and so long as the whip falls upon the unit justice is indifferent as to the precise spot where it cuts most severely.

Once admit the principle we have just stated, and the consequence follows that, if our consciences are unaffected by corporate demerit, it is not because the demerit does not exist, but because our moral nature is imperfectly cultivated, and is not therefore sufficiently active and sensitive.

But there is no need for us to leave the argument here. Examples exist of various kinds, illustrating the aptitude of man's moral nature to be affected, both painfully and joyously, by the moral character of acts which are not the product of his own mind, and in which he is in no other way interested than through the operation of his

human sympathies. To some of these examples we will now advert.

The earliest combination of two or more individuals is into that of the family: the next is that of the tribe or clan. But, in modern times, the clan has given place to the town, and towns corporate form one of the most expressive forms of social organization. We have in a municipal borough something far beyond the mere dwelling together of a numerous body of inhabitants. Besides propinquity of residence, there are mutual concert and combined action for the general welfare. There is discussion in order to agreement; the minority yields to the majority, to effect unanimity: and so soon as the decision thus come to has been affirmed under the corporate seal, the act is no longer the act of a few, but the act of the many, the corporate act of the whole borough. Now, whatever questions of right or wrong, justice or injustice, apply to the acts of individuals, they apply equally to the acts of corporations; and although it is proverbially more difficult, where responsibility is divided, to bring home charges of injustice, the sense of moral obligation is not less existent, and ought not to be less active, with regard to corporate acts than with regard to personal acts.

Again: because corporate life in a municipality illustrates forcibly what we mean when we breathe corporate life into entire humanity, we will on this point invite attention to the following extract from the works of Mr. Gladstone, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose acute mind and varied learning and experience give to his authority, on such a topic, accumulated value:— "Wherever common life," says he, "in any form is established, then, in the same proportion as it prevails, there must be an actual surrender of the individual will: what is thus sacrificed is thrown into a common fund, and unity of being, instead of diversity, is to the same extent established. This joint or common life is what is ordinarily intimated by the phrase—the personality of societies; a phrase applicable whenever the community of law, sentiment, and interest, belonging to the common life, assumes the determinate form of incorporation. The personality of societies is not a mere metaphysical or theological abstraction, nor a phrase invented for the purpose of discussion, but a reality." Mark these words! "The personality of societies is not an abstraction, but a reality." "There are," adds Mr. Gladstone, "qualities in a combination which arise out of the union of its parts, and are not to be found in

those parts when they have been separated and are singly examined."

Ascending from the incorporated town, let us see how this "personality of societies," as Mr. Gladstone calls it—or, as we prefer calling it, this organized unity—is exemplified in a nation. A nation is far more than an aggregate of individuals, speaking the same language and dwelling within a certain circumscribed territory; and patriotism is something more than mere local affection. What is patriotism? Why do we love our country? The idea of country is not completed by a geographical description of it. Country is something of which each feels himself to be a living member. It is the land of our fathers; the land for the liberties of which our fathers fought and bled; the land whose soil they tilled, whose institutions they contributed to rear: so that its glories are interwoven with their memories. We have, with the land of our birth and of our hereditary and personal dwelling, an intermixture of being: it has become part of ourselves; we should not have been what we are but for its modifying power. Hence we cannot be severed from our country without the severance of bonds of strong sympathetic interest. It seems even to have a common national consciousness in which we par-

ticipate, coincident with our individual consciousness; so that, when a nation acts through its duly-constituted authorities, its national acts so thoroughly implicate all loyal subjects, that we are honoured or disgraced, and feel ourselves honoured or disgraced, accordingly as the acts of our rulers are or are not wise, just, and prudent acts. Here we pause to ask, What stronger proof can be required of the aptitude of man's moral nature to be affected by corporate good or evil, than is furnished by the existence of so fine a moral sentiment as that of national honour?

Bearing in mind that we are still considering how far the cultured conscience of humanity is affected by the general guilt, let us suppose the case of some great public calamity calling forth a nation's humiliation. How do good men pray in such times of national penitence? Although without any special consciousness that the guilt is their own, do they not assume that they are in some way implicated in it? Now upon what principle do they assume this? Is it not upon the principle that, since they are involved in the national punishment, and since punishment implies guilt, they conclude that they must, in the judgment of Heaven, be somehow implicated in

the guilt also; and that therefore penitence and prayer not only befit their lips, but ought to be kindled also in their hearts? With what contempt should we look on the man who, in the time of national humiliation, laid the sin wholly at the door of his neighbour, and asked God's mercy for others, but disclaimed all need of it himself! And yet all this proceeds on the assumption that there are national sins and national punishments, and that if the sin be national, the consciousness of it should be national also—national in the sense that every individual conscience should share the general burden.

This tendency in the human mind to appropriate to itself the attributes of those with whom we have common action, shows itself in various other ways. The incumbent of a large church, comprising many men of great rank, wealth, piety, activity, and benevolence, assumes, and has conceded to him, a *status* derived, not from himself, but from his position and associations. A member of an old-established and wealthy firm of merchants carries with him, throughout all his transactions, the *prestige* of his house. The youthful heir of a distinguished family is reverenced, not so much for his personal qualities as for the long line of traditionary honours he represents; and

it is thence, rather than from his individual resources, that he derives the air of reticent self-respect and easy confidence which gives character to his demeanour, both in public and private life. But here we would introduce another thought. In all these cases there must be, on the part of the individual who appropriates the attributes of others, a corresponding spirit. The clergyman over an influential congregation, should he conduct himself personally in a manner unbefitting his high position, would be even more dishonoured than one more culpable, but less prominent. The active partner of the well-known firm must be himself superior to everything mean and suspicious; otherwise his representation of the old name will expose him to reproach, instead of yielding him honour. The youthful heir must needs conduct himself wisely and well, or his family honours will redound to his personal disgrace. In each of these cases the individual acting must breathe the spirit of those whom he represents, as the zephyr breathes the fragrance of the fields over which it has passed on its way to us. Hence two things are to be observed. There is in the human mind an aptitude to appropriate the meritorious claims of those with whom we are in any way identified; and yet this appropriation can never

be made successfully, unless we aspire personally to share the same attributes.

To make this plainer :—The facility men have in combining for a common object, and in appropriating to themselves personally the honour or disgrace of their combined success or failure, is so familiar to every mind, that our difficulty will be, not to prove its existence, but to prove that sentiments so ordinary can be made illustrative of so weighty a theme. In the gymnastic exercises of youth, for instance, the cricket-match or the boat-race, how thoroughly each member identifies himself with the traditionary honours of the club and with its last hard-earned victory ! and if peradventure ill-luck betide them, it is not those only whose blunders have caused the misfortune that are annoyed at the disgrace—the disgrace is felt by the whole club, and not least by those who outdid all their former efforts in striving to prevent it. And again, do not our military officers foster an honest pride in having their names associated with a regiment that has fought many battles and gained high distinction ? Possibly not a man now survives who was present at the corps' earlier conflicts, yet that does not prevent the appropriation to the existing body of all the regiment's historic feats of valour. And should the

body at any time tarnish its fame, who are they that will feel the dishonour most acutely? Not the cowards that turned their backs on the foe, but the men that fought most bravely. Now the correct analysis of this complexity of sentiment depends upon our distinguishing between a man's individual consciousness and the common consciousness which centres in the unity whereof he is a member. In his common consciousness he is overwhelmed with disgrace at the failure of the united effort, while in his individual consciousness he is satisfied that he personally did his own separate duty. Or *vice versâ*, in his individual consciousness he feels ashamed that he did his own part of the work so ill, and did not contribute as he ought to have done to the victory that has been achieved, but rather hindered than promoted it; while, with all this ground for self-reproach, he enters so thoroughly into the spirit and common consciousness of the united body, that he shares fully the general joy at their combined success, participating in the benefit, but giving all the honour to those to whom it is due.

Out of this combination of the individual with the common consciousness arises, we submit, the right to express, and the true force of, public opinion. What right have individuals to pass

judgment on the acts of their fellows, if it be not that all such acts have a public, a world-wide significance? It is because they are allowed to have such a significance that the right to judge them is on the one side upheld and on the other side yielded to. And, when exercised widely, how powerful! Few are the individuals that can resist long the force of public opinion persistently expressed. Even nations are compelled to yield. But why is this? The force of public opinion is not derived from its involving any threats of coercion, but solely from its coincidence with truth and justice. If not so coincident, it will prove but a passing breath, idle and inoperative; if coincident, resistless. Then whence its power? Is it not because public opinion, rationally vindicated and persistently expressed, is felt to indicate the doing of that which the public welfare demands, and because no individual conscience can long resist the obligations of the one to consult the safety of the many, the duty of a part to promote the welfare of the whole? It is a common consciousness of the right into which, although resisted for a while, we at length imperceptibly glide.

Leaving this class of cases, we next pass on to others still more significant. Suppose a parent to

have flagrantly neglected the moral education of his child, and that, in consequence of such neglect, the child has grown up in infamous profligacy, and is at last condemned to an ignominious death for some horrible crime: ought not such a parent to be distressed in his conscience by his child's guilt? ought he not to enter into the guilty one's moral state, and feel his child's guilt as if it were his own guilt? Nay, if the parent be not wholly insensible to his moral obligations, is it not probable that his conscience will be affected even more painfully? Although only contributing by a neglect of parental duty, he cannot but identify himself with the criminal through his whole career; and we are but speaking the language of every day's experience when we say that, all things else being equal, and both consciences being alike aroused to healthy action, the parent's anguish of conscience will, in such a case, exceed that of the child. But in this case, it may be said, the parent himself personally contributed to the crimes of which the remembrance afflicts him. Take, then, another example, one in which there is no obvious contribution—that of a child strictly and judiciously educated. Assume that such child, like too many, forgetting the lessons of childhood, has, in after life, wandered from the right path, and

buried himself in reckless debauchery. At length, having advanced step by step in crime, a crisis is reached. Some base action exposes him to the vengeance of the law, and then follow disgrace, too late repentance, utter ruin. Does the agony of the father in such a state of circumstances amount to nothing more than affectionate sympathy—mere pity? Is there not a burning sense of personal shame, a hanging down of the head, a hiding from the world, the same consciousness of evil committed as if he, the father himself, had been the criminal? A less reputable father would probably repudiate his child in the hour of his woe, would even attempt to disown him, and join ostentatiously in the outcry against his atrocious wickedness: but in proportion as the parent's principles are high and stern, and his parental love deep, he will bleed in silence.

In all instances of this kind, two elements exist which, though both in the abstract good and joyous, become in their concrete combination the source of deepest anguish. The one is love to the object; the other, horror at his crime. Reduce either of these, and you mitigate the sympathetic distress: intensify both, and you create at once *the highest form of virtue and the most excruciating mental agony.* In order the more prominently

to exhibit this remarkable phenomenon, let us imagine a case in which a love transcending all human love embraces, not kindred and friends merely, but the entire race, and in which the hatred of evil is such as can exist only in a moral nature absolutely perfect. Let such an one be an embodied element of humanity — thoroughly human in all his relations and sympathies; and there will stand before you a being who, although a faultless model of virtue, is at the same time the victim of immeasurable sorrow. Such is the picture presented to us in the Christian sacred books of the world's Redeemer. A very different picture, we may remark in passing, from that drawn by M. Renan.

Referring to the example of the father suffering through the crimes of his son, it would be contrary to ordinary modes of thought to represent the good father as being punished for the vicious son's crimes. But we must not conceal from ourselves that such is the conclusion to which our argument tends. To put it abruptly thus, however, without explanation, would be suggestive of error. It is not, that the father, as an individual, is punished for the son's individual offences; but that the son's vice and criminality are corporate, and their punishment corporate; and that, in the

harmonious operation of the principle which visits corporate offences with corporate punishment, suffering falls most heavily on those whose moral characters are most exalted, and whose sympathetic apprehension of human evil is in consequence thereof most acute and afflictive.

We are precluded, by the conditions of this discussion, from calling to our aid any facts of which the evidence is dependent upon religious faith. But the existence of the faith itself ought not to be excluded from an inquiry in which generally-received opinions may be adduced as indicating mental tendencies. If large portions of mankind, of various religious creeds, concur in the belief that communities and nations are blessed or accursed because of the merit or demerit of individuals, does not that fact indicate that the moral system which permits such a result offers no shock to mankind's moral sentiments? To begin with the oldest recorded instance—that of the Old-Testament Adam: his moral turpitude, it is said, involved in ruin the whole race. Whether this be a history or a myth, and whether it be the record of a fall from a higher moral state, or of humanity's first emergence from the mere animal state into moral consciousness, the circumstance that Adam's guilt placed the world under a ban has

been adopted as an article of faith by nations advanced in civilization and moral worth, tends to prove that it involves nothing revolting to the general conscience. Of a similar description was the Jewish persuasion that the Jews inherited the land of Canaan as a reward bestowed upon them by Heaven for the righteousness of their father Abraham; and that Sodom would have been saved from destruction had there been but ten righteous men within its walls. The Phenician sailors made no complaint against the justice of Heaven because the storm sent after Jonah threatened their destruction. If natural conscience had rebelled against such a visitation, we should have expected them to blame the gods, instead of supplicating their clemency. Nor are minor illustrations unfrequent in legendary lore. Homer records it as a fact that the Greeks, on their voyage to Troy, were visited with a plague by way of punishment for the crime of Agamemnon; and he does not complain of it as an act of injustice: quite the contrary. The piety of Chryses, he tells us, undid the evil caused by Agamemnon, and made the gods propitious. The self-sacrifice of Curtius was to the Roman mind an adequate reason for averting a great public calamity. Nor would many men of modern times, crossing the Atlantic in a pas-

senger-vessel, and exposed to imminent danger in a hurricane, hesitate to admit the hope that the tempest might be assuaged and all on board rescued, because of the presence among them of some one of eminent worth, whose mission, of great benevolence and public utility, it was not unreasonable to think, might awaken an interest in other worlds than our own.

We have now, we trust, said enough to vindicate our theme. There is, we say, a moral unity of the race—a corporate responsibility of entire humanity, as well as a personal responsibility of each individual. As the human body is one, though consisting of many parts, so is humanity. The mischievous tongue offends, the whole man suffers the punishment; the hand labours, the whole body participates in the reward. Hence flow the following corollaries:—

1. On the question of society's right to inquire into individual conduct, it is the commonly-received opinion that such right is limited by the obvious tendency of the individual act to inflict public injury. Our hypothesis leads to the inference that in no instance can vice, however secret, fail to injure others—to injure all; and that there is no individual act, therefore, into which society has

not the right to inquire; the true limit of its exercise being one of pure expediency.

2. Philanthropy is too often represented as disinterested condescension; and many a kid-gloved pedant, simpering platitudes, fancies himself a superior order of being whom the vicious should look upon at a distance and admiringly obey, while he deigns to favour them with his pity. Worse than useless are all such labourers in the cause of moral progress. He only is worthy of the name of a philanthropist who, identifying himself with degraded and endangered humanity, becomes one of the crew of the tempest-driven barque, labouring as such for the rescue of himself and all on board. Feeling the danger to be a common danger, he throws his whole soul into the struggle, losing all thought of superiority otherwise than as it imposes the duty of more earnest effort; and, instead of wasting his energies in sentimental pity, reserves them for a toil, which, while it has others for its direct object, is felt by him to be not the less necessary to his own deliverance. "Woe unto me, if I preach not the gospel!"

3. The redeeming principle, through the operation of which the world is to be morally renewed, is inadequately described as the surrender of the personal will to God. Something more is demanded

from us than personal rectitude. We must add to it, loving sympathy for those who are morally and socially degraded, and active efforts on their behalf founded on identity of interest.

4. Between a great living unit and the living elements of which it is composed, there are sure to exist points of resemblance: one of these offers a solution of the question not unfrequently put—To what end does virtue suffer? Why, we ask, in reply, is the individual man so constituted that any disturbance in the harmony of his physical system causes pain; and that his moral nature is affected painfully by the consciousness of the existence within him of moral evil? Is it not that he may struggle against the evil, and eject that which occasions pain? Suffering virtue stands in the same relation to the entire race as that in which our painful consciousness of evil stands to the individual. It is the better part of mankind's corporate moral nature, urged by the lash and the spur to a more earnest striving against wrong: it is a pledge of the existence in humanity of a power of self-renovation, and the application of a stimulus to its more active exercise. Should virtue ever cease to suffer in a world in which it is mixed with vice, it will be because the moral life of the world is low, and its vital powers

paralyzed and morbid. The more vigorous humanity's moral life, the more acute will be virtue's sufferings, until they terminate in the accomplishment of the purpose for which their existence is designed—Earth's purification from evil.

5. Further: it is a question now often mooted, whether personal religion must not necessarily have a purely moral origin, and whether it does not introduce an incompatible element when an historical, and therefore intellectual, origin is added to the moral. This supposition of incompatibility arises out of the error we have been combating—that of looking upon mankind as nothing more than a congeries of independent personalities, having no other relations than between the soul and its God. If, however, humanity be regarded as an organic unit, each part having moral relations with every other part, the historical element must necessarily be introduced as that by which alone the moral can become intercommunicable, and thus made to permeate the mass. In ordinary life the intuitions of one conscience, any more than the judgments of one intellect, have not enough of authority to command the attention essential to public culture. They must first be catholicized and made historical.

Then, but not otherwise, dogmatic appeals, dignified by catholic concurrence and made venerable by historic reception, win attention, and, by winning respectful and unprejudiced attention, awaken in the individual conscience those responses which constitute practically the religious germ. So also in regard to idealism. Idealism bears a relation to history analogous to that which our moral intuitions bear to utilitarian experience. The one is the type, the other the antitype; the one the foreshadowing, the other the substance. Now, unless the former were supported by the latter, the ideal by the phenomenal, the influence of the ideal would be nothing greater than is witnessed in the history of fanaticism. Whatever the effect upon the individual, its effect upon the world would be slight and transitory. Humanity, as a whole, cannot repose mentally except upon a basis of acknowledged facts, any more than it can repose corporeally except upon a basis of solid earth.

6. We have only to add, in conclusion, that out of the principles we have enumerated there naturally arises a theory which, embracing the facts of the gospel history, gives to them a significance in accord with all surrounding social and moral phenomena. Our Lord Jesus Christ, as one of the brotherhood of humanity, suffered in accordance

with the law which so distributes the punishment of the world's guilt that it falls heaviest upon the holiest. That is one feature of the scheme. Another is — that the perfect righteousness of Christ became, by virtue of His human brotherhood, mankind's rightful heritage. Through Christ, the world, corporately, stands reconciled to God: and the righteousness of Christ, which, in that sense, is already ours, becomes ours distributively and consciously, when, so far as, and so long as, we seek to imbibe His spirit and tread in His steps.

III.

THE EVANGELIC THEORY, OR WAY OF CONSCIOUS UNION WITH GOD.

NOTE.—The form of Lecture, or personal address to an imaginary audience, has been adopted in this paper for three reasons, viz.:—1. It facilitates an analysis of the process of thought under review; 2. It enables the author to incorporate with his argument the answers which, as he believes, every cultured conscience will give to his appeals; and, 3. It unfolds the practical application and religious value of the theory contended for.

I TAKE it to be quite clear, that the design of religion is to bring about a conscious reconciliation of man with God. Not an actual reconciliation only, but a *conscious* reconciliation. Nor can this reasonable assumption be denied without adopting the adverse and untenable position, that man's natural condition—the state destined for Him by

his Maker—is to live always under the crushing bondage of conscious guilt.

That the development and elevation of man's moral nature is the object which religion immediately contemplates, we readily admit. But, in so doing, it pursues an immediate purpose, with the view of making use of it as a means towards accomplishing a higher purpose beyond. It ascends one height to reach another. That higher purpose is the soul's conscious union with its God.

Such being the case, it becomes us to consider very earnestly what is the precise method by which a union so sublime is to be attained. And especially do I propose to inquire whether there exists any scheme capable of leading us up to its enjoyment other than the scheme of the Cross.

If there be no other, then is Christianity a moral necessity. And if Christianity be a moral necessity, is that not a strong—ay, even a conclusive—argument in favour of its truth? Without detracting one tittle from other arguments which have been adduced in support of the Christian faith—the arguments from prophecy, from miracles, from its intrinsic moral purity, from its tried power as an engine of spiritual renovation—without, I say, detracting one tittle from these and other arguments whereby the historical truth of

Christianity is demonstrated, we add to them another, of a totally different kind, and specially adapted to the thinkings of the age. It may be briefly stated thus:—There exists, in the universe, a law of adaptation. A want implies the existence of a thing adapted to supply it. Hence, if man's moral nature have a thirst which Christianity alone can quench, if humanity crave that which only the Cross can give, there must be in the outer world some objective reality adapted to satisfy the heart's longing; and that which experience proves to be alone so adapted must be true. Is the eye adapted to the light, and light to the eye—solely so adapted? Then, as the geologist incontrovertibly argues, the existence of the eye in the fossil trilobite proves that, when that creature lived, there must have been light. In like manner, an inward moral want proves, by the application of the same law of adaptation, the existence in the outer world of that which alone can supply such want. Because peace of conscience is a necessity, and cannot be had except by trust in a righteousness not our own, there must be a righteousness existing somewhere, in which that trust is to be placed; and if somewhere, where can it be, except in the work of our Redeeming Lord?

The argument thus stated is by no means identical with the ordinary internal evidences adduced in favour of Christianity: and it rests on a moral fact which some may doubt, namely, that peace of conscience cannot be derived from trust in our own righteousness. But who doubts this proposition? Surely, none can doubt it who have been attentive to their own mental processes. And if admitted, we cannot conceive how it is possible to evade the inference we deduce from it. To my mind it seems singular that the argument on which I venture to lay so much stress, has not been more freely wielded by those ecclesiastical dignitaries whose special province it is to defend the fortress of Christian truth. But may it not be that there are some thoughts which grow up more naturally in the popular mind than in that of the learned student? just as some of our wild flowers, which spring up so beautifully upon the heath, do not flourish in the garden: particularly thoughts which partake of the nature of moral facts—facts of religious experience—the operations of the Christian's inner life.

There is, also, another reason why the views we propound are less likely to spring out of the purely ecclesiastical mind. There is a tendency in all religious systems to foster mystical views of reli-

gion. Thus, the notion held by a large and influential portion of the Church of England, at this day, is, that the priest, if duly consecrated, is the channel through whom, in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, regenerating grace is mystically communicated. And although the evangelical portion of the clergy and most separatists dissent from these views, how common it is even for them merely to substitute the sermon for the ordinance; and, as stoutly as the highest churchman, to maintain that, if not in the baptismal rite nor the eucharist, grace is, beyond all doubt, mystically communicated through the preacher and the sermon! Now, the tendency of modern thought is to do battle with these mystical views, whether High Church or Low Church. And hereupon arises this question—Are mystical views of religious truth necessary? And if not necessary, why contend for them? Are we not, in so doing, falling into the same error as that into which the Catholic clergy fell when they persecuted Galileo, because he asserted scientific truths which they thought—erroneously thought—were contrary to Scripture, and which modern science has placed beyond dispute? Are we not falling into the same error as that into which divines fell half a century ago, when they sternly repelled, as un-

scriptural, the now-received principles of geology? We deny that religion is mystical. We assert that man's moral nature, highly cultivated, develops principles which accord with the revealed word. And it is because the ecclesiastical mind is not, as yet, prepared to descend from its mystical tripod, that it overlooks, what we cannot but regard as, one of the grandest arguments for our common faith; thereby abandoning to Theism that which does not of right belong to it. Theism, we submit, is *not* in accordance with the facts of man's moral nature. CHRISTIANITY IS.

I. As I am anxious to conduct the inquiry in the way that will best combine rational persuasion with conscientious conviction, I will put aside altogether the theology of the schools; and, instead of dealing out dogmatic assertions, you must allow me to make my appeal directly to your own hearts, and to ask you to test by your own experience the truth of what I say. Observe, however, that I do not make this appeal to the speculative reason, but to the conscience, the heart, the moral nature; and to that only if earnest in the practical pursuit of truth. My appeal is to the intuitional faculty by which moral truth is developed; for I hold that the right and wrong

become known to us, not by external teaching—that only stimulates. The origin of our moral convictions is the Spirit of God within us: which is in us as a "well of living water" bubbling up in intuitional elements of truth; or as the vegetable energy in the seed-plant, which, by virtue thereof, thrusts itself up into the light.

Of course I assume, by way of commencement, that all our consciences are guilty—guilty, I mean, in the sense of not having the consciousness of innocence. "If we say that we have no sin," says an apostle, "we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." And this apostolic declaration, natural conscience unequivocally confirms. To pretend the contrary would be moral insanity. The inmate of an asylum who imagines herself a queen, departs not more widely from what all rational people know respecting her, than should we were we to fancy ourselves without sin.

Guilt, then, is our normal condition. All are plunging in the quagmire of a guilty conscience. How to get out of it upon *terra firma*, is the question to be considered. And before unfolding the true method, we will prepare the way by exposing the inefficacy of several false methods. Truth is one; error various. There are many by-paths, leading astray; only one royal road.

1. Some, you are aware, seek peace of conscience at the confessional. They conclude themselves pardoned and accepted of God, because the priest has so pronounced.

I confess that I am at a loss to understand how it is possible for an earnest conscience to be set at rest by words of forgiveness from human lips. A conscience *not* in earnest may be so lulled to sleep; an earnest conscience—*never*.

Nor can we pass the subject of the confessional without remarking, that for the Church to assume to herself the authority to pronounce pardon is something more than an error in theory; it is most demoralizing in practice. All artificial efforts at consolation repress moral development. Nothing is allowable as affording relief to the conscience, however highly it may be sanctioned by mystical Church systems, unless it can do so in a manner strictly accordant with the laws of man's moral nature, and so as to increase the susceptibility of the conscience while soothing its distress.

2. Another mode for quieting troubled consciences is that advocated by Pharisaical moralists

The idea is, that inasmuch as God pardons all who truly repent of their sins and turn from them, we may ourselves properly forget the sins which, as they think, a merciful God ought of right to pardon, and thus obtain repose in forgetfulness.

The objection we entertain to this theory is substantially the same which we have urged against the confessional. It does not relieve the conscience by advancing its progress, but by retarding it. The Christian pilgrim is not encouraged to struggle out on the other side of the Slough of Despond, but he is permitted to retrace his steps and to fall back again into the state from which he is seeking to escape.

The impossibility of acquiring peace of conscience by merely reflecting on our repentance will become at once apparent, if we consider what is implied in repentance.

It is of the very essence of repentance, not only to be sorry for our sins, but to denounce our own conduct in yielding to sin as wholly without excuse, and therefore undeserving of pardon. In vain is it suggested to us that we were strongly tempted, that human nature is weak, and that others have sinned more grievously than we have; true penitence rejects all such suggestions, and would regard their indulgence as aggravating the crime. We loathe ourselves; and the more genuine our repentance, the deeper is our self-abhorrence. In the language of the self-abhorred prodigal, we say—"I am not worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." How utterly impossible is it for a man

in this state of mind to reason himself out of his disquietude by reflecting on the moral value of his penitence! The moment he begins to attach a meritorious value to his penitence, the virtue itself begins to elude his grasp. Has he just said—"I am not worthy to be called thy son"? and does he now say—"My repentance has made me worthy"? What can you infer from this new style of diction but that his repentance is abating, that he no longer thinks so meanly of himself as he before thought,—that, in fact, from being a humble penitent, he is becoming rapidly transformed into a self-righteous Pharisee? What would you have thought of the prodigal in the parable if, just after he had said—"I am not worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants,"—he had, without receiving any assurance of pardon from the lips of his father, taken his seat quietly at the paternal board, and said to himself—"Having repented of my bad conduct, I deserve to be restored, and will, therefore, without more ado, take my seat where I sat before"? Is it not clear that such conduct would be inconsistent with his profession of penitence, and that to pardon ourselves because we have repented is self-contradictory and absurd?

3. I am unable myself to distinguish between

the scheme last considered and another which I shall next mention—namely, that of inferring our acceptance with God from our changed lives—our faith, love, and obedience; as, for example, to argue thus—"I believe, therefore I am justified;" "I love God, therefore I am His child;" "I obey His commands, therefore I am accepted of Him." Self-examination, when condemnatory, is a most valuable exercise; but if exculpatory, it is apt to deceive. Who are the men that think most highly of themselves? Are they the *best* men? Certainly not! The best men judge of themselves by a high standard, they examine themselves microscopically under a strong light, and the consequence is that, being far below their own ideal, they are filled with self-reproach; while inferior men, judging themselves by a low standard, fancy themselves "rich and increased in goods, and to have need of nothing." In every department, men of little minds strut about filled with conceit and self-importance; while great minds are quiet and humble. It is manifest, therefore, that to deduce our Divine sonship from our own moral estimate of ourselves, cannot be safe; since, according to that method, they will draw the most favourable conclusions respecting themselves who have the least ground for doing so.

4. Another mode of quieting troubled consciences is by the efforts of the imagination. When the mind is wrought up to a high pitch of excitement, it is not unusual for the imagination to become so active that objects appear to the mind's eye, and voices fall upon the mind's ear, which have no real existence in the outer world. Many persons have, in this way, had presented to their mental vision pictures of the crucified Saviour, and have heard such sentences as—"Thy sins are forgiven thee;" and they have concluded that these were special communications made to them from the heavenly world.

When these efforts of the imagination are regarded only as aids to faith, their use is legitimate; for the imagination, as well as any other of our mental faculties, may be lawfully employed to exhibit the brilliance of truth. But to regard them as supernatural, and thereupon make them a basis of assurance, is most dangerous. There can be no solid basis for assurance, that has not a real, historical, and permanent existence in the outer world; and inasmuch as dreams, visions, and transitory impressions made upon the mind, have no such real and permanent existence, they cannot be made a safe ground of assured hope.

5. Thus have we disposed of four inadequate

grounds of assurance—the confessional, conscious repentance, conscious regeneration, and mental impressions. To these we add a fifth, which, although among orthodox churches not generally avowed, is wide-spread in practice. It originates in the illusion that the Gospel publishes a universal pardon, irrespective of our moral conduct. God, it is said, in Christ, is so merciful to all men, so indulgent and considerate in His estimate of evil, and so ready to forgive the vilest and worst, that He passes over their iniquities, winks at their enormities, and cannot bear to punish.

I need hardly say that this is language which the earnest conscience can never tolerate. Nor is the page of inspiration less condemnatory. "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the sinner:" but the very oath which relieves Heaven from the imputation of having any pleasure in our death, warningly reiterates, "The soul that sinneth shall die."

Unless we have repented of our sins and forsaken them, and unless we continue still to forsake them and are seeking to live obedient and holy lives, it is beyond all doubt that we have no ground to expect mercy.

6. Then if all the methods fail that we have

mentioned, what say you to this:—If a man live a virtuous and holy life, does there not arise in his mind—he knows not how, or why—a pleasing persuasion that he is accepted of God? Does he not feel conscious that as his character improves he rises in the Divine regards?

That he does rise in the Divine regards we freely admit: but that, irrespective of the work of Christ, he acquires increased confidence before God we emphatically deny. And for this plain reason—a reason already given—that the better any man is in fact, the less has he of any notion of merit. No doubt, as between his present self and his former self, or as between himself and others, he has correct notions of relative virtue; but as between himself and his God, the higher he rises the lower he sinks—as the star highest in the heavens is reflected deepest in the lake's bosom. Nor is this apparent anomaly difficult to understand; for, in proportion as the character improves, the ideal standard rises higher. Nay, more! Not only does the ideal standard rise higher in equal degree with the practical improvement; it rises beyond. So that although, while judging ourselves by a low ideal, we thought well of ourselves; judging ourselves

now by a lofty ideal—more lofty in proportion than before—we necessarily come to a more severe conclusion; we never deemed ourselves so vile.

Let us illustrate this by the example of the artist. When young, he showed the natural bent of his genius by his love for sketching and painting. His friends praised his performances, and he was pleased himself—extravagantly pleased. Many years have now passed over his head, during which he has seen, read, and travelled much, and studied all the best works of the best masters. The paintings of his youth, which then afforded him such delight, are now in his estimation nothing better than paltry daubs. But this is not all. He is now an eminent artist. His productions sell at high prices. All the world praises them. Do they afford to his own mind the same amount of satisfaction which they afford to others? or even the same amount of satisfaction which his early efforts afforded him at the commencement of his career? By no means; nothing he does fully satisfies him. What is the reason of this? Because—as is always the case with improving minds—his critical powers are ever in advance of his powers of execution; his taste is so pure and refined, that nothing short of abso-

lute perfection can yield him unadulterated pleasure.

Thus it is with the advanced Christian; and thus it is that we account for the harsh judgments St. Paul sometimes pronounced against himself. "Unto me," says he, "who am less than the least of all saints, —" Was he really less than the least of all saints? Unquestionably he was not, nor could he himself have pronounced that judgment had he been deciding between himself and others. But judging himself in the presence of God, his eminent piety woke in him so lofty an ideal that no language in which he could speak of himself was too humiliating.

Hence we conclude, that advanced piety will not *of itself* induce a sense of acceptance with God, and that we must therefore seek it in some other source.

II. Having exposed the fallaciousness of six different methods, we will now approach the consideration of the true method: if all those grounds be inadequate, what other basis of confidence have we to offer in lieu of them?

Before answering this question, let me correct a misconception. It is an error to say, that the foundation on which the mind reposes is the

naked act of forgiveness, irrespective of the principles and historic events of which the act is the product. That which furnishes to the conscience its basis of confidence is not the naked judicial act, not the "I am forgiven;" but the moral attributes of Him who forgives, and the whole redeeming scheme out of which forgiveness comes.

If, therefore, we would know what it is that gives to the conscience relief, we must come face to face with the redeeming plan.

But before we bring you into this position, we should like to ascertain what it is that the earnest conscience gropes after, in search of relief. If you will permit our guidance, we will try to elicit from your own consciences what it is they want, in order to quiet their distress.

You feel a sense of guilt, and you present your prayer to Mercy. Now, on what ground is it that you expect Mercy to interpose? Is it on the ground of your merits or of your necessities? It cannot be on the ground of your merits, for we have already shown that it is of the very nature of genuine contrition to disclaim all merit, and that the better we are in fact the more unconscious do we become of having any merit on which to rely. Stripped, then, of every plea of merit, you appeal to Mercy solely on the ground

of your necessities: "God be merciful to me, a sinner!"

Observe that all this while, when you are disclaiming merit and consider your repentance valueless, God does not consider it valueless. He would not pardon your sins without repentance. And here lies a great truth too often forgotten. Scholastic theology writes down the contract on both sides as if it were identical. But the elements of a contract, in which two parties are engaged on opposite sides, are necessarily different in the one mind from what they are in the other. Each looks into the other's mind—the rebel into the mind of his sovereign, the sovereign into the mind of the rebel—and that which each sees in the mind of the other contributes to excite counterworking motives of action. God looks into our minds and sees repentance; thereupon His mercy kindles. We are to look—not into our own minds, to reflect upon our repentance; for any such introvision, like the cold wintry blast, would blight the tender flower—we are to look away from ourselves, exclusively into the mind of God, and see only His mercy.

Then, mark the result! We have said that in the proportion in which a man grows better, he becomes more humble; and we have assigned as

the reason, that his ideal of the good increases beyond his practical attainments. But another consequence flows contemporaneously from the same cause. His loftier ideal of the good brings with it, also, a more vivid apprehension of the Divine goodness—God's mercy and paternal love. So that, although he despairs in the presence of the Divine purity, he, in the presence of the Divine love, ventures to hope.

We are anxious to make it well understood that these two consequences, flowing from the same cause, always accompany each other. They are complementary colours, and will both be either very faint or very vivid. If we have a high conceit of our own virtues, we shall have but a low conception of the Divine mercy. On the other hand, if, through deep penitence and advanced moral purity, we have impressive views of the holiness of God, kindling our fears, we shall have at the same time impressive views of the love of God, bidding our fears be gone; just as the same drops of rain that form the dark cloud, form also the bow that stretches across it in unparalleled beauty.

And now arises the great question—the question between Theism on the one hand, and Christianity on the other. Theists contend that an

enlarged apprehension of the love of God is the only thing requisite to give to the conscience peace; while Christians contend that it is not enough to contemplate the Divine love, unless we can recognize in its exercise a co-operation with righteousness. With which party does the truth lie? Which of these views is correct?—correct, I mean, as a matter of fact and experience. Can the earnest conscience be satisfied with a salvation coming from mercy only, irrespective of whether mercy is or is not exercised in righteousness?

One thing is quite obvious. The love of God would afford us no solace, if it were known *not* to be associated with righteousness. Such a love would be the weakness of an over-indulgent father, and would provoke our contempt rather than engage our confidence. So that were we left wholly ignorant of the means through which mercy had been reconciled with justice, we should be bound to presume that it had been so reconciled, otherwise we should be unable to confide in it.

But the human mind, in its higher religious exercises, is not prone to take up with assumptions. The question, "Why such love to me?" rises to the lips instinctively. We want to know *how* God can love, pardon, and save such rebels.

It is not sufficiently satisfactory to be told that such is His sovereign pleasure, such the plenitude of His mercy; it is not the habit of moral agents to conceive of God—the highest of moral agents—acting without a reason. If He love, He must have a reason for loving. Unless He had a reason in His actions, His acts would have no moral character; but in thinking of the acts of God we cannot conceive of them as without moral character. Whatever God does, must be done righteously. It cannot be otherwise. He cannot act capriciously. It is not enough to say that God wills. To say that God wills to save this man, but refuses to save that man, is to say that which instantly raises a host of objections. You immediately ask, why the preference? why this man saved, and that not saved? When speaking of others it is sufficient to reply—God saves this man because he is a good man, and He does not save that because he is a bad man. But when the question is respecting one's self, how then? I cannot conceive that God loves me because I am good—for the reasons already repeatedly given. I may be good in fact, but the better I am in fact the less confidence I have in my own goodness. In this dilemma, I must turn away from self, and

find elsewhere a reason for God's love to me—a righteous reason.

So thought the devout men of olden times, and they expressed their thoughts in their sacrificial rites. Sacrifice was the language of the devout heart, construing the grounds on which God was felt to be propitious.

Earnest minds anticipate the light before the orb comes, as every Alpine summit is gilded by the morning's beams while, as yet, the valleys are wrapped in gloom: and sacrifice is the prophetic expression of that which the earnest conscience ever longed to have revealed to it—a righteous reason for Heaven's Mercy.

III. Turn we now from the inward sense of want and the contrite mind's intuitional glimmerings of relief, to the outward fact as revealed in the New Testament Scriptures.

What is there in the history of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is adapted to give ease to the penitent conscience? That there is some moral element in the doctrine of the Cross, possessing this adaptation, is proved by the catholic testimony of all true Christians of every age, clime, and degree. What so many concur in testifying,

we are prepared to accept as a demonstrated fact; and the fact thus proved we will best express by quoting the familiar words of a quaint old writer, whose name I need not mention, so universally is his book read: — "Now I saw in my dream that the highway up which Christian was to go was fenced on either side with a wall, and that wall was called Salvation. Up this way, therefore, did burdened Christian run, but not without great difficulty, because of the load on his back. He ran thus till he came at a place somewhat ascending, and upon that place stood a Cross, and a little below, in the bottom, a sepulchre. So I saw in my dream that, just as Christian came up with the Cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders and fell from off his back, and began to tumble, and so continued to do till it came to the mouth of the sepulchre, where it fell in, and I saw it no more. Thereupon was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a merry heart—'He hath given me rest by His sorrow and life by His death.' Then he stood still awhile to look and wonder, for it was very surprising to him that the sight of the Cross should thus ease him of his burden. This done, Christian went on singing—

" ' Thus far did I come, laden with my sin,
Nor could aught ease the grief that I was in
Till I came hither. What a place was this!
Must here be the beginning of my bliss?
Must here the burden fall from off my back?
Must here the strings that bound it to me crack?
Bless'd Cross! Bless'd Sepulchre! Bless'd rather be
The Man that there was put to shame for me.' "

In thus quoting the words of a man whose popularity as a writer on Christian experience exceeds probably that of any other, we adduce in effect a catholic testimony in favour of the fact he records—the power of the Cross to give the conscience peace. That which renders Bunyan's book so popular, is the circumstance that it narrates, in simple, striking language, what its readers have realized in their own experience. The extract I have read is eminently of this description. It utters what thousands have felt. And unless we are prepared to treat the general testimony of mankind with contempt, we have in this way given to us a most significant moral phenomenon. Account for it as you will, the Cross has an aptitude to pour the balm of consolation into distressed consciences.

This it does, not circuitously, not by suggesting a train of argument. There is no intervening

process of logic necessary, nor even permissible. The light that comes into the soul comes direct from the Cross. It does not come in the shape of a new revelation. It is the historic revelation of Christ crucified, beheld with a new spiritual vision. The change is not in the object, but in the gazer. All that we see now might have been seen long ago, but we had no eyes to see it. Our consciences were not in a fit condition for seeing it. Like Saul's companions, we heard the voice, but understood it not. The bridge was there, but we had no wish to cross it. Now that we resolve to be on the other side, is this bridge, we ask, sufficient to carry us over? We try. Having made one step good, we try a second, and then a third—our confidence increasing as we feel the structure firm beneath us. Our trusting consciences tell us, at length, that it is sufficient; and thus the sufficiency of Christ's work is reduced to the test of actual experience. Our consciousness of it is as direct as we have of any other moral truth, and its truth as self-demonstrative. Do I know myself guilty? How? By the direct contact of the conscience with my past memories —giving pain. Do I know that, guilty though I be, I am reconciled to God in Christ? How? By the direct contact of my contrite conscience

with the righteousness of my redeeming Lord—giving peace.

The righteousness of my redeeming Lord! Yes; that is the moral element, in the New Testament revelation, which gives peace to the troubled conscience.

The perfect righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ will not be doubted, nor that He sacrificed His life for the good of mankind. The point that requires to be developed is not the fact of His sacrifice, but the mode in which it operated. We do not say that it operated to *make* God merciful: that would be a very erroneous representation. God is merciful in His own nature; and because that is so, because He loved the world, He sent His only begotten Son into the world to save it. Still, it is in no way inconsistent with this statement, that God blesses the world for the sake of Christ. It was God's love to the ancient world that made Him raise up Abraham; but it is no less true that He blessed it for Abraham's sake. It was God's love to Israel that made Him raise up Moses as their deliverer; yet it is no less true that it was in answer to the intercessory prayers of Moses, and on his account, that God turned away from the fierceness of His anger against Israel when about utterly to destroy them. If

God have given you a pious father, that is a gift of Heaven's love; and yet it is in no way inconsistent therewith to say that, for the sake of that pious father, and in answer to his prayers on your behalf, God has bestowed on you many blessings. In like manner, the love of God gave Christ to the world; and yet, for the sake of Christ, the world is saved.

But how is the world saved in Christ? That the character and life of Christ exerted an extraordinary moral influence upon the world, and that this influence was diffused and intensified by the dramatic power of His death, we admit to have been one step towards the accomplishment of His purpose. But a life and death so influential towards man could not fail to be meritorious in the sight of God. For whom meritorious? Men misread the plain and obvious teachings of the Book of God, when they represent humanity as made up of individual atoms, wholly free from and irresponsible for each other. Humanity forms one vast organized whole. And although, for some purposes, God deals with each atom by itself, He, for other purposes, deals with the whole as a whole—with the world as a world. In this way He dealt with it on the occasion of Adam's sin. It was the sin not of an individual

merely, but of humanity. In this way He deals with the world in providence. Acting in recognition of mankind's corporate responsibility, He scatters blessings and calamities not with specific reference to individual merit or demerit, but guided by those general laws which relate to the world as a whole. So in redemption. Primarily, it is a transaction of the Divine Father—with whom? Not with individual men separately, but with mankind corporately; Christ the Head and King of the race acting as its Representative. In the distribution of the blessings of redemption, laws come into operation affecting the individual, but that is a matter we have not yet reached. We are now considering what Christ did for mankind, and it is most important that this point be intelligently apprehended. They who see nothing in Christ's sacrifice but the renunciation of self and the subjection of His personal will to the will of His Father, and who lose sight of the representative and vicarious character of His work, have no foundation on which to build such an assurance as that of which we have presently to treat. Nor is it easy to discover what better foundation they have who see nothing in the atonement but the satisfaction of penal justice by suffering — no meritorious righteousness. That

the world's sufferings are penal, and that our Lord endured them, and that, in His self-sacrificing efforts to save men, earth's greatest Son thus penally suffered, is, no doubt, a solemnly glorious truth. But Christ did not suffer for our sins in the same sense in which a murderer suffers for his crimes on the scaffold—merely to satisfy penal justice. The criminal's execution is equally a satisfaction to penal justice, in whatever *spirit* He suffers. He may be a true penitent, or he may be so hardened as to evince no compunction at all; he may confess his crime, or he may die with a lie in his mouth; still, his death equally satisfies penal justice. Not thus was it with the death of our Redeemer. All the virtue of His death lay in the self-sacrificing *spirit* in which it was endured. He was the Son of Man, the world's representative Man, and the satisfaction He rendered for the world to God's righteousness was a moral satisfaction. It was that of an oppressed conscience; of a Divine heart crushed beneath sin's burden; of a soul so keenly alive to human guilt that every stripe of the scourging rod, every thorn in that crown of ignominy, every taunt of that blasphemous throng, the prints of the nails, the pierced side, the pangs of the torn limbs, were felt by Him to be, as they were in

fact, so many expressions of God's anger against the world's sin. And as thus the burden lay on Him, it was the moral bearing of His righteous soul, in His self-sacrificing struggle to save others from sin's burden, that gave to our Redeemer's mental and physical sufferings their expiatory power.

Difficult though it be to illustrate so sublime a theme by human analogies, we adduce the following as not one of the least appropriate:—On the occasion of a visit of some distinguished stranger to an eminent manufacturer, a large party had assembled to examine the machinery of the mill, when at full work. Among these was the only daughter of the mill-owner, a young lady of great personal attractions and amiability, aged about seventeen. During their progress through the mill, this young lady's dress had been caught by the machinery, and she would certainly have been dragged into it and crushed to death in a few moments, had it not been for the intrepidity and self-sacrifice of a noble fellow, who rushed upon the danger, tore her away from it, and succeeded in rescuing her, but at the expense of such serious injury to himself that he, within a few days, fell a victim. Six children were thus left without a father's care. But, as

was his duty, the mill-owner took the family under his protection, and while he watched over them with the feelings of a foster father, the young lady herself yielded them a sister's love. Now, mark the points of resemblance between the case I have narrated, and God's love to us in Christ! The mill-owner's care for his sacrificed workman's family was something more than mercy, it was justice. So there is something more than mercy in God's love to us in Christ; it is justice as well as mercy. The family themselves had deserved nothing; nor have we. It was their deceased father who alone had the merit of which they were receiving the fruit. So, there is no human merit except that of Christ. Yet, the family were identified with their father; and it was not a fictitious, but real identity. For the mill-owner to have thrown off the children as being independent of and separable from the father, would have been a cruel outrage. Nor would it be less an outrage on nature, to separate humanity from Christ. There is in humanity a certain moral unity, derived not from conventionalism, but from nature; of which unity Christ is the natural head; and as any child of that dead father might have said to its living protector, "My father bought for me your protec-

tion," so may we say of the redeeming work of our Divine Lord, "He bought us with His blood." And yet, were any of those children to utter such words in other than a humble and thankful spirit, would not the boast be equivalent to a renunciation of that mill-owner's protection? And might not all the obligations he owes to them, or to any one or more of them, be forfeited by individual ingratitude and reckless misconduct? In like manner, it is only while thankfully recognizing our obligations that we can look to God in Christ with confiding trust. It is not that the right originally is conditional. It is absolute. But our misconduct precludes our power to claim it, and by losing this power we negative the relation.

IV. May I not ask those who are labouring under the burden of an oppressed conscience, and who, although hoping in God's mercy, have not yet been able to discover adequate moral grounds to justify God in showing mercy to them—may I not ask whether they do not now *begin* to see a righteous basis for the exercise of Divine mercy in the work of our Lord Jesus Christ? But we must pursue this point a little further.

It is scarcely necessary to remind you that before you can be prepared to enter experi-

mentally into this mystery of morals and of love, you must be thoroughly awakened to a conviction of your guilt and danger, and must feel earnest aspirations after God's favour and image. Such excitement and cultivation of the moral faculties is quite as necessary, in order to our apprehending the work of Christ, as the cultivation of the intellectual faculties is essential to our understanding the higher branches of physical science. Bring a man who has no knowledge of mathematics face to face with the prolix calculations of mathematical astronomy, and his position would be not unlike that of a godless sinner standing face to face with the Cross of Christ. He is like a man with a beautiful landscape before him, but who is blind, and cannot therefore appreciate it; or like one within the compass of the sounds of music, but who is deaf, and whose heart therefore cannot be charmed with their melody.

Let, however, man's nature be aroused to action by repentance and religious inquietude, and immediately a new sense is awakened. And in proportion as repentance becomes more sincere and earnest, this new sense waxes keener. A want is felt, and the disquieted conscience seeks everywhere for something that can satisfy the want. It tries fasting and self-mortification, but that yields no quiet. It tries reading good books

and attending religious ordinances, and asks advice from Christian friends; still in vain. Constant attendance upon the sacrament of the Lord's Supper is resorted to as a probable means of bringing to the conscience relief. All these efforts, however, as yet, fail; and why? Because the conscience has not yet learnt to look through the means to the end—through the symbol to that which it symbolises. These are only the pathway to Calvary. Let us reach the sacred mount, and then—what follows?

I have sought to convey the idea that the faculty of mind by which we apprehend the atonement is the conscience—that the faith which goes forth out of the conscience to take hold of Christ is evoked by Christ's work, and is the intuitive and spontaneous product of the contrite heart—and that, thus apprehended, the righteousness of Christ becomes to us matter of direct personal consciousness. Have we said that, in the agony of the garden and the anguish of the Cross, our Saviour felt the burden of human guilt upon His conscience, as if it had been His own? We now add, as the counterpart of that glorious truth, that having taken to Himself our poverty, He has given us, in exchange, His riches; and that when humbled with Him into the dust of

humiliation, we become capable, by the very constitution of our moral nature, of entering into and becoming conscious of His righteousness. For if, as a consequence of our corporate responsibility, there be, in holy minds, this painful consciousness of others' sins, may there not be, in penitent minds, a corresponding pleasurable consciousness of another's *perfect* righteousness? If there be a ladder by means of which the purest natures can descend to the lowest depths of human guilt so as to become identified with its shame and grief, may not that guilt, when its heavenward tendencies are awakened, climb, by the same road, to the loftiest heights of conscientious peace? If Christ can, by means of this general bond of sympathy and common consciousness of humanity, become conscious of human guilt and suffer and atone for it, what is to prevent us from becoming, in the same way, *conscious* of his perfect righteousness, and being thereby (consciously) justified? Such is the momentous conclusion St. Paul affirms (2 Cor. v. 21) in those pregnant words—"He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." You will observe here a double antithesis. He who had no consciousness of sin

personally, felt it vicariously; we who have no consciousness of meritorious righteousness in ourselves, have it in Christ. The doctrines of atonement and justification become, thus, two sides of one tablet. On the one side, we read the story of Christ's humiliation: on the other, the story of man's exaltation. On the one, that Christ entered into the brotherhood of humanity: on the other, that through the same brotherhood of humanity we become, *not as a legal fiction, but really and truly* one with Christ. On the one side we read that Christ was "made sin for us:" on the other, that "we are made the righteousness of God in Him."

> "Here is firm footing; here is solid rock;
> This can support us; all is sea besides."

All this, however, doubtless proceeds upon the assumption that there is a moral aptitude between the Cross of Christ and the earnest conscience; and such aptitude, we say, does really exist. As light is adapted to the eye, so is the Cross adapted to the contrite spirit. Never was music better fitted to the human ear than is the music of the Cross to the ear of faith. Have the sun's rays and the vernal showers a natural aptitude to cause vegetation to spring up and flourish? So

has the Cross a natural aptitude to cause faith to spring up in the heart that feels the bitterness of conscious guilt. As when the child that has lost itself in the forest calls aloud to its father, and the father, hearing his child's notes of sorrow, calls to him in return; and as there is in these parental notes a natural aptitude to cheer the lost wanderer, to cause him to dash away his tears, and to draw him in the direction of his father's voice; so hope springs up in the heart of the penitent wanderer from God, through the aptitude there exists on the part of the contrite conscience to feel the moral power of the uplifted Cross.

We would emphatically remind you, that the doctrines of the Cross do not induce in us the faith of assurance, by presenting definite premises to the intellect from which we are to draw logical conclusions; but that it is of the nature of moral truth to be self-demonstrative, and so to present itself to the conscience as to evoke intuitive conviction. As in taste so in morals, the sight of that which is deformed and base inflicts pain, and the sight of that which is good and beautiful kindles pleasure, by means which mental science does not enable us to analyse more closely than simply to detect their experienced adaptation. Take an ordinary case. You see a man who has

a wife and family dependent upon him reeling home in a state of beastly intoxication. You immediately exclaim, How disgraceful! Now, the moral judgment you thus pronounce is not the result of any course of reasoning, but the impulsive expression of your shocked moral nature. Take another case. You see a benevolent lady stepping into the wretched abode of disease and penury; you see her quietly and unostentatiously relieving their necessities, and accompanying the relief of their physical wants with words that tell of a greater salvation; you at once exclaim, How beautiful are such charitable actions! How commendable, wise, and good!

Bearing in memory that this is the mode in which all moral truth affects the mind, not by putting into the mind merely that which was before on the written page, but by evoking out of the mind an intuitive response thereto—bearing this, I say, in memory, we will pass on to the exhibition of one or two more complex moral truths, with the view of showing that the judgments they evoke are not unillustrative of the effect produced on the contrite and cultivated conscience by the simple exhibition of the Cross of Christ.

Allow that you are one of an extensive partner-

ship who owe a joint debt, and that there is only one individual of the many hundreds constituting the partnership that has money enough to pay the debt. All the rest are beggars. The creditor wants payment, and as you are one of those who have been actively concerned in contracting the debt, you are sued for it and about to be dragged to prison. At that moment, the wealthy partner steps forward. He was not in any way concerned in contracting the debt, but in consequence of his having voluntarily become one of the firm—as Christ took upon Him our humanity—the debt is laid upon him, *not unjustly*, and he pays it. What is the effect produced upon your mind by this fact? You are no longer in fear of prison; and so far as regards the relation in which you stand to the creditor, your sense of justice is satisfied. Obligations of gratitude are contracted to him who has paid the debt for yourself and others; but the creditor you can look in the face with confidence, and say, "My debt is paid."

Again. You remember the history of Joseph; how his brethren were sent by Jacob their father to Egypt to buy corn, because the famine was sore in the land; that Benjamin was not with them on their first journey, but that, on the second, they were compelled to take Benjamin;

that their wants were supplied and they were dismissed to return home to their father, but that a messenger was sent after them complaining that one of them had stolen Joseph's divining-cup; that the cup was found in Benjamin's sack, and that they were all thereupon carried back prisoners before Joseph. You remember Judah's eloquent appeal:—"Thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, If I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever. Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go up with his brethren." Let us pause at this point of the narrative, and assume that Joseph had accepted Judah's offer. A crime has been charged in which they are *all* implicated —a corporate crime—but Judah takes upon himself the whole punishment, and in consideration thereof the rest are permitted to proceed on their journey. Would they not proceed without fear, feeling that the demands of law and of justice had been fully satisfied?

We do not say that these are cases strictly parallel to the doctrine of salvation through Christ; but we say that they are illustrative instances of moral adaptation; and that as in them the sense of justice was satisfied, so it is

when the contrite conscience comes face to face with the Cross of Christ.

To illustrate our meaning still further, let us suppose that twenty individuals combine together to effect some hazardous and noble enterprise—the scaling, say, of the rampart which alone can give success in the day of battle. Suppose that nineteen out of the twenty are driven back defeated, but that the twentieth stands his ground, advances, puts the enemy to flight single-handed, gains the rampart, rears on it the national standard, and then—although too late to share the merit of the conquest, not too late to reap its fruits—the other nineteen again advance, pursue the routed foe, gather around the uplifted emblem of victory, and unite in the shout of triumph. Mark the co-existence here of an individual defeat and a common success, and tell me whether, though individually defeated, the bravery of their chieftain does not redound to the honour of the whole. Willingly do the nineteen award to their meritorious comrade all the praise; but the battle was a common battle, and the success thereof is a common success; and when they return home to receive their reward, although all eyes are turned to the *great* conqueror, still his companions in arms consciously share his honours. They are

hailed as the conqueror's comrades; and it is enough for them that *he* publicly recognizes them as his comrades; they ask no more. His glory is their glory, his joy theirs.

Now, as in this illustration the nineteen enter into the fruits of their chieftain's labours and into the consciousness of his joy, so do all true Christians share consciously the righteousness and joy of their Lord. And this consciousness, not of their own but of their Lord's righteousness, is ITSELF the assurance of which we speak.

Again: we will avail ourselves, for further illustration, of a few passages from the works of a late eminent clergyman, distinguished for his masterly analysis of man's moral nature.

"Christ," says he, "is the realized idea of our humanity—God's idea of man completed. He is the representative of humanity, the reality and perfection of human nature; and for that reason is called the 'Son of Man.'" But, for the same reason, He must have been also the Son of God, inasmuch as it is impossible for us to conceive of an absolutely perfect moral agent without investing him with Divine attributes. There cannot possibly exist degrees of perfection in morals; everything short of absolute perfection is imperfection. If Christ, therefore, were a perfect man

in the sense of being a perfect moral agent, He must have embodied the Manifestation of the Inconceivable—the Revelation in space and time of the Infinite and Eternal—the Son of God. "God, looking down upon the world tenanted by his own Divine Son incarnate in our humanity, loves human nature with the love He bears to His Son, and, identifying with Christ all who seek to resemble Him, loves them in Him;" "the Saviour of all men" becoming thus, in a special sense, "the Saviour of those that believe." This is Heaven's view of the Mediatorial Work.

Let us next turn to the human view. "There is," continues the same writer, "an almost boundless joy in acquiescing in the life and death of Christ, recognizing it as ours, and representing it to ourselves and God as what we aim at. It is recorded of one of the world's gifted painters that he stood before the masterpiece of the great genius of his age—one which he could never hope to equal nor even rival—and yet the infinite superiority, so far from crushing him, only elevated his feeling, for he saw realized those conceptions which had floated before him, dim and unsubstantial; in every line and touch he felt a spirit immeasurably superior, yet kindred, and is reported to have exclaimed, with dignified

humility, 'And I too am a painter.'" So we, gazing lovingly upon that perfected form of humanity on which God looks well pleased, exclaim, "And I also am one of those whom 'He is not ashamed to call His brethren!'" This is the way in which His righteousness becomes consciously our righteousness. "This is the way in which the heart presents to God the sacrifice of Christ: gazing on that perfect life, we say, 'That is my life as I would wish to give it—that is what I want to be, which I am not—God accepts me, not because of what I am, but because of what Christ is and I strive to be.'" For in this being and striving there is unity; grafted into the living vine, and deriving thence sap and nourishment, the vine and the branch are ONE.

And yet, nothing we have said hitherto comes quite up to what seems essential to satisfy the anxious conscience, struggling after immediate rest in Christ. You ask, in anguish, whether God's offers of mercy are absolute or conditional? We dare not say that they are absolute to the wicked, except in this sense that to the *world in its corporate character* God is in Christ *absolutely* reconciled. But to those who are eschewing evil *this proposition* is all they can wish for, seeing that to *them* it proffers salvation instant and un-

conditional. To such then we say unhesitatingly that if, at this moment, you can, with a clear conscience, grasp the persuasion of God's actual reconciliation to you in Christ, you are authorized to do so. To those who are unable to do this, because their moral culture is not yet up to the mark of evolving a living faith, all we can say is —labour and expect; obey, but beware of substituting obedience for faith; look ever away from self to Christ, until you can read clearly what is *already* written on the Cross—"GOD RECONCILED!"

V. Having traced the operations of the conscience, and thereby discovered that the want it feels can only be satisfied by the apprehension of God's Fatherly love exercised on grounds which recommend themselves to the conscience as righteous grounds; having developed the evangelic scheme, and shown that it reveals exactly what the conscience requires—love founded on justice; and having further, as we trust, made plain the adaptation of the outward fact to the inward want, and demonstrated, by an appeal to the experience of all true Christians, the moral effectiveness of the relation in giving to the conscience peace: it is needful to add, and for this we again make our appeal to the Christian con-

sciousness, that the peace of conscience thus acquired is not a fixed quantity, which on any theory other than that which we are unfolding it necessarily would be, but a state of mind that admits of progression.

Three stages are distinctly marked in Scripture —faith, the assurance of faith, and the full assurance of faith—depending upon the degree of vividness with which our consciences apprehend the righteousness of Christ, and the confidence wherewith we appropriate it. And this, again, depends upon the degree of our moral culture. Advanced piety, as we have already more than once said, exalts our conceptions of the character of God; we see Him higher above us. It gives us also, on comparison, lower conceptions of ourselves; we become more keenly alive to our errors and imperfections. Having thus at once higher views of God and lower views of ourselves, the necessity for the Saviour's work becomes more manifest: and with this there comes, as a never failing accompaniment, the power more fully to apprehend and more confidently to appropriate that righteousness, without which advanced piety would make us only more miserable, but by means of which an elevation is attained otherwise impossible, and the conscience, standing in the un-

sullied splendour of the Divine Presence, is not only without fear but confidently bold.

The height to which this distinguishing feature of Christian morals may be carried, it is beyond our power to portray. Examples alone could do it effectually. There have been those who, amid the busy occupations of life, have walked so closely with God that earth has become to them a suburb of heaven, a regained paradise. Terrestrial objects, viewed through a glowing spiritual-mindedness, have lost their grossness; and earth has become to them so like heaven that, in the transition from one happy abode to the other, "their souls the change could scarcely know." But especially has this representation been realized in hours of physical weakness, when the dying Christian, bidding farewell to his relations with earth as matters with which he has no longer any concern, plumes his wings for his approaching flight. Then, how "precious" Christ becomes to him! With what tenacity he holds by the Cross! How vividly does he realize Christ's righteousness AS HIS OWN! And not to say peace merely, but with what joy it inspires him! Transporting joy! A joy allied to the raptures of heaven!

Observe I am not stating these as simply

theoretical results which ought to follow, but as practical truths that have a frequent actual existence as moral facts which no genuine philosopher will venture to despise. He may seek to disparage their worth by attributing them to fanaticism: and, if the lofty state of moral feeling we have spoken of were not accompanied by a corresponding intensification of moral principle and a fuller development of virtuous conduct, we should admit it to be fanaticism and nothing more. But we are content to throw aside all examples as valueless which have not been associated with *illustrious virtue.*

Nor is heaven to be, in this respect, conceived of as different from earth. Those who conceive of heaven as a personal reward for the good deeds of earth, and as a place where finite human beings are advanced to a state of absolute moral perfection in which they will have no need of Christ and His perfect righteousness, are as far removed from the Scriptural descriptions of the heavenly world as they are from the results to which our theoretical inferences would lead us. Heaven is but an advanced condition of humanity, in which the moral unity of the race is still maintained, as is proved by the phrases—"the *kingdom* of heaven," "the *kingdom* of God;" differing from earth

in this only, that the persistently rebellious members of the race are dissevered, but alike in the circumstance that the redeemed there are, as here, an organized brotherhood with an undying Head.

Ere we close this appeal, let a few words be permitted with reference to that most important fact in the Christ-history, His resurrection from the dead. This event is generally spoken of as a miracle, and a miracle it would have been if Christ had been an ordinary man. But it is a misuse of words to call all unique events miracles. As well might you call the appearance of every untracked comet a miracle. Those events alone can be properly pronounced miracles, which violate theoretical consistency; but, in the case of our Redeemer, theoretical consistency *demanded* His resurrection. The resurrection of Jesus from the dead was, as St. Paul argues, a necessary sequence of a life like His; inasmuch as no moral agent who is absolutely perfect is subject to death. Having stooped to be temporarily subject to it, as one of the human brotherhood, in order that by His perfect "obedience unto death" He might become the world's Redeemer, that life-long act of obedience was no sooner accomplished—no

sooner had He "died for *our* sins," been "delivered for *our* offences"—than His original dominion over death was resumed, so that He could no longer "be holden of it." Hence Christ's resurrection gave to His death its vicarious significance, and was in itself an evidence of His redeeming power—so much so that upon its truth and reality the whole Christian system is made to depend: "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain." In accordance with the same view, the apostle says—"He was raised again *for our justification:*" by which we understand him to mean, that the righteousness presented to our minds for conscious appropriation, is not something of the past merely, but it is that of a life yet and ever living; begun on earth, continued in heaven, but still the life of a Brother Man, in whose intercessions we are interested, with whose merits we are identified, *in the present* as well as in the past, so that His offering ever continues NEW.

CONCLUSION.

We will now review what we have written in the preceding pages, and, recalling the positions there sought to be established, will place them in consecutive order, so as to give continuity to the argument.

Our object has been, as we announced in the Introduction, to repel the charge, commonly brought against Evangelical Christianity by its enemies, and too often admitted or given occasion for by its friends, of being artificial and mystical; and to prove that, instead thereof, it is, rightly understood, an essential part of a perfect moral theory, and operates in strict accordance with natural law and order.

To support this conclusion, we have laid down and sought to make good the three following principles:—

I. That obedience and the moral culture consequent thereon elevate our intuitive standard of right and duty, and increase thereby our conscientious disquiet.

II. That peace of conscience is essential to moral harmony and progress.

III. That the peace which personal obedience denies, the righteousness of Christ gives; not artificially, but naturally—as the result of humanity's moral unity.

1. There can be no conscientious quiet without the consciousness of right. Without the consciousness of right we cannot stand before God in a state of moral repose, we cannot claim His friendship, we cannot think of ourselves otherwise than under His displeasure. It is not enough that we believe in God as the loving Father of all, seeking to win men to His favour by the exercise of a boundless compassion, and stooping to welcome every wanderer on his repentance and return. That God is merciful, is one thing; that we personally are objects of His mercy, is another: and we have no faculty by which to appropriate His mercy, nor do any premises present themselves by reasoning from which we can satisfactorily make such appropriation. The conscience

deals only with right and wrong, and if there have been the previous conviction of wrong, nothing but the substituted consciousness of right can dislodge such conviction. And yet obedience, by giving culture and refinement to the conscience, so far from inducing, takes away the consciousness of personal rectitude.

Such is a brief synopsis of the argument we have pursued in Part III. It consists chiefly of an appeal to the cultured conscience, and of an analysis of its processes in the pursuit of moral satisfaction. This, indeed, is the only kind of proof applicable.

Should any deem the evidence insufficient, and demand logical demonstration where the subject admits only of accurate observation, we would simply ask them what sort of proof they would require, if the question for discussion were, whether St. Paul's cathedral does really raise its lofty dome in the heart of London? As in that case the faculty of perception would supply the only practicable proof, so in this we are dependent wholly upon the evidence to be supplied by consciousness; and we have consequently framed Part III. by way of argumentative appeal, relying on the moral facts to be evolved by the cultured conscience's intuitive response to such

appeal as the best possible evidence and as conclusive proof.

II. If the result thereof be to establish our first principle, which we believe it does irrefragably, it next behoves us to show that the absence of a medium of conscientious quiet indicates theoretical imperfection, and that its presence is essential to moral harmony and progress.

1. It is a truth forced upon our belief, that the world is under a paternal and merciful government as well as a government of righteousness; and if it had been so constituted that we could not, despite our repentance and obedience, have attained to conscientious quiet, there would have been a manifest incompleteness; since, then, we should have been under a governmental system which recognized repentant obedience as the essential attribute of a good subject, over whom the mantle of its favour was thrown, and which yet withheld the power of reciprocal confidence and gratitude: the father would have received the returned prodigal back to his heart and home, but the son not knowing that he was received could have reciprocated no filial love.

2. If our practice of virtue increase our conscientious disquiet, which is the conclusion to

which the discussion has perforce driven us, the chief motive to obedience is wanting. But such a state of things, as obedience discouraging its own exercise, would be so incongruous, that the peace which simple obedience cannot give, must, we opine, be otherwise attainable. What the law cannot do, the Christ must do (Rom. viii. 3, 4).

3. The effect which conscious amity with God has in inspiring a lofty virtue, is the true foundation of Christianity's superior morals. History, therefore, and experience demonstrate that humanity demands conscientious quiet in order to its full moral development.

III. Mark! we readily allow that the existence of a moral necessity does not prove the phenomenal fact. Because the wants and union of humanity, stimulating the devout imagination, might originate typical animal sacrifices and the myth of one perfect man redeeming a city, or a nation, or a world, we should not for that reason alone be justified in affirming that such an event as the Christ-history has actually occurred. It would only prove that the occurrence thereof was probable. Thus far the moral want comes in aid of the historic record, but no farther. For proof

of the actual facts, we rely on written and traditional history, and have no wish to evade the severest critical ordeal. Still, however, having that history before us, our minds instinctively turn to it to inquire whether it fulfils our mythic conception; and we venture to affirm that the Scriptural record is in such thorough harmony with our moral requirements, that to descend from its contemplation to modern attempts at the reconstruction of the life of Jesus, is very much akin to the transfer of one's thoughts from the glowing and life-like pages of a Homer or a Shakspeare to some feeble romance. Our ideal is that of a morally perfect and therefore God-man—for none can be conceived of as *perfect* who is merely human—laying, by His meritorious righteousness, a foundation for humanity's conscientious repose. But while confidently averring that anything short of this would be unsatisfactory and inadequate, we should be justly deemed presumptuous did we not add that, in the blending of an intense human sympathy with a Divine abhorrence of sin, and the consequent creation of an ineffable agony of spirit ever present in the historic Christ, as the source and essence of His sacrifice, the history far transcends the loftiest idealism, and demonstrates itself to be the emana-

tion of an idea which the most advanced of humanity have yet but dimly discerned.

We have said that, for the purpose of the present discussion, we assume the historic truth of the New Testament as ordinarily understood. It may however be objected, that the admission of a history which embraces miracles is contradictory to our main position—that Christianity is a natural system of religion. But is any such contradiction necessarily involved? In answering this question, we must distinguish between the miracles, inaccurately so called, which enter into the essence of Christianity, and those which were merely its unessential adjuncts. With regard to the first, our anticipatory myth could not possibly have been a drama of ordinary events, since any such would have been obviously insufficient to supply the felt want: it must have been the vision of an event quite unique; and in this respect there is an entire agreement between the anticipation and the phenomenal fact; for that the actual Christ-history is unique, is undeniable. But unique events are not, in any proper sense, miraculous or supernatural. The word "supernatural" implies antagonism to some law induced from a collection of recurring events; but when events are unique, they are a law unto themselves, and to pronounce

Christianity supernatural because it is unique would therefore be clearly erroneous. Unique events are natural: Christianity is natural—in consummate harmony with nature's laws.

Referring next to those miracles which were not of the essence of the Christ-history but merely its adventitious adjuncts, it may be doubtful whether we are to look upon them as having had any other effect than that of awakening public attention to the words of the Divine Teacher and to the moral evidences by which His doctrines were made self-demonstrative. Regarding them in this light, their history does not at all enter into our course of thought. Christianity in its essence is as separate from and independent of the miraculous accompaniments by means whereof the world's attention was first called to its claims, as the flourish of trumpets which precedes the approach of royalty on some great public occasion is separate and distinguishable from the moral majesty of law.

The chief part of the duty we have undertaken to discharge does not begin until, the historic truth of the Saviour's life and death being admitted, we are called upon to inquire into their significance. Accordingly this question has, in the preceding pages, occupied by far the largest

share of our attention. Three points were necessary to be established:—

1. That the constitution of the human brotherhood and its corporate relation to God are, hypothetically, such as admit of the righteousness of one man becoming mankind's heritage.

2. That the recorded history of the life and death of Jesus Christ is that of a human righteousness absolutely perfect, and adapted therefore to propitiate God on behalf of man.

3. That the moral want before shown to exist —the want of a righteousness adequate and adapted to yield to the obedient conscience its longed-for quiet—is, according to this scheme, rationally supplied.

No recapitulation of the argument upon these three points is practicable, since it is made up of minute details, the omission of any one of which would destroy its force. And it is this circumstance that awakens our anxiety for its fate. Arguments addressed to the popular mind require, for their appreciation, that they stand on broad grounds: but whatever may be the merits of the argument designed to demonstrate mankind's moral unity, we cannot flatter ourselves that it possesses the popular attribute. It has confessedly a narrow basis, and will require the close atten-

tion of practised thinkers in order to its power being felt. Men think controversially as they fight in war, in organized masses: hence we despair of gaining access to the public mind, unless we are fortunate enough to engage the attention of the leaders of religious thought, and unless those reviews and periodicals, which are wont to subject such topics to critical examination, feel sufficient interest in the question to examine it thoroughly.

Should it be objected, that the principle of mankind's moral unity is merely another mode of stating the theological views contended for, and has been invented to give them a seeming and artificial consistency, we beg by anticipation to observe in reply that, reviewing the mode in which in Part II. this topic has been treated, any such imputation would be unfair. We have scrupulously eschewed therein all those arguments which arise out of the operations of the Christian consciousness, reserving them for Part III. Innumerable living witnesses could testify to the fact, that to become personally conscious of Christ's righteousness is as certainly within the range of our mental and moral powers as are our ordinary instincts and emotions. But all these testimonies we have purposely excluded, that we

might not expose ourselves to the charge of reasoning in a circle. The facts we have made use of are derived from a totally different source; and the hypothesis built upon them cannot, we venture to think, be impugned. Let those who think otherwise construct, if they can, a better hypothesis—one arising as naturally out of the facts!

But if the hypothesis, thus framed out of non-theological materials, be found impregnable, the theological views we have deduced from it are too plain to admit of doubt.

Timid persons may be found who alarm themselves and others by drawing less satisfactory inferences. Some will think that, by asserting the corporate unity of humanity, we lower the dignity of the individual. It would be very easy to show that the reverse of this follows. You cannot lower man's dignity more than by reducing him to a solitaire. What is it that places some men on a pedestal so much higher than others? Is it not their power to govern or influence the masses? And are not individuals great, in proportion to the extent in which they assimilate other minds to their own, and become in themselves the combination and representation of the many? Even the meanest becomes mighty when regarded as an organic portion, however minute, of a mighty unit.

Other objections admit of being as easily replied to; but if the principle be established that humanity is one corporate whole we must accept with it all its consequences, whether agreeable or not. To reject a demonstrated theorem because we dislike its consequences, would be to allow prejudice to usurp the place of reason; and into an error so egregious, we cannot suppose our readers are likely to fall.

Adopting, then, as proved the truth of the propositions we began by propounding, the conclusion to which they finally conduct us is—that inasmuch as conscientious quiet is a moral necessity, and personal obedience, apart from the righteousness of Christ, cannot yield it to us, His manhood and history were essential to the world's moral harmony, and constitute not only the greatest of historical facts, but also the grandest scientific development of moral truth: consequently, that, as the title of this volume imports, common sense, science and revelation are in indissoluble accord.

While, however, we thus strenuously contend for the naturalness of Christianity, in the sense that it is in perfect harmony with moral law and order, and admits consequently of philosophic

treatment, we trust that none of our readers will be misled, by the similarity of terms, to suspect our views to have any, even the slightest, taint of "naturalism." Naturalism is a name given to those systems which exclude all Divine operation, and attempt to explain the phenomena of the universe by a blind force acting necessarily. We should regret if anything we had written could most distantly suggest so absurd a notion. As the reins that guide the steeds in the chariot imply a hand that grasps and moves them, so the laws of nature imply an ever-controlling Divine hand: and what is true in the external world is equally true in the world of morals and mind. Our moral intuitions, as we have already said, are the bubblings up within us of that living fountain which the Saviour spake of as the result of the Holy Spirit's indwelling: they are the ascending sparks from that inward flame which we are bidden "not to quench"—the celestial fire essential to moral life. In this way there is a constant ingress of the Divine into the human: not mystical or occult, but natural. There are but two natural avenues through which the soul can escape beyond its prison walls: the one is external perception which, having reference only to the material world, is out of our present province:

the other is the mind's consciousness of its own modifications. Now our moral intuitions are modifications of mind of which it becomes cognizant through its self-consciousness; and we have but therefore to allow that these modifications originate in the Holy Spirit's influence, and thus a natural communication is opened out between the human spirit and the Divine. Nor is this all. As our inward perception of our own personal moral condition is within the range of consciousness, so also, according to the argument in Part II. is our sympathetic appropriation of humanity's righteousness in Christ. By this means are opened naturally and in strict accord with psychological law two other doors of intercourse: one with the Divine Son as the Reconciler, the other with the Divine Father as reconciled; the first through the medium of our conscious moral identity with Christ, by virtue of our common human brotherhood; the second through the medium of the conscience, thus consciously righteous, standing before a righteous God in conscientious repose. Who will dare to impute naturalism to a scheme which, contemplating a Triune God, indicates thus three appropriate methods of mental communion with Him?

We will go even farther, and venture to claim

for our scheme an advance beyond modern evangelicalism in a direction quite opposite to naturalism. The few following sentences, borrowed from a page of one of the most distinguished organs of modern evangelicalism, afford unsatisfactory evidence of its frigidity, and of the need of something being introduced that will restore to it more of its ancient warmth:—"No man holding the evangelical creed believes in a transfer of merits. The merits of our Lord are, and from the nature of the case must be, simply His. We receive benefits from His merits, the merits themselves cannot be ours, *though in our impassioned moments we may speak, as the Apostle Paul does, of being clothed in His righteousness, and of having it as our own.* In its effect, it is all to us that it would be if it were our own, and that is enough." This last position, however, we take leave to doubt. "Benefits" possessed in a form that open no psychological avenue between the mind and God, such as is the case with a pardon *in foro Divino*, excite no corresponding emotion, kindle no enthusiasm: and the modern evangelicalism portrayed in our quotation can therefore never accomplish the same glowing results as did the more philosophical, and for that reason the more ardent and popular, theo-

logy of St. Paul. His was not, as is erroneously suggested, the exaggerated language of excited feeling, but the well-selected diction in which the mind seeks to express itself, when it apprehends the truth clearly and grasps it firmly. Paul's passion was displayed, not in his speech, but in his action: his was the enthusiasm of untiring effort, but it had a natural connection with a certain permanent condition of his religious feelings which nothing, as we believe, could have produced or sustained except his ever-abiding consciousness of Christ's righteousness as *humanity's own*.

To illustrate how possible it is for the philosophical in mode to be combined with the Divine in origin—nay! in ordinary cases how necessary is such combination—let us notice the mental under-current in the conversion of the great apostle. In it, as in every conversion, there were three clearly distinguished stages of progress. First, there was the moral culture, ending in deep conscientious disquietude. Paul was not an immoral man: as concerning the righteousness of the law, he was blameless. Although a persecutor, he persecuted under the pressure of an unenlightened zeal for God. His true character was that of an earnest seeker after truth,

that of a man who wished to do and to be right, but had not yet found out the road. The sense of guilt is a modification of mind naturally consequent upon such preliminaries: it is the intuitional outflow of a cultured conscience, originating in Divine influence and revealed in self-consciousness: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me?" being its outward expression. Thus the first stage in the process has altogether an internal origin. If anything external operate to aid the internal movement, it operates only by way of stimulus; for it is by way of stimulus only, by way of appeal and response, by asserted truth and its echo, that our moral intuitions can be aroused. But next, as to the second stage. If the first be wholly internal, the second commences in the external. It is the conception of an external fact—Christ's person, character, and work. The effect produced upon the mind by this external fact depends upon the mind's previous moral condition. If its moral condition be unsuitable, the knowledge of the external fact will merely lodge it in the memory as a fact of history; but if the moral condition be suitable, the modification of mind consequent upon the intellectual concept will be that which the apostle describes by the words—"revealed

His Son in me." The act is of God, as is the rolling of the spheres, but the mode of action is uniform and philosophic. Given a heart consciously devoid of all righteousness of its own, weary and seeking rest, and, for another *datum*, the conception of Christ's righteousness as that of corporate humanity and consequently as mine; and out of these two will arise the mental modification—we speak advisedly, the *mental modification*—which the apostle describes in such words as, "made the righteousness of God in Him," "found in Him, not having mine own righteousness but the righteousness which is of God." The third stage is that modification of mind known as a peaceful or justified conscience, originating in the agreement that subsists between the mind's ideal of the Divine character and its own moral consciousness, *i. e.* our consciousness, not of what we are in ourselves, but of what "Christ is to us—righteousness." Thus, in each of these three stages, the mind's modification occurs as the result of adequate causes, as rationally traceable as in any other psychological problem; and yet in every case the operation being moral is necessarily, in the highest sense, Divine.

Nor are the views we are now putting forth

important only by way of precaution against speculative error; they have great practical value. Because salvation in Christ is a Divine gift, it is a fitting subject to become the burden of our prayers, a fitting theme for our songs of praise. But how are we to pray, with what hopes? Are we to remain unsatisfied until we receive a *mystic* answer? To inculcate the waiting for answers conveyed otherwise than through the ordinary psychological avenues, has had, we believe, a most discouraging effect upon thousands. The right doctrine is that the very offering of the prayer, if sincere and earnest, is a pledge of its answer; and that, as the joyful song is as oft the expression of the mournful spirit seeking joy as it is of the joy already come, so to thank God for the righteousness of our Divine Saviour, prevalent for the world and from which no sinner is excluded, is one of the most effectual means of advancing the culture essential to its joyful appropriation. All persons who have watched thoughtfully the progress of any of those religious movements, denominated "revivals," will have observed the tendency there is on such occasions to encourage grateful songs to Heaven for Christ's work as an external fact, in order thereby to induce a state of mind favourable to

its personal appropriation; and this being a practice taught by experience, we call it in aid of our theoretical conclusions. True, conclusions cannot be drawn from excepted cases, but we doubt whether the phenomena of revivals are excepted cases. Are they not rather the outbreak of the pent-up Christian mind, embanked by its mystic theology? In this way only can we account for the relapse that usually follows. Bursting its fetters, the Church becomes rampant in its joyous freedom, until sinking, like the excited patient, into a temporary lethargy, the opportunity is seized to apply again the mystic bonds. A theology in accordance with the mind's natural operations, and which deduced its doctrines not from misunderstood texts of Scripture, but from moral facts, would, we cannot but think, operate to induce a much more spiritual and more joyous tone of Christian feeling, and, as a consequence thereof, a healthy and enlightened enthusiasm, removed equally from stupid monotony and fanatical excess.

We have but to advance one step further, and we shall have done. The world's moral history has been, beyond all doubt, a progressive history: whatever the cause, the effect is certain. The patriarchal, the Judaical and

the Christian dispensations mark three stages of progress. We will not quarrel with the assertion that they were three successive revelations of the Divine Mind increasing, by sovereign choice, in brightness and plenitude: but it is more in accordance with our line of thought to represent them as results of the world's moral culture, revealing itself in progressive development. In this view, the late appearance of Christianity in the world presents no difficulty—Christ did not come until the world was prepared for Him. Nor does another difficulty present itself, which seems to us fatal to any other explanation—that with the same written system of truth, the mind attains a loftier moral ideal in proportion to its moral growth. Sublime is the vista through which we look, in the contemplation of the future. That form of Christian truth is evidently most in accordance with the theory of progress which, by elevating man into conscious union with God, adds a new stimulus to moral development, and creates, at every step of moral progress, a still higher ideal of duty; the goal retreating, as the race is run. In the dogma of a moral standard projecting itself ever higher and higher, there lies the germ of a *morale* befitting that immortality for which man is destined; pointing to the even-

tual fading away of earth amid the dawning glories of heaven; and, in heaven itself, pointing yet onward to a heaven of heavens. For as in science, so in morals: our end in life is not the mere knowing, or possessing, but that cultivation of the faculties which impels to higher pursuit. Hence every aspect of religion is self-proved to be unfitted for human beings, and therefore untrue, which, in arrogating to itself the attribute of rigid unchangeableness, makes no provision for an elastic *morale* ever and ever ascending with our advancing growth; in accord with the aspiration to which devout hymns give utterance in many varied forms, but which none express more aptly and ardently than the simple suggestive words—looking into the depths of the Infinite—

"*Nearer*, my God, to Thee!
NEARER to Thee!"

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