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RE-ADJUSTMENT

OF

CHRISTIANITY.

BY ALBERT BARNES.

FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY REVIEW, JULY, 1862.

PRESBYTERIAN HOUSE,
1334 CHESTNUT STREET.

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READJUSTMENT OF CHRISTIANITY.

1. *Recent Inquiries in Theology*, by eminent English Clergymen; being "Essays and Reviews." Third American, from the second London edition. With an Appendix. Edited, with an Introduction, by Rev. FREDERICK H. HEDGE, D. D. Boston: Walker, Wise & Co. 1861.

2. *Tracts for Priests and People*. By various writers. Boston: Walker, Wise & Co. 1862.

3. *Aids to Faith*; a series of Theological Essays. By several writers. Being a Reply to "Essays and Reviews." Edited by WILLIAM THOMPSON, D. D., Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1862.

4. *Replies to "Essays and Reviews."* By the Rev. C. E. M. Goulburn, D. D., Rev. H. J. Rose, B. D., Rev. C. A. Heurtley, D. D., Rev. W. J. Irons, D. D., Rev. G. Rorison, M. A., Rev. A. W. Haddan, B. D., Rev. Chr. Wordsworth, D. D. With a Preface by the Lord Bishop of Oxford, &c. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1862.

5. *Bunsen's Biblical Researches*.

6. *The Westminster Review*.

THERE has never been a period in the world when the men who, by talent, learning or position, have it in their power to form public opinion on great questions of morals and religion, had a more important work to perform than now. The old

opinions which have so long influenced mankind are to be adjusted to this age. Opinions and doctrines are of importance, not merely as they are in themselves, but as they are adjusted to an existing order of things; as they displace old customs, opinions, and laws, and introduce new ones; as they convulse an age by violence, or influence it in a gentle manner; as they retard the movements of society, or help it on in its developments. Opinions and doctrines are not lifeless things. Creeds in religion and philosophy, however abstract they may be, are not like well-arranged specimens, duly labelled, in a cabinet of minerals; or like stuffed birds and animals; or like fossil geological specimens in an Academy of Natural Sciences. They are like the sunlight and the dew; the wind, and the storm; the vital forces moving through nature, and forming the living specimens of mosses and ferns, of animalculæ and worms, of trees and fishes, of birds and men of any single generation.

In every new age there is some modification to be made of old opinions and doctrines on all subjects. New facts are discovered; new thoughts are stricken out by some mind of uncommon power; old opinions and doctrines are seen to be erroneous, in whole or in part, and are to be modified so as to be brought into conformity to truth, or to be suffered to pass away altogether. The world drops them in its progress, or reconstructs and readjusts them. There are few doctrines in the world now which are precisely like the opinions held by the sages of Greece; there are few which are precisely like those of the Hebrew prophets; there are few which could be expressed accurately in the formulas which would have been used by the schoolmen in the middle ages, or which were used by the leaders in the Protestant Reformation. The old books of geography, of philosophy, of medicine, of anatomy, of astronomy, of chemistry, have passed away, and are referred to only as marking historic periods, not as accurate statements of science; the present age, in its progress, an ever-flowing stream, is leaving multitudes of treatises in mental philosophy, and even in theology, where the works of Galen and Hippocrates are in respect to medicine; of Strabo and Mela in respect to geography; of Ptolemy in respect to astronomy.

The readjustment of opinions and doctrines may be accomplished silently, or it may be by violence. Most of the changes in nature are so silent as to be unobserved at the time, caused by the sunlight, by gentle seasons, by the dew, and by the mild falling rain; but deluges, earthquakes and storms are employed, also, in the adjustments of nature, and in the revolutions of things. Most of the changes in the old geological periods of the earth were made by violent convulsions; not a few such occur even amidst the movements of a more advanced and settled order of things.

In most changes, whether violent or mild, there is a *shock*, greater or less, to the existing order of things. A machine may be made to move with almost no jar or perceptible friction, but a change, introducing a new principle, can be introduced only by a readjustment, and not always without peril to the existing arrangements. In religion great changes may be introduced by the quiet development of thought; in morals, by carefully adjusting new principles to the old system; in politics, by a change quite in accordance with constitutional principles, as changes in the world of nature are made by sunlight and dew; but changes on each of these subjects *may* be made by violent agitation of the public mind, as in the "Reformation" in religion, or by revolutions in politics, as changes are made in nature by earthquakes and storms. But even when most quietly made—when most entirely in accordance with settled laws and constitutional principles, they do not often occur without a shock, more or less severe, to the very constitution of things themselves. A few amendments to the Constitution of the United States have been made in a way entirely constitutional, and with no perceptible shock; not many more could be made now, even for the purpose of adjusting it to the existing state of things in our country, without peril to the Constitution itself, and to all the great interests which it was framed to protect. As if the framers of the Constitution foresaw that changes in future times must be made; as if they foresaw that they would be made by the violence of revolution if provision was not made for a peaceful adjustment of our institutions to

what might be the state of things in future years; as if they hoped that, by quiet and constitutional changes made from time to time, all such peril of revolution might be avoided, they incorporated into the instrument itself an arrangement for such a peaceful change, and up to a recent period our land has been a land of peace, while it has been eminently a land of development and progress, under these constitutional arrangements. Whether such changes could now be made, however, as are demanded in the progress of things after the lapse of the greater part of a century in the most remarkable period of the world for progress, without convulsion, revolution, and ruin to the existing order of things, is THE great question which is to be settled at the present time.

No provisions for amendments and readjustment, applicable to all cases it would seem, could be made in the operations of nature; none, it would seem, could be introduced into the church, into Christianity. Nature could not be made to work so quietly and calmly that storms and tempests, earthquakes and wars, could be dispensed with; and the Church could not be so framed that the great changes which might be demanded to adjust it to an existing state of things in future times could be accomplished without such convulsions as occurred in the transition from Judaism to Christianity—from Paganism, in the Roman Empire, to the establishment of the Gospel—from the dominion of the Papacy, in later times, to the prevalence of the doctrines of the Protestant Reformation.

The men who are the authors of the first work whose title we have placed at the head of this article—a work published in England, under the very general title of "Essays and Reviews," and in our country, under the title of "Recent Inquiries in Theology,"—have addressed themselves, each one in his own sphere, without a previous understanding of the designs of the others, to the work of readjusting Christianity, and of adapting it to the wants of this age. Their work is of the more importance, as it is the production of seven independent minds, without having associated together avowedly for the purpose; and since it happens that, when the results of their sepa-

rate and independent thinking are brought together, they seem to form parts of one plan. The seven writers aim at one end; they pursue one mode of investigation; they see the same things to be accomplished; they have the same views of what is to be done, and they would reach the same result. The system which they would substitute in the place of that which has been received in the Church, and to which, as members of the Established Church of England, they have all expressed their assent, would be a system in itself, quite distinct from the existing system, and as homogeneous as if it had been the production of one mind. The volume, therefore, has this incidental importance, that it indicates an undercurrent of thought and feeling extensively pervading the public mind in the Established Church in England, if not in the religious mind of England generally, of which this book, or this collection of independent Essays, is the exponent. There might be, from anything in the book itself, but slight cause of alarm, and it might have but a slight claim to public attention, if it were the production of one mind; its principal claim to attention is the fact that it is an indication of a wide-spread state of feeling and mode of reasoning which has found a simultaneous expression in this form.

The authors of the Essays are seven in number, all English "Churchmen," and most of them occupying conspicuous stations. Two of them are Professors in the University of Oxford; one is a Professor in St. David's College, in Wales; one is a successor of the late Dr. Arnold, in the headship of Rugby School. The names of two others, Messrs. Jowett and Rowland Williams, are known to not a few American readers in connection with a volume of "Theological Essays," edited, four years since, by Professor Noyes, of Cambridge University. One, the author of the first Essay in the book, the Rev. Frederick Temple, D. D., occupies the important position of Chaplain in Ordinary to the Queen, as well as being Head Master of Rugby School. And another, Baden Powell, Professor of Geometry in the University of Oxford, who has died since the "Essays" were first published, had secured a wide reputation,

both as a man of science and of sacred learning. It is claimed of these men, in the edition of the work republished in this country, that these Essays "represent a new era in Anglican Theology. The topics here discussed are handled with a frankness, a breadth, and a spiritual heroism long unknown to ecclesiastical England. The sincerity which speaks in them recalls the better days of a church which, in Catholic ages, and as a branch of Catholic Christendom, could boast such names as John Scotus, Anselm, Duns, Alexander of Hales, and Roger Bacon, and which numbers a More and a Cudworth among her Protestant divines."*

The spirit and tendency of the Essays, and the importance to be attached to the labors of the "Essayists," in the estimation of the American editor, are expressed in the following language, in commending the work to the patronage and attention of the Christian public in this country:

"The life of Anglican theology is now represented by such men as Powell and Williams and Maurice and Jowett and Stanley. Its strain and promise are apparent in these Essays.

"The term 'Broad Church' has been used to designate the new phase of ecclesiastical life, whose characteristics are breadth and freedom of view, an earnest spirit of inquiry and resolute criticism, joined to a reverent regard for ecclesiastical tradition and the common faith of mankind. The spirit of this theology is at once progressive and conservative; careful of all essential sanctities, careful also of the rights of the mind, of the interests of science and the 'liberty of prophesying;' carefully adjusting old views with new discoveries, transient forms with everlasting verities; regarding symbols and 'Articles' as servants of thought, not as laws of thought; as imperfect attempts to articulate truth, not as the measure and gauge of truth.

"Rationalistic it is, inasmuch as it is Protestant; for of Rationalism, the only alternative is Rationalism. Yet assuming in Christianity itself the perfection of reason, and believing that the truest insight in spiritual things is where the human intellect, freely inquiring, encounters the Holy Ghost, and that such encounter is afforded by the Gospel, it goes about to analyze and interpret, not to gainsay or destroy; reverently listening, if here and there it may catch some accents of the Eternal Voice amid the confused dialects of Scripture, yet not confounding the latter with the former; expecting to find in criticism,

* Introduction to the American Edition, p. x.

guided by a true philosophy, the key to revelation; in revelation, the sanction and condign expression of philosophic truth."—*Pp.* xiii. xiv.

The titles of the articles in the volume are as follows: The Education of the World; Bunsen's Biblical Researches; The Study of the Evidences of Christianity; The National Church; The Mosaic Cosmogony; Tendencies of Religious Thought in England; and The Interpretation of Scripture.

It is not our purpose now to state the doctrines which are laid down in the volume on these subjects, or to examine the arguments by which they are supported. This would require much more space than could be devoted to the subject in the pages of a Review, and it is not necessary to our design. To some of those doctrines and arguments we shall have occasion to refer, as illustrating the point which we have indicated as the general subject of our Article, "The Readjustment of Christianity."

It will be seen, at once, from the bare enumeration of the titles of the articles, that they suggest the principal topics which have been brought into notice by the contact of Christianity with this age, or as it touches the principal points which constitute the characteristics of this age on physical science, mental philosophy, and religious thought. It is on these points mainly that Christianity *has* come into contact with this age; it is here that the principal warfare in regard to the Bible is to be waged; it is here eminently that those who are preparing to be the future defenders of Christianity are to be armed, if they are properly armed, for the work which they have to do in their generation. How much of Christianity is to be retained, as Christianity has been commonly understood; how many of the older views, if any, on the past duration of the world, on inspiration, on the origin of the race, on the interpretation of the Bible, on the subject of miracles especially, are to be defended still, and to constitute *the* Christianity of future times; how many, if any, of the views heretofore held in the Church, and embodied in creeds and confessions, are to be *sloughed off* in the development of a purer and more healthful Christianity; and, in the mean time, how much of obligation remains in regard to

doctrines in the Church, by those who have solemnly expressed their assent to articles framed in other times and now regarded as inconsistent with the real truth, are questions of great interest and of great importance in this age, and are likely to call forth more inquiry than any other subjects which occupy the attention of the religious world. The authors of these "Essays and Reviews" believe that great changes are to occur in these respects, and that the Christianity of future times will vary materially, on all the points above indicated, from the past; and quite independently of each other, and yet by some pervading feeling in the religious community suggesting simultaneously the discussion of these topics, they have given themselves to the task of thus readjusting Christianity, or adapting it to the present age.

They are not alone. In almost every department of science and literature, contributions are furnished to the work. Our own country, in such works as those of Messrs. Gliddon and Nott, we fear in some of the speculations of Agassiz, and in the works of the late Theodore Parker, is doing not a little in lending its aid to this undertaking; and if the warm commendation of the Editor of the American edition, to which we have already adverted, be, as it may without unfairness be presumed to be, an expression of the prevailing feelings in the literary and scientific circles especially connected with the Unitarian denomination in Boston and Cambridge, we may regard the positions taken in this volume as expressing views which Unitarians in our country wish to sustain and propagate, and as representing opinions which they themselves hold, and which they wish to commend to those connected with the church as the form of Christianity which they are to be exhorted to embrace under the readjustment of the system.

In the Established Church of England, also, it is known that these seven men are, by no means, alone in the effort to readjust the system of Christianity to the prevalent views of science and of mental philosophy. It is even alleged that the entire "Broad" Church party in the Established Church find in these views what substantially represents their own opinions, and that, although not formally and avowedly, yet they

are really and practically fellow-laborers in the work of thus readjusting the Christian system, and adapting it to these times. A most malignant testimony in this respect, though, in the present instance, probably not wholly unjust, may be found in a work which we shall soon notice more particularly, the Westminster Review. It relates to the existing state of feeling in the Established Church, and the effect of the teaching of those who are represented in that church by such men as Mr. Maurice, Mr. Kingsley, and Mr. Llewellynn Davies. We copy a portion of the statement on this subject in the number for January, 1862:

“But the heresies which most frighten the representatives of the old theology exist within the church pale, and have a certain odor of sanctity, seeing that they are taught by men on whom the hands of the successors of the Apostles have been laid. Mr. Maurice is dangerous and heterodox, clearly unsound on the Trinity; though he defends the Athanasian creed, has Alexandrian notions about the Son of God rather than Anglican, has more faith in the heart and conscience than the Articles relating to natural depravity will warrant, and is altogether too charitable to believe in the perdition of the heathen or the everlasting ruin of anybody; but still he is an episcopally ordained clergyman, chaplain of Lincoln’s Inn, and rector of St. Peter’s. Mr. Kingsley’s illogical humanity, and Mr. Llewellynn Davies’ mild doses of heretical doctrine, in the sweet disguise of orthodox-sounding language, administer shocks of about equal force to different types of men. Muscular Christians would not complain if the new Professor of History at Cambridge were more careful to keep within the limits of the Prayer-book than he was about to do at Eversley. Hypatia was bad company for him, and the Chartist and skeptical Alton Locke would corrupt the strictest rector in the Diocese of Exeter itself. The congregation of Christ church, Marylebone, may discover an unexpected coincidence between their minister’s teachings and those of men who thirteen times a year are stated to perish everlastingly. He asserts that no doctrine of vicarious satisfaction is to be found in the Prayer book, though he condescends not to prove it. Evangelical believers are led away by his evident earnestness and piety; and as much of the well-worn phraseology of the pulpit falls gratefully on their ears, they scarcely know it is prohibited music to which they listen, until they have become partners in guilt by applauding, and heard the warning howl of the watchful Cerberus outside. The ‘Essays and Reviews’ are both worse and better than all that have gone before. They are free from Mr. Maurice’s strange freaks of Biblical criticism, and are plain and comprehensible when he is confused and lost in a mud which he fondly imagines is a deep water. They are more scientific, thorough, and consistent, than Mr. Kingsley, and set Mr. Davies the brave example of dispensing with

many forms of speech when they have long since parted with the meaning of them. But the church of England, practically more Catholic than its founders ever dreamt when they insisted on calling it the Holy Catholic Church, includes them all, and others also, whose name is legion. High, Low, Hard, and Broad sections find a home in it, manage to pronounce its Shibboleth with a correct accent, and to see their own theories in its Articles. The two former tilted at one another *à l'outrance* a few years back; and the third, indifferent to disputes about candlesticks and surplices, sneered at transcendentalism, and thought German decidedly the farthest removed of all the dialects of Babel from the primitive language of Paradise. Now, the three make common cause against the fourth, and will permit nothing to be Anglican which is latitudinarian. And while the clergy are fighting, what are the laity doing? Is the beginning of the end coming for them, or are they content to listen to the clang of battle without taking part in it? So far as the thoughtful members of the working classes are concerned, we propose to mention some facts and draw some inferences.

"The reputedly saving ideas of theology were long ago banished from literary and scientific minds. It may be that the ancient words are still occasionally uttered on the Sunday, but they mean no more than a modern song to Bacchus, or oath by Jove. When Humboldt significantly said that he was of the religion of all men of science, he was perhaps mistaken in imagining that all *Savans* were like himself. But, in the main, Biblical orthodoxy is as dead to them as it was to him."

Germany has, of course, furnished more laborers in the work of adjusting the Bible to the wants of the present age than any other nation. We are not insensible, we trust, to the obligations of sacred literature in this age to Germany. We are not about to indulge in any language of sweeping condemnation of the influence of German criticism on theological opinions. We should forget our own training, and the results of the studies of a life not now brief, if we refused, at any time, the tribute of a grateful expression of what we owe to German labor and patience, in the knowledge of the language of the Bible; in correct views of the principles of interpretation; in the means of illustrating the sacred volume; in the knowledge of words, and phrases, and customs, and laws, that tend to throw light on the sacred volume. Meagre and sad would have been all the attainments which a man could have made in sacred literature, in the age in which we have lived, if he had trusted to English or Scottish learning on these subjects. Except in the compilations of Thomas Hartwell Horne, of little ori-

ginal value—in the labors of Herbert Marsh, of real value—and in the more recent work of Conybeare and Howson, on the life of St. Paul, the only very respectable contribution to sacred literature which England, with all its rich endowments in sacred learning, has produced in the present age, the British Isles have made no marked progress in sacred learning, and have produced little which the world “will not willingly let die.” It is to Germany that the world is indebted for the real progress which has been made in sacred learning in the nineteenth century.

But while such tributes are due to Germany by all who love sacred learning, it is not to be denied that no small part of the speculations of the German mind on subjects connected with revealed theology, and on subjects connected with mental philosophy, have tended to unsettle the faith of mankind in truths that were long regarded as established, and on points essential to the maintenance of faith in God, in his word, and in his providential and direct agency in human affairs. Not a little of that which threatens to shake the foundation of faith in England had come from ‘Christian’ Germany, not from ‘infidel’ France; no small part of that which has found an utterance in our own country in the writings of Theodore Parker and his fellow-laborers, is but a reproduction of what is found in German writers; and all, or nearly all, in the work before us, the “Recent Inquiries in Theology,” that has tended to shake the Anglican faith in the truths of revelation, is but an echo of sentiments uttered in Germany, and an illustration of a mode of thinking on sacred subjects, and dealing with established truths, derived from the land of Wolf, Hegel, and Kant.

Among the Germans who have done most to commend this mode of treating sacred subjects, and who have contributed most to unsettle the foundations of faith in England as it was held in the Reformation, as it is found in the Thirty-nine Articles, and as it has been maintained by the great body of the English people in the Establishment and among Dissenters, we are disposed to place the late Chevalier Bunsen. His rank, his talents, his statesmanship, his great learning, his remarkable social qualities, and his residence in England for a succession of

years, gave him an influence there perhaps never before conceded to any literary foreigner. The effect of that influence is seen, in some degree, in the second article in the work before us, entitled "Bunsen's Biblical Researches." The results of these "Researches," as stated in the article, and which are esteemed of so much value by the author of the article, the "Vice-Principal and Professor of Hebrew, St. David's College Lampeter," are said to be "that he has vindicated for the civilized kingdom of Egypt, from Menes downward, an antiquity of nearly four thousand years before Christ," (p. 61;) that he "could not have vindicated the unity of mankind, if he had not asked for a *(vast) extension of time*, whether his petition of twenty thousand years," (which he actually did demand,) "be granted or not," (p. 61, 62;) that the traditions of Babylon, Sidon, Assyria, and Troy, are brought to illustrate and confirm, though *to modify our interpretation of Genesis*;" that is, that "our deluge takes its place among geological phenomena—no longer a disturbance of law *from which nature shrinks*, but a *prolonged play* of the forces of fire and water, rendering the primeval regions of North Asia uninhabitable, and urging the nations to new abodes," (p. 65, 66;) that "In the *half-ideal, half-traditional* notices of the beginnings of our race, compiled in Genesis, we notice the combination of documents, and the recurrence of *barely consistent* genealogies," (p. 64;) "that the *firmness* of Bunsen is shown by his *relegating* the long lives of the first patriarchs to *the domain of legend*, or of symbolical cycle, conceiving that the historical portion begins with Abraham, when the lives became *natural*, and *information was nearer*," (p. 54;) that "in the passage of the Red Sea the description may be interpreted *with the latitude of poetry*," (p. 65;) that "our author believes St. Paul *because* he understands him *reasonably*," (p. 93;) that "he" (Bunsen,) "could not state original sin *in so exaggerated a form* as to make the design of God altered by the first agents in his creation, or to destroy the notion of moral choice and the foundation of ethics;" and that "the fall of Adam represents with him, *ideally*, the circumscription of our spirits in limits of flesh and time, and practically the selfish nature with which we fell from

the likeness of God, which should be fulfilled in man," (p. 98.) The entire spirit of Bunsen's writings on theology is expressed by a question asked by himself, "*How long shall we bear this FICTION of an external revelation?*" (p. 103;) to which, in the volume before us, the Rev. "Rowland Williams, D.D., Vice-Principal and Professor of Hebrew in St. David's College, Lampeter," replies with the severe and withering rebuke, "*There are some who think his language too vehement FOR GOOD TASTE,*" (p. 103:)—a reply worthy of the best days of the martyrs.

Chevalier Bunsen was engaged, at the time of his death, in a work which he regarded as the principal work of his life, a "Revised Bible for the People." This work, two parts of which only had appeared at the time of his death, and of which Alexander Humboldt said: "I have formed the highest opinion of his *Bibelwerk*," ("The Supernatural in relation to the Natural," by Dr. McCosh, (p. 366,) was designed to be a book to be read by "*the people*;" * that is, in a popular Commentary, to convey down from the clouds of German rationalism to the common mind, such views as those to which we have referred in the Article of Dr. Williams, and which are scattered abundantly in the "*Hippolytus*," and other writings of Bunsen. It was, *perhaps*, with reference to such an effect that Humboldt expressed his admiration of the "*Bibelwerk*," and it is this which gives so much point to a question by Dr. McCosh ("The Supernatural," &c., p. 366,) "Was he (Humboldt) rejoicing because he saw that it would further very different ends from those contemplated by Bunsen?" Who can tell what the effect of a popular Commentary—a *Bibelwerk für die Gemeinde*—constructed on these principles, with the talent, the learning, and the fame of Bunsen; with the impression derived from the universal belief that he was a truly pious man—a belief which we are not disposed to call in question—would have had on the popular mind of Germany, and ultimately on the popular mind of England, where he was so well known, and so much beloved?

We cannot, therefore, regard the death of the Chevalier

* *Bibel-werk für Gemeinde.*

Bunsen, pure, and elevated, and learned as he was, as a calamity to the world. It is one of those cases where, in the language of Dr. Goodell, missionary at Constantinople, though employed by him with a different significancy from that which we give to the phrase, it is proper to say, "Let us arise, and give thanks to God that good men may die." For, the ground of rejoicing when a good man is taken from the earth, is not merely that he is redeemed and has gone to glory; not merely that another of our race has been rescued from sin, and death, and hell; not merely that another gem has been added to the Redeemer's crown, to sparkle there with increasing brilliancy forever and ever: it is, not unfrequently, that a good man is removed from the world when, from some peculiarity of opinion and character, even in honest and well-meant efforts, he has been doing, and is doing, more harm than good; when a *mingled* power of good and evil is withdrawn from the world, in a case in which the good gives sanction to the evil, and in which the good that would be done would be more than overbalanced by the evil; or when a good man is embarked in an undertaking the end of which he cannot foresee, and when the ultimate results, if accomplished, would more than neutralize all the good which he has done in a long life. Indeed, it is a rare case in which the world does not gain *something* when a godly man dies. Few are the men whose character is such that their influence is wholly salutary and happy. Often, very often, it happens that a man who, on the whole, gives such evidence of piety that we cannot doubt that he has gone to heaven, holds such a form of belief, or is engaged in such plans, or by his position, wealth, rank, or learning, exerts such an influence that the Church has little to hope from him except by his removal to heaven.

Such a man, eminently, was the Chevalier Bunsen. We cannot, we would not doubt that he was a good man; that he was sincere and honest in his convictions and in his aims. No one can doubt the reality of his great intellectual ability and his great learning. His rank, and his learning, and his high social qualities, as we have before remarked, fitted him to exert a wide influence over mankind. It is much, too, that he was

free from the grosser forms of error which abound in the world, and especially in the circles in which he moved; much, that he placed himself on the side of religion in the view of the elevated ranks of life; much, that his name can never be appealed to, in favor of open skepticism. But we should regard the completion of his "Bible-work for the People," on the principles in which he commenced it, and which would have been continued if he had lived to carry it out to its completion, as one of the direst calamities which could have occurred to the world; for we can conceive of nothing more fitted to overthrow the foundations of faith among mankind than a commentary "for the people" on the Bible, with lax views of its inspiration, and with a practical and popular embodiment of the sentiments which are expressed in the volume before us. In fact, one of the most dangerous "Essays" in the volume, is that of which his writings have been made the basis. Comparatively harmless will be that volume as a volume of "Essays and Reviews," alike in the Old World and the New, in the limited circulation which it will be likely to have, and in the existence to which it is destined; but no one can calculate what *would be* the influence of these sentiments if they were wrought into a popular commentary on the Bible, and if the Bible were to be explained on these principles.

Our judgment of the Chevalier Bunsen may seem to be harsh, and in some quarters will be set down undoubtedly as bigotry and uncharitableness. It will be charged on "orthodoxy" or Calvinism, as a proof of its dark and bitter spirit; of its want of sympathy with liberal views, with the progress of mankind, and with the age in which we live. Be it so. We cannot help it if it is. But we are happy to confirm our view by the testimony of one who enjoyed an opportunity of forming an estimate of the character and influence of Chevalier Bunsen by a personal acquaintance with him; who had no prejudices to subserve; who was qualified and prepared to appreciate all that was noble, elevated, and pure in his character, and who, in recording the result of his impressions in regard to him, has uttered no word that tends to depreciate his character, or to do injustice to his great and generous qualities. We

refer to Dr. James McCosh, author of "The Typical Forms and Special Ends in Creation;" "The Divine Moral Government, Physical and Moral;" and "The Supernatural in relation to the Natural." In the Appendix to the last volume referred to, he has stated the impression which he derived from the "delightful intercourse" which he had with him "several hours every day for five successive days," in August, 1858. From this, we make the following extracts:—

"He was now, in his retirement, to give to the world the views on all subjects, historical, philosophical, and theological, which had burst upon him in their freshness when he spent so many of his youthful years in Rome. I confess, however, that, deeply interested as I was in his speculations—as these came forth with such a warmth and radiance from his own lips—I had all the while an impression that he would require to live to an antediluvian age in order to commit all his theories to writing,—and also a very strong conviction that his views belonged to the past age rather than the present, and that some of them would not, in fact, promote the cause of religion which he had so much at heart. It ever came out, that he drew no distinction between the natural and preternatural. He was a firm believer in mesmerism and clairvoyance (in favor of them he mentioned some circumstances which seemed to me to have no evidential value,) and was apt to connect them with the inspiration of the writers of the Bible."—Pp. 364, 365.

"On my reporting to Bunsen how kindly Humboldt had spoken of him, he said, 'I am bringing out a certain portion of my Bibelwerk before other parts which should come earlier, in order that it may fall under the eye of Humboldt ere he is removed from us.' The way he said this showed the great love he had for Humboldt; and he intimated pretty plainly that he hoped the part of the Bibelwerk to which he referred might help to draw Humboldt towards deeper religious convictions."—P. 366.

"Whether any such end was accomplished, I have no means of knowing. I have doubts as to whether the means were fitted to attain the object fondly desired. For Bunsen was already in a very ambiguous position in his own country. Respected and beloved by all—except the enemies of civil and religious liberty—his speculations, philosophical or theological, carried, I found, very little weight in Germany. The great divines of the orthodox school, while they loved him for his piety, just regretted the more that in his opinions as to the authenticity and inspiration of the Old Testament he was adhering to views which had been very prevalent in the earlier part of the century, but had been for years abandoned by all who had given their attention to the subject. The rationalists, who, in the days of their strength, had hated Bunsen for his warm evangelical piety, were rejoicing, now that the tide was against them, that they had in him an unconscious auxiliary in their work of undermining the inspiration of the Bible,—

but they set no value whatever on his own speculations and opinions. His venerated name is being extensively used by the Rationalists of this country; it is right that they should know that he ever spoke of Rationalism in terms of strongest disapprobation and aversion, and he wished it to be known everywhere that he identified himself with the living evangelical piety of Britain. While Bunsen was able to retain his piety, in spite of the vagueness and wanderings of his speculative opinions, it is difficult to see how any young man trained in the creed left to Bunsen, could ever rise to a belief in the Saviour."—Pp. 366, 367.

"I am able to say—what I believe I can say of no other with whom I had so much intercourse—that we never conversed during these five days, for ten minutes at a time, without his returning, however far he might be off, to his Bible and his Saviour, as the objects that were evidently the dearest to him."—P. 368.

"The last day I passed with him was a Sabbath—a *Sabbath indeed*—for I never in all my life spent a more profitable day. In the forenoon, I sat with him in his seat in the University Church, at Heidelberg, where we had the privilege of listening to a powerful Gospel sermon from Dr. Schenkel. I spent the afternoon in his house, where he read to us in German, or in English translations, out of the fine old devotional works of his country, interspersing remarks of his own, evidently springing from the depths of his heart, and breathing towards heaven—to which I firmly believe, he has now been carried."—P. 369.

In noticing the efforts which are made to adjust Christianity to the present age, we cannot, of course, omit the influence of the "Westminster Review." That periodical, not professedly religious, and not *openly* infidel; not connected with any ecclesiastical establishment, nor pledged to the particular support of any, and not avowedly arrayed against any; not undertaken with a view to defend the Bible, and yet not pledged expressly or impliedly not to attack the Bible; projected apparently, and conducted with a purpose to represent the opinions of the age, and to record and help forward the progress of mankind, has, from the beginning, regarded with special interest the relation of Christianity to the world at the present time. Its aim is mainly scientific, rather than political; its purpose rather to record the bearings of the discoveries of science, and the progress of literature, than to contend on the arena of metaphysics or theology. It is not a work professedly of sacred criticism, and it looks at theological opinions only as they bear on the existing state of things:—on the modification of old opinions; on the changes which progress in sacred criticism and

science seem to be compelling mankind to make in their religious views. It hails with delight *any* change which either criticism or science *compels* men to make, or which may be so employed by the conductors of that journal as to compel them to make in the religious opinions which have been cherished and held sacred for ages. There are, in that periodical, *two* departments which seem to command all the talent and learning which are employed in conducting the Review. The one is the body of the Review itself, where every thing that *science* can suggest is employed to undermine the foundations of faith, especially in those things in religion where the "supernatural" is implied, or where the deductions of science seem to be inconsistent with miracles, and with the faith of former generations; the latter is what they call "Contemporary Literature," in which all that is furnished by sacred criticism that can be made to bear on the subject, is employed for the same end. It is in this latter department of the "Review" that the hope of success mainly depends. It is, in general, the most elaborate part of the work. It has the advantage of containing more information on the literature of the age than any other publication in the English language. It evinces great acquaintance with German Theological Literature, and with what religious literature there is in France, and it is prompt to mark and record the result of any labors in either country, or in England or America, that will tend to unsettle the faith of mankind in miracles, in the inspiration of the Bible, or in ancient creeds.

What would be the ultimate creed of the Westminster Review, if it should ever be settled and defined, or what would be the precise theological opinions of the world if science and criticism, under its guidance, had done all that they could do to adjust religion to this age, and this age to religion, it would be impossible to say. The points which *have* been settled in the estimation of that work and which are no longer spoken of as doubtful; which are always referred to with the complacency of those who feel that they *have* fixed points of belief, are such as the following: That the laws of nature are so fixed that miracles are impossible; that the prophecies were written after the events to which they refer: that the world is

much older than the Mosaic records make it; that man has been on the earth for thousands of years longer than those records would allow; that there have been different centres of the origin of vegetable and animal life; that man in his origin has followed the common laws in the development of "Species" as indicated in the work of Dr. Darwin; that there are numerous mistakes, contradictions, and absurdities in the so-called sacred books of the Hebrews, and in the New Testament; that no scientific man can speak of the "miracle" of Joshua in commanding the sun and moon to stand still as an actual fact; that the last books of "Isaiah" were written after the return from the exile, and the entire book of Daniel after the events which it seems to predict; and that all proper idea of *inspiration* in regard to the Bible is to be abandoned. On these, and kindred points, the Westminster Review no longer reasons. They are as much beyond the necessity of argument, as the doctrine of gravitation, or the laws of Kepler.

The work which the Westminster Review has undertaken is, in a great measure, peculiar to this age. Porphyry, in his day, had his field; Celsus his; Julian his. In neither case was it science or sacred criticism. It was ancient philosophy as then held, coming in contact with a new religion—Christianity. They did their work well. They did all that acute philosophers of that age could do to prevent the progress of the new system. Volney had his field, sitting among the "Ruins" of ages, to find out evidence that Christianity would decline also—so to extend the work of *Ruin*, that Christianity, after his time, might be numbered with the "Ruins" of the world. Paine had his field: by low ribaldry and abuse to attempt to drive religion from the world. Voltaire had his field: satire, learning, wit, philosophy. Paine and Voltaire did their work well, and have left nothing in their departments to be attempted in future times. Hume had his: by most subtle sophistry; by great calmness; by a spirit of apparent candor; by perplexing and involving a subject so as, even to this day, to exercise the ingenuity of the world to show *where* he was wrong, when all felt that he *was* wrong. And Hume has done his work well, and left nothing in the line of skepticism to be attempted in future times, for he has given employment, in detecting his

sophistry, to the great intellects of Reid, of Dugald Stewart, of Campbell, of Chalmers, and of Dr. Thomas Brown—each one feeling that his predecessor has *not* satisfactorily shown where the sophism was; each one proposing a theory of his own; and all leaving us not *quite* sure that the real secret of the sophistry has been yet detected. Gibbon had his field, and well has he worked it. His province was history, and his investigations led him, *a skeptic*, over the entire period when Christianity, from the feeblest beginning, made its way over the Roman world, and “sat down on the throne of the Cæsars;” when during the long and eventful period of the decline of the empire, Christianity was seen moulding society, directing wars, founding empires, modifying opinions, changing the arts of life, introducing revolutions into laws, manners, dress, dwellings, schools; when it controlled the government and influenced the people; when it founded monasteries and colleges; when it poured its embattled legions in the Holy Land in fierce wars of conquest. It was not the work of Gibbon to falsify history. It was not his to state as a fact what had never occurred, or to suppress a fact which had occurred. We believe that as a historian he was, in respect to this, among the most faithful of men. We do not believe that his skepticism—deep and bitter as it was—ever led him, in a single instance, to pervert or falsify a *fact*, however much it might be opposed to his own views on the subject of religion, or however much ingenuity it might require to escape from the legitimate *consequences* of the fact. Never, from the time of Thucydides down, has there been a man more upright, stern, honest, unbending, in recording *the facts* of history. As a skeptic in religion, it was his to show what could be done by a *sneer*, and well has he done *that* work. If *that* could have destroyed the credit of Christianity, the work would have been done by Gibbon. In *that* mode of endeavoring to undermine and destroy Christianity, nothing more remains to be accomplished.

The province of the Westminster Review is different from that of Porphyry, Celsus, and Julian; different from that of Volney and Paine; different from that of Voltaire, Hume, and Gibbon. None of those men, if, perhaps, we except Voltaire,

had any considerable claims to eminence in science; none of them understood the bearings of science on revelation as it is now presented to the world. None of those men, if, perhaps, we except Celsus and Porphyry, had any considerable knowledge of sacred criticism; none of them would have been able to urge the arguments against the established faith of the Christian world, which Bunsen could urge—which the writers of the “Essays and Reviews” can urge—which the industry of the writers of the Westminster Review can collect from the abundant storehouse of German scholarship. The peculiar province of the Westminster Review, therefore, so far as its bearing on religion is concerned, is to show how far skepticism may be sustained by the discoveries in modern times in science, or how much may be done by those discoveries, ingeniously applied, in undermining the faith of the world in truths hitherto regarded as established.

We are not to be surprised, therefore, at the favor with which the Westminster Review greeted the volume of “Essays and Reviews” as a most important contribution in the cause which it is laboring to promote; and in regard to the book itself, and to the real position of the authors of the book before the world, it is a most ominous circumstance that the volume was hailed with so much satisfaction by the Westminster Review in England, and published with such a commendatory notice as we have referred to above, by the Unitarian press in this country. In the Westminster Review for October, 1860, the volume is reviewed in an Article bearing the title of “Neo-Christianity;” a title itself indicating the view which is taken of the book, and justifying the title which we have placed at the head of *our* article as indicating the tendency of that and kindred works. As specimens of the manner in which the work is regarded by the Westminster Review, and as showing what is the real tendency of the volume, and also as showing the position of Unitarians in this country so far as they may be supposed to be represented by Dr. Hedge, the editor of the American Edition, we make the following extracts from the Westminster Review for October, 1860, No. CXLVI.:—

“A book has appeared which may serve to mark an epoch in the history of opinion. The latest phase of religion at length has de-

veloped its creed. The vigor and the candor of this volume would raise it above the dust of theological strife; but its origin gives it a place in the record of religious thought. The subject, the form, and the authorship are all alike significant. It is no work of a single or isolated thinker; nor of unconnected thoughts upon secondary questions. It is the combined work of several of the leaders of thought in our seminaries of religious and useful learning; and it deals (not without some method) with the central topic in which all religious inquiry is now summed up. In a word, it is a manifesto from a body of kindred or associated thinkers; if it be not rather an outline of the principles of a new school of English theology. But whatever be the intention of its authors, those who watch the progress of opinion must look upon its appearance, and still more upon its reception, as full of significance and instruction. When seven theologians, teachers and professors in our universities or schools, combine their strength to deal with the great questions of modern inquiry, the public may justly infer that it has a test of the progress of ideas within the pale of the Church."—P. 157.

"No fair mind can close this volume without feeling it to be at bottom in direct antagonism to the whole system of popular belief. They profess, indeed, to come forward as defenders of the creeds against attacks from without; but their hardest blows fall not on the assaulting, but on the resisting force. They throw themselves into the breach; but their principal care is to clear it from its oldest and stoutest defenders. In object, in spirit, and in method, in details no less than in general design—this book is incompatible with the religious belief of the masses of the Christian public, and the broad principles on which the Protestantism of Englishmen rests. The most elaborate reasoning to prove that they are in harmony can never be anything but futile, and ends in becoming insincere. All attempts to show that these opinions are in accordance with Scripture, the Articles, the Liturgy, or the Church, have little practical value, and do no small practical harm. Such reasoning may ease the conscience of troubled inquirers; but is powerless to persuade the mass that *that* is after all the true meaning of that which they had been taught and have believed. Just as their instinct repudiated the ingenious attempts of the Tractarian writers to build a semi-Romish system on the dogmas of their Church; just so it will revolt from any attempt, however sincere, to graft the results and the principles of rationalism on the popular Christianity of the day. Is the crumbling edifice of orthodoxy to be supported by sweeping away the whole of its substructure; and Christian divines taught cheerfully to surrender all that the most exacting criticism assails? The mass of ordinary believers may well ask to be protected from such friends, as their worst and most dangerous enemies. Is it reasonable to suppose, that at this time of day the Christian world will consent to reconsider the whole of its positions; to develop its cardinal doctrines into new forms, and to remodel the whole structure of belief upon an improved theory? Will the complicated and time-worn mechanism bear so radical a repair? Can its pieces be reset and placed in new relations, and the rusted mediæval

time-piece be restored into the shape of a modern watch? Has it been all a mistaken rendering that men have been believing so long? Is theology then due to a mere confusion of terms? Can religion be set right by sounder canons of interpretation, and the mystery of the unknown cleared up by a more accurate scholarship? Of one thing we may be quite sure, that the public can never be persuaded to make a trial of the process. They, at any rate, will never be brought to believe that the Bible is full of errors, or rather untruths; that it does not contain authentic or even contemporary records of facts, and is a medley of late compilers; and yet withal remains the Book of Life, the great source of revealed truth, the standard of holiness, purity, and wisdom. Yet all this our Essayists call upon them to admit, in the very name of Revelation and for the honor and glory of the Bible itself. Let our authors beware of such excessive candor, and rest assured that when the public once begin to read their Bibles in that spirit, they will soon cease to read them at all, and that the Hebrew Scriptures will take their place upon the book-shelf of the learned, beside the Arabian and the Sanscrit poets.

“Nor again is it a more hopeful scheme to preach to the congregations in Church and Chapel, that the central notions of their creed, no less than the volume on which they are based, have been utterly misinterpreted and distorted; yet withal that the creeds must regain their influence under new forms, as the Scriptures, through their new expounders. The men and women around us are told that the whole scheme of salvation has to be entirely re-arranged and altered: Divine rewards and punishments; the Fall; original Sin; the vicarious penalty; and Salvation by faith, are all, in the natural sense of the terms, repudiated as immoral delusions. Miracles, inspiration, and prophecy, in their plain and natural sense, are denounced as figments or exploded blunders. The Mosaic history dissolves into a mass of ill-digested legends, the Mosaic ritual into an Oriental system of priestcraft, and the Mosaic origin of the earth and man sinks amidst the rubbish of rabbinical cosmogonies. And yet all this is done in the name of orthodoxy, and for the glory of Christian truth. Nay, unwearied with destroying this great edifice of old belief, our writers enter upon the gigantic and incredible enterprise of rebuilding the whole again from its foundations, upon the same ground-plan, but with stronger walls; and after forcing the simple believer to unlearn his well-conned creed, they sit down to teach it to him anew with altered words and remodelled phrases. An expurgated Bible resumes its place. Miracles, inspiration, and prophecy reappear under the old names with new meanings: the harmonious whole arises anew in loftier and softer outlines with the cardinal features—with a revised Atonement, a transcendental Fall, a practical Salvation, and an idealized Damnation.”—Pp. 158, 159.

“*Of the spirit and tone of this book it is impossible to speak too warmly, nor in refusing to accept the final issue of its argument, would we be wanting in respect to the candor of its authors. ‘Amicus Plato;’ ‘they are our friends who have introduced this doctrine of ideology.’ But we cannot but point out the fatal moral aspect of this*

new defence. The history of the defence of the Bible singularly and sadly resembles that of the defence of the Cosmogony. Exactly the same process is repeated: of constant retreat, ever-shifting positions, and industrious extenuation. Science steadily advances and covers the abandoned ground. The Catholic Church thought that the 'round world was so fast it could not be moved.' Then came Galileo. The Calvinist surrenders Joshua's command; the orthodox Churchman speaks of the 'ages,' not the days of creation. Then a Buckland or a Miller surrenders the actual, but retains the ideal truth of the whole. Lastly, comes a broader Christian, who looks on the whole Hebrew cosmogony as an unscientific invention. Step by step the Scripture is similarly surrendered. The parallel holds good in detail. First, the accuracy of trifling facts in narrative is doubted. Then prophecies become poetry, and glaring improbabilities are figures. Then candid Churchmen read many miracles and narratives in a spiritual light. Then come earnest, bold, and learned thinkers, like our essayists, who, laying down an entire scheme of history, make the Scripture fall into its place; and prodigally use every hypothesis of 'vision,' and 'ideology,' and partial 'revelation,' 'the spiritual aspects of natural laws,' and 'the purposes of God in history,' and all the well-known apparatus of elaborate and ingenious concordance."—Pp. 172, 173.

"Our account of this book would be incomplete unless we were to point to the reception it has received. It has passed through two editions, it has been read and discussed within and without the Church, with the hesitation of reflection or the pleasure of surprise. Nowhere has there been seen or heard a sign of official repudiation. These professors, tutors, principals, and masters still hold their chairs and retain their influence. No authorized rebuke has been put forward. They have been left to the bark of the toothless watch-dogs of orthodoxy. The authorities of the Universities are paralyzed, and incapable even of a protest. They have had the pain of seeing nearly all the brain and heart of their foundations ranged on the other side; they have issued an order of the day 'to ignore so painful a subject.' In the meantime, many of the younger members have received it with welcome and assent, many also with welcome, but with slight assent. Indeed, no one that knows the religious state of the Universities, could doubt that such a book would be eagerly welcomed, but welcomed only as a partial instalment. Few, perhaps, are aware how far the decay of belief extends beneath those walls.

"It is the ablest, the sincerest and the best who feel their faith giving way beneath them. The Church is losing now at once the best heads and the best hearts. It is character, influence and sympathy with mankind, which now mark those who stand aloof. Are not these seven authors worthy representatives of the best of their order? Others as high in place and influence have spoken less, but have not therefore thought less. Perhaps, if they have been silent, they have found it still more difficult to speak. This volume draws a sad picture of the prevalence of intellectual doubt within those cloisters. That picture is far short of the reality. 'Smouldering scepticism,' indeed! When they are honeycombed with disbelief, running through every

phase from mystical interpretation to utter atheism. Professors, tutors, fellows, and pupils are conscious of this wide-spread doubt. In silence they watch and respect each other's thoughts, and silently work out their own. Above them sit unconscious dignities and powers vaguely condemning pantheism and neology, or piecing the articles together with scraps of accommodating texts. Such are those seminaries of the Priesthood and the Church, and he who has passed through them has seen the circles of an intellectual purgatory. How long shall this last?"—P. 177.

"The sense of despair, the shudder of the mind, the tearing up of dear associations, the agony of the family, have darkened the picture of every religious convulsion. It must be endured. Let every one with hearts and brains concur in the inevitable task. Let each who has thought and felt for himself, ask himself first what he *does not* believe, and then, if wise or needful, avow it. Next let him ask himself what he *does* believe, and pursue it to its true and full conclusions. Let violent attack be avoided, but the mask of conformity cast off. May no honest mind be disturbed, but hollow peace rejected. If we have spoken strongly, few of our readers are likely to be quite at rest, whilst many are being drawn towards a premature compromise. Let such reflect that no half-measures will succeed. Neither loose accommodation nor sonorous principles will long give them rest. It is of as little use to surrender the more glaring contradictions of science as it is to evaporate a discredited doctrine into a few vague precepts. Religion, to regain the world, must not only be not contrary to science, but it must be in entire and close harmony with science. Not with one science only, but with all. Not only must it have a place beside philosophy, morals, and politics; but it must guide and elevate all these. Religion, to have strength, must have a doctrine; and a doctrine, to endure now, must embody the outgrowth of human thought. If it be not distinctly proved therefrom, it must at least flow from and sum up the whole. Its intellectual basis must be broad and unimpeachable. The highest efforts of the brain must guide the best promptings of the heart. That end will not be attained by our authors, by subliming religion into an emotion, and making an armistice with science. It will not be obtained by any unreal adaptation, nor by this, which is of all recent adaptations, at once the most able, the most earnest, and—the most suicidal."—P. 178.

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It cannot be denied that the question whether a readjustment of Christianity, as adapted to this age of the world, is desirable, and whether it can be effected so as to save Christianity itself—that is, so that the Bible, and the doctrines of the Bible, may retain the hold on the public mind which they have held in less scientific periods of the world, and which a book professing to be inspired should secure in the faith of

mankind, is THE great question of this age. If such a readjustment is to be made, it is still a question *how* it is to be done; what is to be given up, and what retained; what is demanded, and what is to be conceded; whether these men have so succeeded in their work that the true friends of religion will be compelled to receive the adjustment; whether the Christianity to be left to the world is the system which the authors of the "Essays and Reviews" would bequeath to mankind, and which is to go down to future ages with the endorsement of the Westminster Review and the Unitarians of Massachusetts.

It is not to be denied that any system of religion must be shaped very much by the characteristics of an age or country. While, as was shown in the leading Article in our January number, there is and must be in Christianity, as a revelation from God, that which is "permanent," and which must be as unchanging as God himself, it is also true that there is much in the system that may receive, in its application and development, different forms—forms that may give its religious character to a particular age or nation. Religion may put on an oriental or an occidental garb. It may appear in monastic seclusion, or it may be developed in the active and public life of the Church. It may be calm, contemplative, recluse; it may attach itself to the prevailing philosophy of the age; it may be developed in connection with the habits of thinking and the temperament of a people; it may receive its form under a certain system of philosophy, and become embodied in creeds framed on the supposition that that is the true system; it may receive its interpretations on the supposition that certain prevailing views in science are correct, and may *seem* to countenance and sustain those views; it may attach to itself numberless superstitions that may be made to *appear* to belong to the essence of the system; and it may be so identified, in that form, with literary and eleemosynary establishments that the ancient system of religious doctrines embodied in a creed shall come down with all that there is that is venerable, sacred and philanthropic in those establishments, and all that there is in their charters to render them permanent. When the monasteries in England, in the time of Henry VIII., were broken up, and the

accumulated property of ages was confiscated, it seemed to many that a fatal blow was struck at vital religion; and, in like manner, when that which is properly *philosophy* is rent away from the forms of religion as they have been held in the church, there is the same apprehension that religion itself is assailed, and that its very existence is identified with maintaining the religion and the philosophy together. Much of the opposition to the changes suggested by the theology of President Edwards has arisen from the fact that he labored to *divorce* theology from the philosophy with which it had been connected in the older Calvinistic system, and to unite that system with a better philosophy; and, in our own church, in the struggle between the two great parties in that church, the *real* contest has been not so much about the system of Christianity as it is found in the Bible, as about that system as blended with certain philosophical opinions, and as having received their shape from union with such opinions. For, it is to be remembered that Christianity has not come to *us* directly from its Author. It is not to *us* a new revelation. It has come down to us through a descent of eighteen centuries, collecting, in its progress, whatever of good or bad there might be that could be made in any way to adhere to it; adopting the opinions in mental philosophy, the doctrines of science, the peculiarities of thinking and acting that have prevailed in the world, and uniting all, it may be, in its symbols of faith. It is a ship—not just starting out of port fresh and new, but one that has sailed afar, and that has collected whatever of barnacles and sea-weed that could be made to adhere to it. It is still a ship; whether its timbers are rotten or not is a fair question; whether it can be made to encounter heavy seas now, and keep afloat, is *the* question which these churchmen and the Westminster Review would help us to solve. Whether anything would be left, after taking off all that the authors of the “Essays and Reviews” propose to take off, is a question on which the writers in the Westminster Review, we think, are looking with all the interest of hatred and of hope.

It is not to be denied that there has been, from time to time, a new readjustment of Christianity to the progress of the world,

accomplished either silently or by violence. As a general fact, it has been a silent readjustment. Old interpretations of the Bible, inconsistent with the position which the world takes in philosophy and science, have been quietly dropped, and, without either shock or commotion, the system of religious doctrines has quietly adjusted itself to the advances in science. It has been found that the ancient interpretation of the Bible, though it may have been regarded as sacred for ages, and though it may have been held under some of the best forms of piety in the church, was in no way *demand*ed by the fair interpretation of language; and as the new facts in science were accepted by the world, the old interpretation was quietly dropped, and the new discovery in science was found to be, in fact, the best exponent of the real meaning of the language of the Bible:—for it was seen to impart to it new beauty and sublimity, and to be in no manner inconsistent with the meaning of the record on the most rigid principles of exegesis. In fact, it has been seen that the truth in science as discovered, and the language used in the sacred writings bearing on the general subject, were so adapted to each other that the one seemed to have been designed to describe the other; or, in other words, that the *language* employed by the sacred writer was such as he would have used if the fact had been distinctly before his mind. The new discovery, therefore, so far from impinging on the claim to inspiration, seemed only to confirm it. As an illustration of this, we may refer to the change made in the views of astronomy in passing from the conjectures of the Ptolemaic to the demonstrations of the Copernican system. The old interpretations of the Bible, in the systems of theology, were undoubtedly all based on the idea of the correctness of the Ptolemaic system. The doctrines of the creeds were all adjusted to that. That system of astronomy became the doctrine of the Church, and to maintain that the earth revolved on its axis and around the sun was heresy—the heresy for which Galileo was persecuted and imprisoned, and which he was required by the Church to “abjure, curse, and detest,” and which “he was never again to teach, because erroneous, heretical, and *contrary to Scripture.*” Even Turretin

endeavored to sustain that system from the Bible, and to demonstrate that, according to the Scriptures, the earth was the centre of the system, and that the sun, and moon, and stars revolved around it.*

The adjustment respecting astronomy was quietly made. Except the storm that was raised respecting Galileo, there was no agitation or convulsion. The reasoning of Turretin in favor of the old system, as drawn from the Bible, made no impression on mankind, and did nothing to impede the progress of the new sentiments. The Church accepted the change, and abandoned the old interpretation of the Bible, and henceforward explained the Bible on the supposition that the Copernican, and not the Ptolemaic system of astronomy is the one that is accordant with truth. Even infidels saw nothing in the new mode of interpreting the Bible that was not admissible and fair, and were willing to concede that the Bible had made no statements on the subject of astronomy which *required* its friends to maintain that it taught the Ptolemaic system.

There have been, however, readjustments of Christianity attended with violence, and which have convulsed the world. The ancient system had become so established; it had connected itself so intimately with the opinions, the interests, and the corruptions of mankind; it was so defended by charters, investments, and laws; it was so under the patronage of corrupt civil governments, and a more corrupt hierarchy; it had so subdued all philosophy to itself, and had so asserted its rule

* His argument makes us smile. It is as follows: "*First*," he remarks, "the sun is said in Scripture to move in the heavens, and to rise and set. 'The sun is as a bridegroom coming out of his chambers, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race.' 'The sun knoweth his going down.' 'The sun ariseth, and the sun goeth down.' *Secondly*. The sun, by a miracle, stood still in the time of Joshua, and by a miracle it went back in the time of Hezekiah. *Thirdly*. The earth is said to be fixed immoveably. 'The earth also is established that it cannot be moved.' 'Thou hast established the earth, and it abideth.' 'They continue this day according to thine ordinances.' *Fourthly*. Neither could birds, which often fly off through an hour's circuit, be able to return to their nests. *Fifthly*. Whatever flies or is suspended in the air, ought, by this theory, to move from West to East; but this is proved not to be true, from birds, arrows shot forth, atoms made manifest in the sun, and down floating in the atmosphere."

over the hearts of men; it was so blended with pomp, and show, and splendor of ritual; it was so identified with time-honored customs, and with time-honored institutions; it so placed at the disposal of the Church the wealth of the world, and so made the conscience of the world subject to its control; it had so permeated through the entire system of Christianity; the Church was so completely in all its parts the representative of false philosophy, false opinion, false views of God and of man, false views of the way by which sinful men must be saved, that it was impossible to adjust it to the new condition of things in the world by a calm and quiet process, and convulsion, revolution and storm became inevitable. Such was the readjustment of Christianity at the Reformation. Literature had been revived. The race had made progress. The world, as it had *become*, could no longer bear the system which had been well enough adapted to it as it *had been*, and a readjustment of Christianity was indispensable. One of two things was to be done; either the Bible must be abandoned altogether, and the world be given over to infidelity, *or* the system of Christianity must be so presented to mankind as not to be seen to be inconsistent with the progress which the world had made, and was making. It was, therefore, just a question whether infidelity should become universal, or whether the real system of Christianity was of such a nature as to be adapted to the world as it was becoming, and as it was to be. But, for the reasons above stated, the readjustment could not be calmly, quietly made. Hence the Protestant Reformation advanced amidst storms, revolutions, and persecutions. But the adjustment was made. Those things which had been attached to Christianity by a corrupt philosophy and a corrupt superstition were shown to be no essential part of the system; the interpretations which had been given to the Bible were shown to be false interpretations; the doctrines of the Papacy, which had been claimed to be the doctrines of the Scriptures, were demonstrated to be perversions, abuses and corruptions of the pure word of God; the enormous system which had been reared to tyrannize over mankind was shown to have no authority in the Bible; and, as the result of the storms and conflicts of the Re-

formation, Christianity reappeared in much of its native purity, and the world has now, for three centuries, accepted it as not inconsistent with any disclosures which science or philosophy has made.

The authors of the "Essays and Reviews," Drs. Temple, Williams, and Messrs. Baden Powell, Wilson, Goodwin, Pattison, and Jowett, in their high places in the Episcopal Church; the Westminster Review; Chevalier Bunsen; the German Rationalists and their fellow-laborers in the old world generally; Messrs. Gliddon and Nott; and Messrs. Theodore Parker and Dr. Hedge as representing the Unitarian body in the new world, demand a new adjustment of Christianity. They insist that as it is held now it is inconsistent with the science of the age. They affirm that, as commonly interpreted, the Bible is contradicted by the facts which science has established. They demand that the Bible shall be adjusted to those facts; that either a new interpretation shall be adopted, or that certain parts of the Bible shall be reduced from their claim to inspiration to the rank of the common records of the past—true or false, as the case may be, that every man is to be left to his own solution as to what is to be regarded as true; that the ancient ideas of inspiration are to be abandoned, and that it is to be admitted that there are errors and contradictions in the sacred volume, however there may be *in it somewhere* a pure system of doctrines that has *had* a divine origin; that, in one word, the world shall accept the revelations of science as settled, and that, if the Bible does not conform to those revelations as understood, it shall be abandoned forever. Part of these collaborators—like the Chevalier Bunsen, and, we would hope, the authors of the "Essays and Reviews"—are true and honest men. They are alarmed, and they desire that the Bible and the Church may be saved. Part desire the overthrow of Church establishments as such, having no particular regard for religion one way or the other. Part have the same pious feelings on the subject of religion which Hume had when he said "Our *most holy* religion is founded on *faith*, not on *reason*," or which Gibbon had when he sorrowed over the superstitions which entered the Church from the heathen world or when he expressed

a tone of holy exultation at the success of the experiment made by Cyprian to show the firmness of the chastity of the sexes among the faithful; or when he dropped a tear on the pages of his history over the inconsistencies and sins of the ancient worthies in the church. Part welcome the labors of such men as the Chevalier Bunsen and the authors of the "Essays and Reviews," as Alexander Humboldt did the "Bibel-work" of Bunsen, because, in the language of Dr. McCosh, "in the Bibel-work he saw that it would further very different ends from those contemplated by Bunsen,"* and as the Westminster Review welcomes the labors of Messrs. Temple, Williams, Powell, Wilson, Goodwin, Pattison and Jowett, because they see in their labors that which tends to the overthrow of Christianity:— for Humboldt and the writers in the Westminster Review see correctly the results to which these labors are tending.

The *points* on which it is now demanded that there shall be a readjustment of Christianity, or on which it is supposed that the positions in sacred criticism and science are so well taken that they may be assumed as a basis to which Christianity is to be made to conform, are such as the following:

(1.) The first, and perhaps the most material, relates to the subject of inspiration. The old and established doctrine of the church has been, that the Bible is a book given by a supernatural inspiration of God; that is, that truths are recorded there which in fact have their origin *directly* in the mind of God, and have been imparted by him to the minds of the writers by a direct communication; that those truths are above any natural power of the writers to originate them, to discover them, or to express them; and that in recording them, however much they may have been left to their own peculiarities of modes of expression or language, they have been so guided by the Holy Spirit as to be preserved from error; that this principle applies to every part of the sacred volume; that the Bible is in fact, and to all intents and purposes, *one book*, whose real author is the Spirit of God. The view which they who propose to readjust Christianity insist shall be taken of this

* The supernatural in relation to the natural. p. 366.

subject is, substantially, that the word "inspiration," if used at all as applicable to a book claiming to be from God, denotes, in fact, nothing more than *the inspiration of genius*, or that the inspiration of Isaiah, David and Paul does not differ in principle from the inspiration of Homer, Dante, Milton, Shakespeare, Plato or Bacon; that though the inspiration may pertain to a different subject, yet it is the same in principle; that, moreover, whatever there is of "inspiration" in the Bible does not pertain to the entire book, but that the true idea is that the Bible rather *contains* a revelation than that it *is* a revelation; that, on ordinary subjects, as science and history, the authors of the Bible were liable to err like other men; that the system of revealed truth is to be obtained rather by the general spirit of the volume than by any specific statements of the sacred writers; that consequently it may be admitted that there are mistakes in regard to the formation and duration of the earth, the origin of the human race, the chronology of the world, the deluge, and the early history of mankind; and that, as the result of all this, there may be inconsistencies in the statements of the several writers, and contradictions which cannot be reconciled. A single extract from the "Essays and Reviews" will show the prevalent views entertained on this subject by the class of writers to which we refer. It occurs in the "Essay" on "The Interpretation of Scriptures," by Benjamin Jowett, M. A., Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Oxford. After stating the different ideas which have prevailed in the Church, on the subject of inspiration, he remarks:

"Many of these explanations lose sight of the original meaning and derivation of the word. Some of them are framed with the view of meeting difficulties: all, perhaps, err in attempting to define what, though real, is incapable of being defined in an exact manner. Nor for any of the higher or supernatural views of inspiration is there any foundation in the Gospels or Epistles. There is no appearance in their writings that the evangelists or apostles had any inward gift, or were subject to any power external to them different from that of preaching or teaching, which they daily exercised; nor do they anywhere lead us to suppose that they were free from error or infirmity. St. Paul writes like a Christian teacher, exhibiting all the emotions and vicissitudes of human feeling; speaking, indeed, with authority, but hesitating in difficult cases, and more than once correcting himself,—corrected, too, by the course of events in his expectation of the

coming of Christ. The evangelist 'who saw it, bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true.' (John xix. 35.) Another evangelist does not profess to be an original narrator, but only 'to set forth in order a declaration of what eye-witnesses had delivered,' like many others whose writings have not been preserved to us. (Luke i. 1, 2.) And the result is in accordance with the simple profession and style in which they describe themselves: there is no appearance, that is to say, of insincerity, or want of faith; but neither is there perfect accuracy or agreement. One supposes the original dwelling-place of our Lord's parents to have been Bethlehem (Matt. ii. 1, 2;) another, Nazareth (Luke ii. 4.) They trace his genealogy in different ways. One mentions the thieves blaspheming; another has preserved to after ages the record of the penitent thief. They appear to differ about the day and hour of the crucifixion. The narrative of the woman who anointed our Lord's feet with ointment is told in all four, each narrative having more or less considerable variations. These are a few instances of the differences which arose in the traditions of the earliest ages respecting the history of our Lord. But he who wishes to investigate the character of the sacred writings should not be afraid to make a catalogue of them all with the view of estimating their cumulative weight. (For it is obvious, that the answer which would be admitted in the case of a single discrepancy will not be the true answer when there are many.) He should further consider, that the narratives in which these discrepancies occur are short, and partly identical,—a cycle of tradition beyond which the knowledge of the early Fathers never travels; though, if all the things that Jesus said and did had been written down, 'the world itself could not have contained the books that would have been written.' (John xx. 30; xxi. 25.) For the proportion which these narratives bear to the whole subject, as well as their relation to one another, is an important element in the estimation of differences. In the same way, he who would understand the nature of prophecy in the Old Testament, should have the courage to examine how far its details were minutely fulfilled. The absence of such a fulfillment may further lead him to discover that he took the letter for the spirit in expecting it."—Pp. 379—381.

(2.) Christianity is to be adjusted to the idea, not only that our world itself may have existed for thousands or even millions of years; that has undergone different and slow modifications and it has been occupied by numerous races of animals which have long since passed away, but that *man himself* has existed for a much longer period than that assigned to him by the common chronology, or than the Mosaic records, by a fair interpretation, would allow us to believe. The adjustment in regard to the existence of our globe itself, to the geological changes which have occurred, and to the existence of

the races of animals which had passed away before man appeared, has been quietly made, and made without any convulsion in the religious world, or any admitted gain to the cause of infidelity. The friends of the Bible have accepted the revelations of geology on these subjects; and, with a few exceptions, these disclosures of geology are regarded by the great mass of believers in the Bible as among the settled facts in science. Often as the subject has been pressed upon their attention, they have failed to see that there is any essential conflict between these statements of geology and the statements of Moses, and they have been employed in explaining the remarkable *analogy*, in fact, in the *order* at least of the processes on our globe in its preparatory stages as disclosed in geology and as stated in the first chapter of Genesis. Not a few of those who reject the Bible have ceased to urge the revelations of geology on this subject as in conflict with the statements of Moses, since it cannot be demonstrated from the Bible *how long* the earth, in some form, may have existed; since there is no precise date *when* "the foundation of the earth was laid;" and since, if the main proposition in Genesis i. 1, that "In the beginning GOD CREATED the heavens and the earth," be admitted, the utmost latitude as to *time* may be given to those who may have the ability or find the means to tell *when* it was that "the morning stars sang together," and "the sons of God shouted for joy" over the creation of the world. Job xxxviii. 7. We do not doubt that the whole Christian world would feel itself laid under unspeakable obligations to infidel geologists if they *would* settle the question of chronology as to the exact period when our globe was made, however far back in a distant eternity they may fix the epoch.

The other point on this subject is more material; it may be vital. Those who propose to readjust Christianity demand, also, that it shall be admitted that *the race of man* has existed for an indefinite period back of that assigned to the origin of the race in the records of Moses. The Chevalier Bunsen has demonstrated, "if we will receive it," that Egypt was a civilized kingdom nearly four thousand years before the birth of Christ, and he asks that it may be admitted that the race

has existed for a period of at least "twenty thousand years;" and Dr. Williams, the author of the second of the "Essays," if we understand him, asks that it should be believed that "there is an historical area of nations and languages extending itself over nearly ten thousand years," and that another "ten thousand" was required "during which the possibilities of these things took body and form." The views which the Christian world is asked to adopt, and to which Christianity is now to be adjusted, may be understood by a single extract from the Article by Dr. Williams, in the "Essays and Reviews," in stating the results of the Chevalier Bunsen's investigations:

"The result, if we can receive it, is to vindicate for the civilized kingdom of Egypt, from Menes downward, an antiquity of nearly four thousand years before Christ. There is no point in which archæologists of all shades were so nearly unanimous as in the belief that our biblical chronology was too narrow in its limits; and the enlargement of our views, deduced from Egyptian records, is extended by our author's reasonings on the development of commerce and government, and still more of languages, and physical features of race. He could not have vindicated the unity of mankind if he had not asked for a vast extension of time, whether his petition of twenty thousand years be granted or not. The mention of such a term may appear monstrous to those who regard six thousand years as a part of revelation. Yet it is easier to throw doubt on some of the arguments than to show that the conclusion in favor of a vast length is improbable. If pottery in a river's mud proves little, its tendency may agree with that of the discovery of very ancient pre-historic remains in many parts of the world. Again, how many years are needed to develop modern French out of Latin, and Latin itself out of its original crude forms? How unlike is English to Welsh, and Greek to Sanscrit! —yet all indubitably of one family of languages. What years were required to create the existing divergence of members of this family! How many more for other families, separated by a wide gulf from this, yet retaining traces of a primeval aboriginal affinity, to have developed themselves, either in priority or collaterally! The same consonantal roots, appearing either as verbs inflected with great variety of grammatical form or as nouns with case-endings in some languages, and with none in others, plead, as convincingly as the succession of strata in geology, for enormous lapses of time. When, again, we have traced our Gaelic and our Sanscrit to their inferential pre-Hellenic stem, and when reason has convinced us that the Semitic languages, which had as distinct an individuality four thousand years ago as they have now, require a cradle of larger dimensions than Archbishop Usher's chronology, what further effort is not forced upon our imagination, if we would guess the measure of the dim background, in which the Mongolian and Egyptian languages, older probably than the

Hebrew, became fixed, growing early into the type which they retain? Do we see an historical area of nations and languages extending itself over nearly ten thousand years? and can we imagine less than another ten thousand during which the possibilities of these things took body and form?"

The *value* to be attached to the Mosaic records in such investigations, in the estimation of those who propose thus to readjust Christianity, may be understood from the following extract from the same article, as stating the views of the Chevalier Bunsen, and as apparently endorsed by the "Vice-Principal, and Professor of Hebrew, St. David's College, Lampeter."

"In the half-ideal, half-traditional notices of the beginnings of our race compiled in *Genesis*, we are bid notice the combination of documents and the recurrence of barely consistent genealogies. As the man Adam begets Cain, the man Enos begets Cainan. Jared and Irad, Methuselah and Methusael, are similarly compared. Seth, like El, is an old deity's appellation; and MAN was the son of Seth in one record as Adam was the son of God in the other. One could wish the puzzling circumstance that the etymology of some of the earlier names seems strained to suit the present form of the narrative had been explained. That our author would not shrink from noticing this, is shown by the firmness with which he relegates the long lives of the first patriarchs to the domain of legend or of symbolical cycle. *He reasonably conceives that the historical portion begins with Abraham, where the lives become natural, and information was nearer.* A skeptical criticism might, indeed, ask by what right he assumes that the moral dimensions of our spiritual heroes cannot have been idealized by tradition, as he admits to have been the case with physical events and with chronology rounded into epical shape; but the first principles of his philosophy, which fixes on personality (or what we might call force of character) as the great organ of divine manifestation in the world, and his entire method of handling the Bible, lead him to insist on the genuineness, and to magnify the force, of spiritual ideas, and of the men who exemplify them. Hence, on the side of religion, he does not intentionally violate that reverence with which evangelical thinkers view the fathers of our faith. To Abraham and Moses, Elijah and Jeremiah, he renders grateful honor. Even in archæology, his skepticism does not outrun the suspicions often betrayed in our popular mind; and he limits while he confirms these, by showing how far they have ground. But, as he says with *quaint strength*, '*there is no chronological element in revelation.*' Without borrowing the fifteen centuries which the Greek Church and the Septuagint would lend us, we see, from comparing the Bible with the Egyptian records and with itself, that our common dates are wrong; though it is not so easy to say how they should be rectified."—Pp. 64, 65.

The historical value which is to be attached to the Mosaic records, is indicated also by the extract which follows. In that extract it will be seen that these writings are to be regarded as the "*speculation*" of some Hebrew Descartes or Newton, who did not pretend to any knowledge of details, and who knew much less of what he was about than these later "speculators" and philosophers. The extract is made from the Essay "on the Mosaic Cosmogony."

"But, if we regard it as the speculation of some Hebrew Descartes or Newton, promulgated in all good faith as the best and most probable account that could be then given of God's universe, it resumes the dignity and value of which the writers in question have done their utmost to deprive it. It has been sometimes felt as a difficulty to taking this view of the case, that the writer asserts so solemnly and unhesitatingly that for which he must have known that he had no authority; but this arises only from our modern habits of thought, and from the modesty of assertion which the spirit of true science has taught us. Mankind has learned caution through repeated slips in the process of tracing out the truth.

"The early speculator was harassed by no such scruples, and asserted as facts what he knew in reality only as probabilities: but we are not on that account to doubt his perfect good faith; nor need we attribute to him wilful misrepresentation, or consciousness of asserting that which he knew not to be true. He had seized one great truth, in which, indeed, he anticipated the highest revelation of modern inquiry; namely, the unity of the design of the world, and its subordination to one sole Maker and Lawgiver. With regard to details, observation failed him. He knew little of the earth's surface, or of its shape and place in the universe; the infinite varieties of organized existences which people it, the distinct floras and faunas of its different continents were unknown to him; but he saw that all which lay within his observation had been formed for the benefit and service of man, and the goodness of the Creator to his creatures was the thought predominant in his mind. Man's closer relation to his Maker is indicated by the representation that he was formed last of all creatures, and in the visible likeness of God. For ages, this simple view of creation satisfied the wants of man, and formed a sufficient basis of theological teaching, and if modern research now shows it to be physically untenable, our respect for the narrative which has played so important a part in the culture of our race need be in nowise diminished."—Pp. 277, 278.

(3.) Christianity is to be adjusted to new disclosures about the various orders of beings in the earth. These disclosures, it would perhaps be admitted by the new Christian philosophers, are not quite complete or fully defined, but they are so far advanced, and promise so much in the future, that it is at least

proper that the friends of the Bible should begin to *think* of the way in which the statements there are to be adjusted to them. It has been the commonly received belief of mankind that the Bible teaches that God *made* man in the proper sense of the term "*made*," as a distinct act of creation, constituting him a quite distinct being from all the other animals upon the earth, or creating him so distinct and peculiar that he could not, in body or in soul, be "*developed*" from any of the inferior orders of being; that, in like manner, God *made* the various orders of beings in the air, on the earth, and in the waters, so distinct in their species, in their original formation, and so confined within certain limits, that the one cannot be "*developed*" into another, or that there are boundaries in their constitution which they do not pass; that originally distinct pairs were created from which all the others have sprung, and that they were created at about the time when man appeared upon the earth; that the different races of animals had each one, in respect to its creation, a single "*centre*," or, in other words, that there have not been different acts of 'creation' in regard to each of the kinds of animals in different, and perhaps many, centres upon the earth:—that, for example, all elephants are descended from an original pair, created at the beginning, and that they have not sprung up since from different 'centres' in Bengal, in Ceylon, in Caffraria, as occasion required; that all salmon had their origin from a single pair, and not that they have sprung up at successive periods as they were needed—now in the waters on the Atlantic slope, and now in those on the Pacific slope; now in the waters of Scotland, and now in the waters that flow into the Indian Ocean; that in like manner all human beings have sprung from one pair, Adam and Eve, and not that they have had different 'centres' of creation, or that men and women have been formed, as occasion required, in different places, and constituting different races—the Mongolian race, with its proper head, its 'Adam and Eve,—and the Caucasian, the Ethiopian, the American, each springing from an original and independent act of creation, or with its own proper ancestry representing that type of humanity. In other words, it has been understood

that the doctrine of the Bible is that the race is properly *one*; one in its origin, one in its fall, one in its redemption. To a different form of belief all this is now to be adjusted. Either the whole matter of 'creation' is to be surrendered, and we are to admit that all that we see is the result of 'development,' or, we are to believe, as the result of Messrs. Crosse and Weeke's experiments, of Dr. Darwin's patient investigation, sustained by Mr. Owen's admissions, either that the different orders of animals, including man, have been formed at different 'centres,' and are, therefore, of different 'races,' or that the different races of beings on the earth, embracing *all* the species, are developed from a single pair, or from a simple 'monad,' the weaker dying in the struggle of development, and the stronger surviving, until after an infinite number of struggles, and an infinite waste of being, continued through almost infinite cycles of ages, the earth, the waters, and the air, are at last peopled with the different species and orders of beings which now exist. The old faith on this subject, it is supposed, cannot "hold out above a year or two; just long enough to give the philosophers time enough to finish their experiments." Tracts for Priests and People, p. 19.

(4.) The idea of prophecy is to be given up, and Christianity is to be adjusted to the belief that what have been generally understood to be *prophecies*, in the sense that certain men were endowed beyond any limits of their natural capacities, or any power of mere sagacity, to foretell future events, are to be explained by the idea that they are "noble old Eastern poems, full of symbolism, like other Eastern poems;" that many of these 'old poems' referred to events passing before the eyes of the writers themselves, and are designedly presented in this mode of gorgeous imagery, as if referring to future events; that for the most part these representations are vague and unmeaning, and that where there is any definiteness of time, as in the Book of Daniel, (ch. xi.,) or any mention of a name, as in Isaiah, (ch. xlv. 1,) such a fact demonstrates that the so-called prophecy was written *after* the event. So Porphyry long since held in regard to the prophecies in Daniel, admitting that they described with entire exactness the events

which had actually occurred, but maintaining that they were written *after* the events themselves. If *neither* of the modes above suggested will explain what have been called "*prophecies*;" if they cannot be resolved into old "poems," gorgeous in their imagery, and sometimes happy in their coincidences, like Virgil's *Pollio*, or, like dreams; or if it is not to be conceded that they were written *after* the events referred to, then Christianity is to be adjusted to the idea that they may be explained on the principle of *clairvoyance*, or on the same principles as the ravings of the Priestess of Delphi. Thus, with great apparent candor, and yet with some *slight* show of misgiving, as if not wholly certain whether the same result in the explanation of prophecy *might* not have been reached in some other way, Vice-Principal Williams (*Recent Inquiries in Theology*, p. 79,) says:

"Why he should add to his moral and metaphysical basis of prophecy a notion of foresight by vision of particulars or a kind of *clairvoyance*, though he admits it to be a natural gift, consistent with fallibility, is not so easy to explain. One would wish he might have intended only the power of seeing the ideal in the actual, or of tracing the divine government in the movements of men. He seems to mean more than presentiment or sagacity, and this element in his system requires proof."—*P.* 79.

Thus Dr. McCosh says of the Chevalier Bunsen, in a passage already quoted, "He was a firm believer in mesmerism and clairvoyance, and *was apt to connect them with the inspiration of the writers of the Bible*," (*The Supernatural in Relation to the Natural*, p. 365;) and thus Bunsen himself says:

"Die Kraft des Schauens, die im Menschen verborgen liegt, und, von der Naturnothwendigkeit befreit, in hebräischen Prophetenthum sich zur wahren Weltanschauung erhoben hat, . . . ist der Schlüssel," &c.—*Gott in der Geschichte*, p. 149.

"Jene Herrlichkeit besteht nicht in dem Vorhersagen. . . . Dieses haben sie gemein mit manchen Aussprüchen der Pythia, . . . und mit vielen Weissagungen der Hellsheerinnen dieses Jahrhunderts." *Id.* p. 151.

So, also, in another passage, (*Gott in Geschichte*, p. 141,) translated: "The word which we, after the *lxx.*, translate *Prophets*, means, in the Hebrew, *Inspired*. Their original designation was *Seers*—men who *saw*. Clairvoyance (the so-called magnetic sight) and prophesying in the ecstatic state,

were of remote antiquity amongst the Jews, and their neighbors; and Joseph, a man of a waking spirit, who, as a growing youth, possessed a natural gift of second sight, was able, as man, to see visions in his cup, just as the Arab boy in Cairo, still sees them in his bowl." (*Aids to Faith*, p. 98.)

As showing the estimate entertained of prophecy by the authors of the "Essays and Reviews," and by those who propose to reconstruct Christianity according to the principles laid down in that volume, or what Christianity must become if the principles advocated by that class of writers are true principles, we make a single extract from the "Recent Inquiries in Theology:"

"With the revival of learning began a reluctant and wavering, yet inevitable retreat from the details of patristic exposition, accompanied with some attempts to preserve its spirit. Even Erasmus looked that way; Luther's and Calvin's strong sense impelled them some strides in the same direction: but Grotius, who outweighs, as a critic, any ten opposites, went boldly on the road. In our own country, each successive defence of the prophecies, in proportion as its author was able, detracted something from the extent of literal prognostication; and either laid stress on the moral element, or urged a second, as the spiritual sense. Even Butler foresaw the possibility, that every prophecy in the Old Testament might have its elucidation in contemporaneous history; but literature was not his strong point, and he turned aside, endeavoring to limit it, from an unwelcome idea. Bishop Chandler is said to have thought twelve passages in the Old Testament directly Messianic: others restricted this character to five. Paley ventures to quote only one. Bishop Kidder conceded freely an historical sense in Old Testament texts, remote from adaptations in the New. The apostolic Middleton pronounced firmly for the same principle. Archbishop Newcome and others proved in detail its necessity. Coleridge, in a suggestive letter, preserved in the memoirs of Cary, the translator of Dante, threw secular prognostication altogether out of the idea of prophecy. Dr. Arnold and his truest followers bear, not always consistently, on the same side. On the other hand, the declamatory assertions, so easy in pulpits or on platforms, and aided sometimes by powers which produce silence rather than conviction, have not only kept alive, but magnified with uncritical exaggeration, whatever the Fathers had dreamt or modern rhetoric could add, tending to make prophecy miraculous. Keith's edition of Newton need not be here discussed. Davison of Oriel, with admirable skill, threw his argument into a series, as it were, of hypothetical syllogisms, with only the defect (which some readers overlook,) that his minor premise can hardly, in a single instance, be proved. Yet the stress which he lays on the moral element of prophecy atones for his sophistry as regards the predictive. On the whole, even in England, there is a wide gulf

between the arguments of our genuine critics, with the convictions of our most learned clergy on the one side, and the assumptions of popular declamation on the other."—Pp. 73—75.

(5.) There is to be an entire new adjustment of Christianity on the subject of miracles. The tendency in the study of the physical sciences by the class of men represented by the Westminster Review, is to the opinion that the universe is under the control of *laws* which are absolute, unvarying, and universal; that those laws, so far as understood, are never deviated from, and that phenomena which have not yet been reduced to any of those laws are nevertheless subject to the control of laws which are not yet fully understood, but which, when understood, will furnish an explanation of *these* facts as consistent as in any case where the causes are now known; and that, in respect to *all* the events which have occurred, or which will occur in our world, it is simply a question of *time*, or a question limited by man's ability, whether those laws shall be understood. In other words, the idea is, that there is, and there has been, no direct divine interference to produce effects which lie beyond the range of those fixed laws; or that, in the administration of the affairs of the universe, God never departs from the laws which have been ordained. It is assumed that there are no such interferences now; and with this, as a point which is regarded as indisputable, the mind looks on all in the past that has the appearance of the marvellous and the miraculous, and supposes that there is either defect in the *testimony* by which such facts are affirmed to have occurred, or that, if they occurred, it will be found that they can be explained by some *law* not as yet fully understood.

It is true that this ground is not openly taken by the writers of the "Essays and Reviews;" but it is true that it *is* taken by the writers in the Westminster Review, and that there is, among the authors of the "Essays and Reviews," and the writers of that school, a manifest *disposition*, if possible, to explain all that has occurred, or that is occurring, in accordance with this view. It is certain that there is a *demand* of that kind made by a very large class of the cultivators of science; that they proceed on the supposition of the absolute universality and uniformity of the laws of nature; that they insist that this

shall be conceded by the friends of Christianity, whatever may be the result; and that there is a strong *disposition* on the part of the professed advocates of Christianity in the "Essays and Reviews," if possible, to accede to the demand:—in other words, to explain the facts of the New Testament on this supposition, or to *adjust* Christianity somehow to these demands of science.

The *tendency*, on this subject, in the class of minds represented by the writers of the "Essays and Reviews," though we admit that they have not conceded *all* that would be satisfactory to the Westminster Review, and *all* that would be demanded by scientific men avowedly infidel, may be seen by a few extracts which we shall now introduce. In the American edition of the "Essays and Reviews," there is an "Appendix" on "The present relations of Science and Religion," by the Rev. Frederick Temple, D. D., Head Master of Rugby School, author of the first of the "Essays" on "The education of the World." This "Appendix" consists of a sermon preached before the University of Oxford, during the meeting of the British Association, July 1, 1860, and has an importance, therefore, derived not merely from the name and position of the author, but from the *place* where the sermon was preached. As preached and published, it shows what *may* be preached at Oxford, and what may be regarded, to some extent, certainly, as the views cherished by the "British Association" for Science. In that discourse the author says:

"Science has been called the handmaid of theology, and theology has often had recourse to science for arguments to prove or confirm her fundamental propositions. But it is remarkable that theology has almost always for this purpose dwelt chiefly, not on the scientific, but on the unscientific statements of science. Arguments have been commonly extracted, not from the revelations of science, but from her confessions; and theology has begun where science has ended. It has been common to trace the power of God, not in that which is universal, but in that which is individual; not in the laws of nature, but in any apparent interference with those laws; not in the maintenance, but in the creation of the universe. And sometimes such stress has been laid upon these arguments, that to deny them was held to be a denial of their conclusions; and men were thought impious who attempted to represent the present order of the solar system or the existence of animal life as the work of natural causes, and not the direct handiwork of God himself. *And yet spontaneous generation*

was long believed in by the most religious men, and there seems no more reason why the solar system should not have been brought into its present form by the slow working of natural causes, than the surface of the earth, about whose gradual formation most students are now agreed. The fact is, one idea is now emerging into supremacy in science, a supremacy which it never possessed before, and for which it still has to fight a battle; and that is the idea of law. Different orders of natural phenomena have in time past been held to be exempt from that idea, either tacitly or avowedly. The weather, the thunder and lightning, the crops of the earth, the progress of disease, whether over a country or in an individual, these have been considered as regulated by some special interference, even when it was already known that the recurrence of the seasons, the motions of the planets, the periodic winds, and other phenomena of the same kind, were subject to invariable laws. But the steady march of science has now reached the point when men are tempted, or rather compelled, to jump at once to a universal conclusion: all analogy points one way, and none another. And the student of science is learning to look upon fixed laws as universal, and many of the old arguments which science once supplied to religion, are in consequence rapidly disappearing. How strikingly altered is our view from that of a few centuries ago, is shown by the fact that the miracles recorded in the Bible, which were once looked on as the bulwarks of the faith, are now felt by very many to be difficulties in their way; and commentators endeavor to represent them, not as mere interferences with the laws of nature, but as the natural action of still higher laws, belonging to a world whose phenomena are only half revealed to us.

“It is evident that this change in science necessitates a change in its relation to faith. If law be either almost or altogether universal, we must look for the finger of God in that law: we must expect to find him manifesting his love, his wisdom, his infinity, *not in individual acts of will*, but in a perfection of legislation rendering all individual action needless; we must find his providence in that perfect adaptation of all the parts of the machine to one another, which shall have the effect of tender care, though it proceed by an invariable action. The vast consequences which flow from a few simple properties of matter, the profusion of combinations, the beauty, the order, the happiness which abound in the creation in consequence of these, such must be now the teachers of the man of science to make him feel that God is with him in all his studies.”—Pp. 488, 489.

In like manner we have in the “Essay” of the late Professor Baden Powell, “On the Study of the Evidences of Christianity,” (Recent Inquiries in Theology, pp. 106–163,) statements of a similar tendency and character, showing, as far as the similarity goes, that the head master of Rugby School said nothing on that occasion which was contrary to what was deemed allowable at Oxford.

Then we have, in that "Essay,"

(a.) The manifestation of a disposition to *undervalue* the testimony from miracles as a proof of revealed religion, as compared with the views which have been taken on the subject by the Church heretofore.

"The force of the appeal to miracles must ever be essentially dependent on the preconceptions of the parties addressed. Yet, even in an age or among a people entertaining an indiscriminate belief in the supernatural, the allegation of particular miracles as evidential may be altogether vain; the very extent of their belief may render it ineffective in furnishing proofs to authenticate the communications of any teacher as a divine message. The constant belief in the miraculous may neutralize all evidential distinctions which it may be attempted to deduce. Of this we have a striking instance on record, in the labors of the missionary, Henry Martyn, among the Persian Mahometans. They believed readily all that he told them of the Scripture miracles, but directly paralleled them by wonders of their own. They were proof against any arguments from the resurrection, because they held that their own sheiks had the power of raising the dead."—*Pp.* 133-134.

"Those who have reflected most deeply on the nature of the argument from external evidence, will admit that it would naturally possess very different degrees of force as addressed to different ages; and, in a period of advanced physical knowledge, the reference to what was believed in past times, if at variance with principles now acknowledged, could afford little ground of appeal, in fact would damage the argument rather than assist it.

"Even some of the older writers assign a much lower place to the *evidence of miracles*, contrasting it with the conviction of *real faith*, as being merely a preparatory step to it. Thus an old divine observes, 'Adducuntur primum ratione exteri ad fidem, et quasi præparantur; . . . signis ergo et miraculis via fidei per sensus et rationem sternitur.'"—*P.* 124.

"The more knowledge advances, the more it has been and will be acknowledged that Christianity, as a real religion, must be viewed apart from connection with physical things.

"The first dissociation of the spiritual from the physical was rendered necessary by the palpable contradictions disclosed by astronomical discovery with the letter of Scripture. Another still wider and more material step has been effected by the discoveries of geology. More recently, the antiquity of the human race and the development of species, and the rejection of the idea of 'creation,' have caused new advances in the same direction.

"In all these cases there is, indeed, a direct discrepancy between what had been taken for revealed truth and certain undeniable existing monuments to the contrary.

"But these monuments were interpreted by science and reason, and there are other deductions of science and reason referring to alleged

events which, though they have left no monuments or permanent effects behind them, are not the less legitimately subject to the conclusions of positive science, and require a similar concession and recognition of the same principle of the independence of spiritual and of physical truth."—*P.* 145.

(*b.*) The expression of a belief that the laws of nature are so universal and unchanging that *all* the phenomena which have actually occurred in our world may yet be resolved into those laws, and that those which *seem* to be miraculous may, when the subject is fully understood, be placed in the same category as natural events, and take their place as occurring under established laws of nature; while those which can be explained by no such operations of law will take their place with the alleged miraculous "tongues" of the Rev. Edward Irving, or the marvels in the heathen world. Thus, in the Essay above referred to, Professor Powell says:

"If, at the present day, any very extraordinary and unaccountable fact were exhibited before the eyes of an unbiased, educated, well-informed individual, and supposing all suspicion of imposture put out of the question, his only conclusion would be that it was something he was unable at present to explain; and, if at all versed in physical studies, he would not for an instant doubt either that it was really due to some natural cause, or that, if properly recorded and examined, it would at some future time receive its explanation by the advance of discovery."—*P.* 121.

"Such are the arguments of those who have failed to grasp the positive scientific idea of the power of the inductive philosophy, or the *order of nature*. The boundaries of nature exist only where our present knowledge places them; the discoveries of to-morrow will alter and enlarge them. The inevitable progress of research must, within a longer or shorter period, unravel all that seems most marvellous; and what is at present least understood, will become as familiarly known to the science of the future as those points which a few centuries ago were involved in equal obscurity, but are now thoroughly understood."—*P.* 123.

"The enlarged critical and inductive study of the natural world cannot but tend powerfully to evince the inconceivableness of imagined interruptions of natural order or supposed suspensions of the laws of matter, and of that vast series of dependent causation which constitutes the legitimate field for the investigation of science, whose constancy is the sole warrant for its generalizations, while it forms the substantial basis for the grand conclusions of natural theology. Such would be the grounds on which our convictions would be regulated as to *marvellous events at the present day*; such the rules which we should apply to *the like cases narrated in ordinary history*."—*P.* 124.

"It was formerly argued that every Theist must admit the credi-

bility of miracles ; but this, it is now seen, depends on the *nature* and *degree* of his Theism, which may vary through many shades of opinion. It depends, in fact, on the precise view taken of the divine attributes, such, of course, as is attainable *prior* to our admission of revelation, or we fall into an argument in a vicious circle."—*Pp.* 127–128.

"To take a single instance, we may refer to the alleged miraculous 'tongues' among the followers of the late Mr. Irving, some years ago. It is not, and was not, a question of *records* or *testimony*, or fallibility of *witnesses*, or exaggerated or fabulous *narratives*. *At the time* the matter was closely scrutinized and inquired into, and many perfectly unprejudiced, and even sceptical persons, themselves witnessed the effects, and were fully convinced—as, indeed, were most candid inquirers at the time—that, after all reasonable or possible allowance for the influence of delusion or imposture, beyond all question *certain extraordinary manifestations did occur*. But just as little as the *mere fact* could be disputed, did any sober-minded person, except those *immediately interested*, or *influenced by peculiar views*, for a moment believe those effects to be *miraculous*. Even granting that they could not be explained by any known form of nervous affection, or on the like physiological grounds, still, that they were in some way to be ascribed to natural causes, as yet perhaps little understood, was what no one of ordinary cultivated mind or dispassionate judgment ever doubted."—*P.* 122.

"The main assertion of Paley is, that it is impossible to conceive a revelation given except by means of miracles. This is his primary axiom; but this is precisely the point which the modern turn of reasoning most calls in question, and rather adopts the belief that a revelation is then most credible, when it appeals least to violations of natural causes. Thus, if miracles were, in the estimation of a former age, among the chief *supports* of Christianity, they are at present among the main *difficulties* and hinderances to its acceptance."—*P.* 158.

"In an age of physical research like the present, all highly cultivated minds and duly advanced intellects have imbibed, more or less, the lessons of the inductive philosophy, and have, at least in some measure, learned to appreciate the grand foundation conception of universal law; to recognize the impossibility even of *any two material atoms* subsisting together without a determinate relation; of any action of the one on the other, whether of equilibrium or of motion, without reference to a physical cause; of any modification whatsoever in the existing conditions of material agents, unless through the invariable operation of a series of eternally impressed consequences, following in some necessary chain of orderly connection, however imperfectly known to us. So clear and indisputable, indeed, has this great truth become, so deeply seated has it now been admitted to be in the essential nature of sensible things and of the external world, that not only do all philosophical inquirers adopt it as a primary principle and guiding maxim of all their researches, but what is most worthy of remark, minds of a less comprehensive capacity, accustomed to reason on topics of another character, and on more contracted views, have at the present day been constrained to evince some concession to this grand principle, even when seeming to oppose it."—*Pp.* 150–151.

“No testimony,” we are told on the same authority, “can reach to the supernatural; testimony can only apply to apparent sensible facts; testimony can only prove an extraordinary, and perhaps inexplicable occurrence of phenomenon; *that it is due to supernatural causes is entirely dependent on the previous belief and ASSUMPTION of the parties.*” (Quoted in the “Aids to Faith,” p. 14.)

(c.) It is maintained that the evidence of religion does not depend on miracles, but on faith; on the moral sense; on the conformity of the doctrines which are revealed to our innate conviction of what is true, or that “the human mind is competent to sit as a moral and spiritual tribunal on a professed revelation.” Thus it is said:

“After all, the *evidential* argument has but little actual weight with the generality of believers. The high moral convictions, often referred to for internal evidence, are, to say the least, probably really felt by very few, and the appeal made to miracles as *proofs of revelation* by still fewer. A totally different feeling actuates the many, and the spirit of faith is acknowledged where there is little disposition to reason at all, or where moral and philosophical considerations are absolutely rejected on the highest religious grounds, and everything referred to the sovereign power of divine grace.”—*Essays and Reviews*, P. 144.

And again:

“To conclude, an alleged miracle can only be regarded in one of two ways—either (1) abstractedly, as a physical event, and therefore to be investigated by reason and physical evidence, and referred to physical causes, possibly to *known* causes, but at all events to some higher cause or law, if at present unknown: it then ceases to be supernatural, yet still might be appealed to in support of religious truth, especially as referring to the state of knowledge and apprehensions of the parties addressed in past ages. Or (2) as connected with religious doctrine, regarded in a second light, asserted on the authority of inspiration. In this case, it ceases to be capable of investigation by reason, or to own its dominion. It is accepted on religious grounds, and can appeal only to the principle and influence of faith.”—*Ibid.*, P. 160.

And again:

“The ‘*reason of the hope that is in us*’ is not restricted to *external* signs, nor to any one kind of evidence, but consists of such assurance as may be most satisfactory to each earnest individual inquirer’s own mind; and the true acceptance of the entire revealed manifestation of Christianity will be most worthily and satisfactorily based on that

assurance of 'faith,' by which, the apostle affirms, 'we stand,' (2 Cor. ii. 24;) and which, in accordance with his emphatic declaration, must rest, 'not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.' (1 Cor. ii. 5.)—*Ibid.*, P. 162.

Our space admits no further extracts, and these, we apprehend, are sufficient to put our readers in possession of the demands which are made on this age, in the readjustment of Christianity. To these points it is supposed that the human mind, in its progress, has come; from these points it is held that it is not to recede: and as, in former times, Christianity, as held in any particular age, has been modified and adjusted secretly or by violence to that age; as the Papal form has been adjusted, under Protestantism and by Protestantism, to better views of mental philosophy, and better notions of liberty than prevailed in the dark ages; as Protestants have rejected the ancient interpretation of the Bible which proceeded on the supposition that the Ptolemaic system of astronomy was true; and as, in more modern times, the former views of the creation of the world within a period not more remote than six thousand years have given place to the doctrine that the earth has existed for perhaps millions of ages, so it is *now* demanded that the older forms of faith shall be adjusted to the views which we have presented above on the subject of inspiration; on the long continued existence and the origin of our race; on prophecy, and on miracles. These are the demands. In this work the Chevalier Bunsen was engaged when he died. In this work Baden Powell was engaged, as among the last acts of his life. In this work the living authors of the Articles in the "Essays and Reviews" were and are engaged. In this work Dr. Hedge is engaged, by commending those "Essays and Reviews" to the favorable notice of the Christian people of the United States. To this result the Westminster Review insists that the Church shall be driven; and that, if such an adjustment fails, the Bible shall be classed with the Koran and the Vedas.

The great inquiry of the age, so far as religion is concerned, we apprehend, is: How is this question to be solved? How much of these demands, if any, are to be conceded? How many of these demands may be yielded, if any, and the Bible still be received as a revelation from God?

To the task of solving these inquiries three of the works at the head of our Article are devoted: the first, "Tracts for Priests and People," like the "Essays and Reviews," a collection of voluntary and independent essays on the various points referred to; the two others, the "Aids to Faith" and the "Replies to Essays and Reviews," the result of an avowed effort to vindicate the ancient forms of ancient belief, made under the best auspices, and summoning to the aid of "Faith," it may be presumed, the best talent in the English Church.

The first of these works is entitled "Tracts for Priests and People by various authors," issued by the same press as the "Essays and Reviews" in our own country, and therefore it may be presumed, coming before the American public with the sanction of the Unitarian denomination, and representing the views of that denomination. The volume embraces the following subjects:—"Religio Laici;" "The Mote and the Beam, a Clergyman's Lessons from the Present Panic;" "The Atonement as a Fact and as a Theory;" "The Signs of the Kingdom of Heaven;" "An appeal to Scripture on the question of Miracles;" "On Terms of Communion;" "A Dialogue of Doubt; Morality and Divinity; and on Laws of Nature and faith therein, and on Positive Philosophy;" respectively by Thomas Hughes, author of "Tom Brown's School Days;" Rev. F. D. Maurice, Incumbent of St. Peter's, St. Marylebone; Rev. Francis Garden, Sub-Dean of her Majesty's Chapels Royal; Rev. John Llewelyn Davies, Rector of Christ Church, St. Marylebone; J. N. Langley, and J. M. Ludlow, "all of whom have hitherto been members of the English Church." p. vii. The object and origin of these Tracts are thus stated:

"These tracts were commenced about six months ago. The controversy respecting the "Essays and Reviews," which has not subsided yet, was then at its height. Clergymen and laymen were told that they must either declare their sympathy with the book openly, or must unite in condemning it.

"The writers of these Tracts felt that they could take neither of these courses. They could not declare their sympathy with the book; for it seemed to them almost entirely negative; hinting at faults in the prevalent religious opinions of the day, but not investigating them; hesitating dislike to certain obligations which are imposed upon churchmen, but not stating or considering what those obligations are; leaving an impression upon devout Christians that something in their

faith is untenable, when they want to find what in it is tenable; suggesting that earnest infidels in this day have much to urge on behalf of their doubts and difficulties; never fairly asking *what* they have to urge, *what are* their doubts and difficulties.

"The very same reason which hindered the writers of those Tracts from accepting the teaching of the "Essays and Reviews," hindered them from joining in the popular denunciation of them, or in appeals to ecclesiastical authorities against them. Those denunciations and appeals took an almost entirely negative form. They contradicted and slandered objectors; they were not assertions of a belief; they led Christians away from the Bible to apologies for the Bible, from the creeds which they confess to certain notions about the creeds, from practice to disputation. They met no real doubts in the minds of unbelievers; they only called for the suppression of all doubts. They confounded the opinions of the day with the faith once delivered to the saints. They tended to make anonymous journalists the lawgivers of the church. They tended to discourage clergymen from expressing manfully what is in their hearts, lest they should incur the charge of being unfaithful to their vows. They tended to hinder all serious and honest co-operation between men who are not bound together in a sectarian agreement, lest they should make themselves responsible for opinions different from their own."—Pp. 3-5.

The work is designed, as we have remarked, to take a middle ground, and to show that the opinions presented in the "Essays and Reviews," though in many respects erroneous and of dangerous tendency, are not inconsistent with an honest subscription to the Articles of the English Church, and are to be tolerated with that liberty which is demanded by Christianity as it advances from age to age. The work is written with freshness, and under the impulse of a warm personal interest in the undertaking. The hearts of the writers are manifestly in their work. Their sympathies are in the main with the writers of the "Essays and Reviews." They demand for the English Church liberty to occupy that wide and not very accurately marked territory which lies between Rationalism in Germany, Unitarianism in England, and Arminianism every where, on the one hand, and the strictest form of Trinitarianism and Calvinism on the other. It is a work which, as we have seen, has been commended by Unitarians in this country, and it may with propriety be commended by the editor to them, as its principles would so far accord with the views of that denomination as to allow them to occupy that wide territory of belief and unbelief which lies between the faith of Theodore Parker and Dr. Chan-

ning. A few very brief extracts will sufficiently indicate the doctrinal position of the book.

"He came to lead us men, His brethren, back into perfect understanding of and submission to that will,—to make us at one with it; and this He did triumphantly by His own perfect obedience to that will, by sacrificing Himself even to death for us, because it was the will of His and our Father that He should give Himself up wholly and unreservedly; thus, by His one sacrifice, redeeming us, and leaving us an example that we too should sacrifice ourselves to Him for our brethren. Thus I believe in the Atonement."—P. 26.

"I believe that God has given us these Scriptures, this Bible, to instruct us in these the highest of all truths. Therefore I reverence this Bible as I reverence no other book; but I reverence it because it speaks of Him, and His dealings with us. *The Bible has no charm or power of its own.* It may become a chain around men's necks, an idol in the throne of God, to men who will worship the book, and not Him of whom the book speaks. There are many signs that this is, or is fast becoming, the case with us; but it is our fault, and not the Bible's fault."—P. 27.

"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 promising 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." Pp. 133-134.

"To sum up what I have wished to enforce. The Atonement, the reconciliation of earth and heaven, of God and Man, the redemption of man through Christ, is what is denied, I am sure, by no man who worships Christ as his God, and reposes on Him as his Elder Brother. Every such man, in so far as he is awake and earnest, traces every good thing he has to the work and the intercession of his great High Priest. But many such men may fail of reconciling themselves to the theory of vicarious punishment, may find that to them it in no way manifests the righteousness of God, may be unable to see anything in Scripture which warrants the theory."—Pp. 143-144.

"It would be a great advantage if we could get rid of the term miracle altogether. It carries with it some arbitrary definition—some 'conception of a miracle'—which is foreign to the ideas of the New Testament. And the word is not wanted. In a great majority of the places in which we have 'miracles' in our version, we ought to replace it by 'signs.' The word itself is exactly equivalent to 'wonders.' Signs, wonders, and powers are what we have to do with in the New Testament."—Pp. 167-168.

"The Scriptures then do not contain the modern logical notion of a Revelation attested by miracles. They represent the Son of God as naturally doing mightier works than other men did, but they do not place his acts, or any part of them, in a class called 'supernatural' by themselves. They give no hint of their having been sifted by incredulous philosophers, and ascertained to be supernatural. They present no careful array of the evidence of those who witnessed them. Their language concerning the signs and wonders of the gospel is such, that, if any one should think it worth while to maintain the hypothesis that, in some future age, through the advancing knowledge and power bestowed by the Creator upon the human race, men will be enabled without supernatural agency to do the very works which Christ did, no sentence could be quoted from Scripture to condemn it. We may have other good reasons for rejecting such a hypothesis; I only mention it for the sake of illustrating the language of the Scriptures. The tendency of the Scriptural writers is not to draw the line sharply between the natural and supernatural, but to obliterate it."—Pp. 173-174.

The work entitled "Aids to Faith," embraces essays on the following subjects: "On Miracles as Evidences of Christianity," by H. L. Mansel, B. D.; "On the Study of the Evidences of Christianity," by William Fitzgerald, D. D., Lord Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross; "On Prophecy," by A. McCaul, D. D., Professor of Hebrew in King's College, London; "On Ideology and Subscription," by F. C. Cook, M. A., Chaplain in ordinary to the Queen, etc.; "On the Mosaic Record in Creation," by Prof. McCaul; "On the Genuineness and Authenticity of the Pentateuch," by George Rawlinson, M. A., Camden Professor of Ancient History in Oxford; "On Inspiration," by Edward Harold Browne, B. D., Professor of Divinity in Cambridge; "On the Death of Christ," by William Thompson, D. D., Lord Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol, Editor of the work; and "On Scripture and Interpretation," by Charles John Ellicott, B. D., Dean of Exeter, and Professor of Divinity, King's College, London. The book is such a book as might be expected to be made in the circumstances of the case. It is a book "made to order." It has all the characteristics of a book made by benefited good men; men whose living is at stake, and who at the same time have a real interest in religion; men who have leisure to write, who are not unaccustomed to speak *ex cathedra*, and whose business it is to *instruct* others; men who have probably never felt the difficulties of skepticism

which they are set to combat, and who are therefore little qualified to grapple with suggestions often felt by earnest souls in the search for truth; men of learning, men of position, men of influence; men accustomed to feel that for the purpose in hand a *dictum* may accomplish the purpose of an argument. The work, therefore, with the exception of the article by Professor Mansel, is, in general, dull, cold, dogmatic, perfunctory; it is adapted to convince those who are already convinced, to confirm those in the faith who desire to be confirmed, to strengthen those who are willing to be strengthened, but it is a work which will meet few of the difficulties of a book which is the utterance of troubled hearts. We fear that a remark made by the writer of the last essay in the volume, will be found, in the result, to describe the general effect of the book in regard to the object contemplated by its preparation. "*Those*," says he, "*against whom our observations have been directed, will probably not be affected by any thing that we have said.*"—Aids to Faith, p. 537. We fear also that the judgment of the Westminster Review on the work will not be found to be far out of the way in the estimation of those who have ever been called to contend with skeptical difficulties, when it says: "A few concessions are made which could no longer be withholden, but neutralized and covered up as far as possible; *there is no grappling with the principles brought into issue by the publication of the 'Essays and Reviews,'* either before the public at large, or before the Established Church of the country."—Vol. LXXVIII., p. 292. April, 1862.

The work entitled "Replies to Essays and Reviews," professes, like the "Essays and Reviews," to have been written by those who were "in entire independence of each other, without concert or comparison." "Each author was individually requested by the publishers to write an essay on a subject named, with the especial object of replying to a given essay in the volume of 'Essays and Reviews.'" The volume is issued under the auspices of the Bishop of Oxford, commending it to the world as an answer to the "Essays and Reviews." The subjects, following substantially the same course of discus-

sion as the "Essays and Reviews," are, "The Education of the World." "Bunsen and the Critical School." "Miracles." "The Idea of the National Church." "The Creation Week." "Rationalism." "The Interpretation of Scripture."

This work is also 'written to order,' and has much of the essential characteristics of a work so written. It may be regarded as indicating the High Church method of disposing of the question agitated by the "Essays and Reviews."

Its appearance after the others is one of the evidences of the deep state of alarm produced in England by the "Essays and Reviews." It shows, as the "Tracts for Priests and People" do; as the "Aids to Faith" do; as the articles in the Westminster Review do; as the general tone of the English religious press does, that, either from the position of the writers, from the force of their arguments, or from some prevalent state of feeling in the English mind on the subject of religion, there is real alarm, and real cause for alarm.

This work is designed mainly to bring in the force of authority as a primary element in settling the case, and calming the church. It proceeds on the principle that no change is to be contemplated in the doctrinal articles, or in the form of religion in the Established Church, and that uniformity and perpetuity are to be secured by an appeal to authority, and to the power of traditionary doctrines—the authority of the Fathers. Thus, the Lord Bishop of Oxford, in a preface to the work, says: "Two distinct courses seem to me to be required by such a state of things: *FIRST*, The distinct, solemn, and, if need be, severe decision of authority, that assertions such as these cannot be put forward as possibly true, or even advanced as admitting of question, by honest men. *Secondly*, we need the calm, composed, sincere, scholarlike declaration of positive truth upon the matter in dispute." P. 12. This is the order which the Roman Catholic Church pursued in the case of Galileo and the Reformers; this is the order which the 'Old School' attempted in our own country; this is the order which persecutors generally pursue in attempting to suppress heresy. We do not believe that much will be accomplished in religion until the order is reversed.

We judge, also, that some of the writers, like some in our own country, have very little confidence in the power of *argument* in suppressing error, and that the only hope, in regard to the evils referred to by the "Essays and Reviews," or caused by them, is in the final conflict in the second advent of the Saviour. Thus, in the Essay on "The Education of the World," in reply to that of Dr. Temple on the same subject, Dr. Goulburn says, "What we have to expect as time goes on is, that both evil and good will draw to a head together; that if on one side of us the light will be brighter, on the other the shadows will be darker, *until the Righteous one and the Evil one, in personal manifestations, confront one another on the stage of the earth.*" P. 32.

The work is most thoroughly Episcopal, and the writers do not seem to suppose it possible that religion could survive on the earth if the ecclesiastical establishment of the Church of England was successfully assailed. Thus the very able canon of Westminster, Dr. Wordsworth, allows himself to say: "From the time of the Apostles, for fifteen hundred years, there was no church in Christendom without a Bishop." P. 364.

Of course we do not mean to say that the work is without ability. The very names of the writers assure us that a volume proceeding from their pens must have high claims to public attention. Inferior men would not have been selected for this task under the auspices of the Bishop of Oxford, and the writers are in fact "among the most able and scholarly members of the Episcopal Church." Whatever may occur, Dr. Temple will have occasion to review the manner in which he has made facts bend to theory in his article on the Education World; Dr. Rowland Williams will stand humbled before the world for the mistakes which he has made, or the gross misrepresentations of which he is shown to be guilty in the article on Bunsen and the Critical School; and to the end of life, the author of the article on the Interpretation of Scripture, in the Essays and Reviews, will not forget the caustic severity, the cutting sarcasm, the keen wit of the Canon of Westminster. There is great ability in the work; but it is most sad to reflect that when such vital issues are at stake; when Christianity itself

is assailed, as we believe it to be in the "Essays and Reviews," men prominent in the schools, exalted in the church, eminent for learning, for piety, and for moral worth, cannot, for once, forget that they are *churchmen*; cannot defend Christianity on great and broad and catholic principles; cannot attack the great foe, and bring these mighty weapons of warfare to the defence of the system assailed, without evincing an exclusive sympathy for an established religion, for Diocesan Episcopacy, and for an Anti-Puritan Theology.

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To examine all the points which are noticed in the volumes before us cannot, of course, be expected in an article like ours; yet, without attempting to go into the *argument* as such, a few remarks may be made rather relating to the *progress* which is made in the work of readjustment as thus undertaken by the writers whom we have referred to, than on the argument itself; designed rather to show what is *assumed* by writers of that class than to *disprove* the truth of the positions which they have taken. The remarks which we shall make will relate to certain *facts* which must be admitted on all hands, and which may tend to show that the modes of reasoning adopted only remove the main difficulty a step further back, and that no real difficulty in the case is removed, even if what is assumed to be true should be conceded.

1. One of the main points in the general subject, and one which lies at the foundation of the whole, pertains to *inspiration*; that is, to the question whether the Bible is inspired, or whether there is such a thing as *book revelation*. The main point here, we apprehend, appertains to the *principle* in the case—whether what is implied in the *idea* of a revelation is absurd or not; for when the *principle* is settled, if it can be, the main difficulty would be overcome, and there would be little difference of opinion on the question *where* that revelation has been preserved, or what particular book has a just claim to being such a revelation; whether the Bible, the *Zen-devesta*, or the *Vedas*.

The ground *assumed* in all the reasoning on the subject in the "Essays and Reviews," and in the public sentiment exten-

sively represented by those Essays, is that the revelation in the Bible is substantially the same *in kind* as that which is made to men of eminent genius—men who have been able to strike out great thoughts that have given a new impulse to human affairs; or that it differs in *degree*, not in *kind*, from that which is found in Homer or Shakespeare. The objection of avowed infidels is, of course, essentially the same. It is, that there can be nothing communicated to man which cannot be fairly *measured* by the human powers. The objection to inspiration is substantially the same as the objection to miracles in general, since the imparting of knowledge to a human mind in regard to the future beyond the limits of human sagacity, or of the knowledge of what occurred at a period anterior to the records of history, or of the knowledge of God *above* what the human powers could originate, is essentially of the nature of a miracle; that is, it is bringing in the aid of the Divine Being to accomplish a work whose sole cause *is* God, and which could neither be originated by nor measured by the powers of man. Beyond the natural powers of man; beyond what there is *in* man, and what may be properly conveyed through him as having capacities to be the proper organs through which intelligence may be conveyed to the world, and in the same sense in regard to sacred truths as all other truths, there is, according to the views of inspiration to which we are advertising, *no* inspiration. "It is," says Coleridge, "that one and the same Intelligence is speaking in the unity of a person, which unity is no more broken by the diversity of pipes through which it makes itself audible, than is a tune by the different instruments on which it is played by a consummate musician, equally perfect in all. One instrument may be more capacious than another; but as far as its compass extends, and in what it sounds forth, it will be true to the conception of the master." Quoted in the "Aids to Faith," p. 343. The idea is, that while it may be admitted that God *has* spoken through Isaiah or Samuel, it is him only in the same sense in which it is true that he speaks to any man's soul, according to the measure of his capacity, or in the spiritual and providential direction of enlightened men in every age and nation.

Now we would like to ask of the men who object to the doc-

trine of inspiration on the ground that it is essentially a 'miracle,' or that it is 'supernatural,' a solution of the question about the origin of what is called *genius*, and of what marks the superiority of one mind over another. Is not the fact that such thoughts came into the mind of Plato or Shakespeare, of Bacon, Watt, or Fulton, encompassed with the same difficulties which are implied in the idea of supernatural inspiration; that is, of communicating directly to the world thoughts that God designs to communicate to mankind? If it be said that the thoughts in such cases of *genius* come *through* human powers, and can be *measured* by those human powers, we ask whence were those powers themselves? They are not the result of any transmitted or inherited *genius*; they are not the effect of development from the seminal *genius* of ancestors whose powers are unfolded into this form; they cannot be measured by any thing in the line from which they are descended that has grown to this growth; they are apparently the result of a divine arrangement above any mere 'laws of nature' for the very purpose of throwing these great thoughts upon the world. Assuredly it will not be maintained that the germ of Hamlet, and Lear, and the Tempest, was laid in the hearts of some remote ancestors of Shakespeare, and were in the course of ages developed *into* these wonderful 'creations of *genius*.' It will not be pretended that in the intellect of John Shakespeare, the father of Shakespeare, 'originally a glover, and then a skinner and wool-stapler,'* in Henley Street, in Stratford-on-Avon, there was any thing that could be *developed* into those marvellous works that have placed his son in creative *genius* at the head of the race. And even if all this could be traced back to some germ in some very remote ancestor which had been slowly developed for ages and generations until it at last appeared in the form of Hamlet and Lear, still we would ask what is the true account of the origin of the germ *there*? Had it a beginning there? If so, what *caused* it? Or had *it* also come down as a germ as yet undeveloped, from the beginning of things: and if so what formed or produced it in the beginning? Now, what we are saying is, that in the case supposed in our example, as a specimen of mil-

* Ulrici, *Dramatic art of Shakespeare*, p. 70.

lions of such examples in principle on the earth, there is *something*—that something which we call ‘*genius*’—that lies *above* and *beyond* any of the operations of natural laws; above and beyond any thing of the nature of development; above and beyond any thing that can be measured by what is anterior in time or in order, as *really* as in the visions of Isaiah there is that which is above and beyond all that there was of a similar kind in his origin and training, or as really as there was in the act when Peter healed the lame man in the temple, or when he raised up Tabitha from the dead. Any valid objection in the one case, in the sense of its being of the nature of a ‘miracle,’ or as being ‘supernatural,’ would be a valid objection in the other; any theory which would explain the one case, so far as the point before us is concerned, would explain the other; any argument that the one could not be received, on the ground that it is a departure from ‘the course of nature,’ would be an argument of equal force in the other. Let a man explain the phenomena of *genius*, and he would probably find that he would have little additional embarrassment on the score of inspiration. In either case, we apprehend, the fact for which a solution is to be found is, that there may be such a control over a created mind, either in its origin, or by some mode of communicating with it after its creation, as to lodge a thought in that mind whose existence there cannot be explained by any mere natural laws. We see not that the infidel gains any thing by denying the fact that God can and does suggest thoughts to a mind that is already made, while he cannot but admit that there must have been, in the creation of ‘genius,’ some departure from settled ‘laws,’ or some direct agency in bringing upon the stage a *mind* of remarkable powers. We see not that the Essayists and Reviewers gain any thing by adopting the same principle as the infidel, and by attempting to *explain* what the infidel *rejects*. In either case the difficulty is merely removed a step backward; but it is no removal of a difficulty, and no explanation of a subject, to place it a little further back.

We shall not, we trust, be considered as intending to concede, by these remarks, that there *is* no difference between the play of genius and the teachings of inspiration; or that in the

doctrines of the prophets and the apostles there *is* nothing more than can be explained under some proper view of the phenomena of *genius*. We believe that there *is* a marked difference. But what we are saying is that, so far as we can see, the objections and difficulties in the one case may be urged also in the other; that if the difficulties could be removed in the one case, they might in the other; and that what may be an explanation in the one case, *may* contain, in principle, all that might be necessary in the explanation of the other. For ourselves, we shall not regard it as absurd to suppose that God could have *inspired* the mind of Isaiah when we have in our recollection the fact that he *created* the mind of Pascal; nor shall we think it absurd to believe that he may have made use of the mind of Paul to suggest truths to mankind quite in advance of what the world knew, or could otherwise have known, on subjects of the highest importance, when he created the mind of Bacon to place the world on a higher elevation in regard to science than it had before attained, or than it *could* have attained by any contemporary minds *if* his had not been created.

2. The second point on which Christianity is to be readjusted is, the long duration of the earth itself, and the long duration of man upon it. For the former of these, geology asks that it shall be conceded that the earth itself has existed for an indefinite period, perhaps millions of ages; that that long period was necessary to prepare it for its present inhabitants, and that, during its preparation for the abode of man, countless numbers of races of beings, inferior to its present inhabitants; and adapted to the state of the earth as it then was, have appeared, and played their part, and have vanished forever. For the latter of these points, those who would readjust Christianity and the Bible demand that the Mosaic record, which describes the appearing of *man* upon the earth at about six thousand years ago, shall be so far set aside as to allow the Egyptian records to be regarded as authoritative, and to admit, if necessary, no small part of the hitherto rejected records of the Hindoos in regard to the ancient history of their race.

The former of these, as we have seen, has been readily con-

ceded by the Christian world. The friends of the Bible see no reason why all that the geologist asks in this respect should not be granted, and are willing that the general statement in Genesis i. 1, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," should be laid as far back as the geologist may demand. They are willing to give to geologists ample time for the slowest possible evolution of things upon the earth, and for the most gradual of the processes by which they suppose that the earth was wrought into its present form.

It is now demanded that the other point shall also be conceded, and the authors of the "Essays and Reviews" have undertaken the task of showing that it *must* be conceded; the Westminster Review assumes it as an undoubted fact that the race *has* existed upon the earth for that long period, and that the Mosaic record is false. In the apprehension of the writers of that Review this is no longer a matter of doubt, but may be spoken of as among the settled points pertaining to the past—a point *as* clear as the existence of the earth itself during the long periods claimed by scientific geologists. The Chevalier Bunsen demands a period of "twenty thousand years" as requisite to explain the "changes of commerce" which have occurred upon the earth; the rise and fall of the governments which have existed; the changes of language, and the development of the physical features of the race. He thinks that he finds evidence of this in the Egyptian records. Vice-Principal Williams, as we have seen in the quotation which we have made from the "Recent Inquiries in Theology," (pp. 61-63,) is disposed to concede all that is thus demanded.

Now, whatever credit *may* be due to the Egyptian Records, as interpreted by Lepsius and Bunsen, there are some things, on this general subject, which will make it not altogether easy for the world to embrace this view, and which may show that all the *credulity* in the world is not on the side of those who are willing to believe the records of the Bible.

There are, then, *besides* those Egyptian records as thus interpreted, no such memorials of those ancient times as we have a right to expect to find, *if* the race of man has been upon the earth for a period of twenty thousand years. All the records

of *history* terminate at a period long subsequent to that. No authentic records go back to a period *beyond* that assigned for the appearance of man upon the earth, in the Mosaic records. The Bible states the manner in which man appeared upon the earth, and describes the origin of nations, and the first settlement of the different parts of the world. That account is a statement on that point, clear, and plain, and natural enough, for we see how, *according to that account*, the different nations of the earth *may* have sprung up, and how the fact of the different locations of the nations, and the diversities of language, customs and laws *may* be explained. The statement has, moreover, this element of probability, that in many of those nations the *names* which were originally given to individuals, as stated in the Bible, have been perpetuated in the nations which have descended from them. The account in the tenth chapter of Genesis, apparently quite a dry and uninteresting account—almost as much so as the enumeration of the Grecian hosts at the siege of Troy, in the first book of the Iliad—is one of the most remarkable records in the world; for, taking that as a basis, it is easy to account for the origin of nearly all the ancient nations, and to explain how it was that the earth was peopled. But, setting the Bible aside, and relying simply on the records of the earliest profane histories, nothing is more confused, tangled and inexplicable than the early history of this world. Take away the history of the past which we have in the Bible, and there are at least some two thousand years of the history of the race—even supposing that man appeared upon the earth at so late a period as that assigned by Moses—of which we know nothing, and that, too, the *forming* period, and in many respects the most interesting period of the history of the world. Begin, in the investigation of past events, when ancient profane history begins, and we are plunged into the midst of a state of affairs of whose origin we know nothing, and where the mind wanders in perfect night, and can find no rest. Kingdoms are seen, but no one can tell by whom they were founded; cities appear, whose origin no one knows; heroes are playing their part in the great and mysterious drama, but no one tells us whence they came, and what are their de-

signs; a race of beings appears upon the earth whose origin is unknown, and the past periods of whose existence no one can determine—a race formed no one can tell when, or for what purpose, or by what hand. Vast multitudes of creatures are suffering and dying for causes which no one can explain, and generations, in their own journey to the grave, tread over the monuments of extinct generations, and with the memorials of fearful changes and convulsions in the past all around them of which no one can give an account. Begin the knowledge of the past at the remotest period to which profane history would conduct us, and we are in the midst of chaos, and we cannot advance a step without plunging into deeper night—a night strikingly resembling that of which the oldest poet in the world speaks, when he describes the abode of the dead: “A land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness.” (Job x. 21, 22.) The history of the world—of the whole world—in this respect, is much like the history of the tribes that wandered in the wilds of America when the Western world was disclosed to the eyes of Europeans. Who could tell what was their origin? Who could recover their history? Who could explain whence, or how, or why they came? Who can do it now? The Bible *states*, at least, the way in which the race began, and professes to show how those nations, which, at the oldest period of profane history, we find already organized, and in some degree civilized, were originated; by whom those cities were built; who the heroes *are* that are playing their part in the mysterious drama.

All ancient records, unless it *be* those on which Baron Bunsen relies, and the records of India, agree in regard to the recent origin of nations. They do not even pretend to carry up their own history to a remote period. The Greeks, for example, acknowledge most freely the recent origin of their own, and their indebtedness to others. Herodotus (Book ii. 50, 51,) admits that his countrymen derived a great part of what they possessed from Egypt. Lord Bacon well remarks in regard to the ancient “fables,”—as he justly calls them—of Egypt itself, as thus coming to our times modified by Grecian genius, “The

writings that relate these fables being not delivered as inventions of these writers, but as things before believed and received, appear like a soft whisper from the traditions of more ancient nations, conveyed through the flutes of the Grecians."

Meantime there are no monumental records of those far-distant times—those remote ages beyond the period of the Mosaic record when, according to the theory to which the Bible is to be adjusted, nations played their parts—of those portions of the "twenty thousand years" in the past which lie back of the Mosaic record of the creation of man. There are no records on papyrus, parchment, lead, or rock, to preserve the transactions of those marvellous ages. There are no poems or histories composed then; no orations delivered then. There are no remains of cities or towns. There are no tomb-stones, no sarcophagi, no *mummies* that were then swathed up, and kept to excite our wonder, or to give us information in these latter days. There are no implements of war or peace; no battle-axes; no helmets or shields; no arrow-heads of flint; no chisels or hammers of stone; no remains of aqueducts or bridges; no towers or pyramids; *no human bones*. All, if they ever existed, have been swept away. The ancient monstrosities of the earth, in the forms of the Plesiosaurian and Ichthyosaurian races, have been preserved; serpents, crocodiles, alligators, have been kept; the footprints of enormous birds now unknown to man have been found as they were made in the soft sand, and then solidified into stone; shells in abundance have been preserved, and the cabinets of the learned world are full of the fossil remains of extinct generations, by which, in far distant ages and times,

"Air, water, earth,

By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swam, was walked,"

but not one genuine bone of *man*—prince or peasant; African, Indian, Mongolian, Caucasian; not one pure, undisputed specimen of a human being that lived—that laughed or cried—that built a city or a tent—that married a wife—that caught a fish, or that killed a deer—in all those "twenty thousand years."

Now, what we are required to believe, in this readjustment of Christianity, is, that all these generations of human beings,

so varied and so numerous, and with this long period for development and improvement, lived through so many thousand years, and passed away, leaving to future ages no record whatever of their having lived, unless it be the records of India or the hieroglyphics of Egypt; that they built no cities, the foundations or remains of which can be discovered; that they found out no arts by which their memory could be perpetuated; that they invented no methods of keeping up the knowledge of their existence, on lead, or rocks, or parchment; that they made no such use of iron or the precious metals as to preserve the remembrance of their having lived; that they reared no monuments that have survived to tell who they were; that, after an existence of "twenty thousand years," they passed away, leaving the world in the rude state in which, according to the testimony of all the historical records on which the world has hitherto relied, it was found at the beginning of authentic history; and that all the arts of which we have any knowledge—of war or peace—of poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture—have had their origin, *somehow*, since the period assigned in the Mosaic records to the origin of mankind. *Credat Judæus Apella!*

In the meantime we are also required to believe that the lowest races—the monsters of the ancient geological world—the Dinotherium, the Megatherium, and the Pterodactyls—the monster, "qualified for all services and all elements," that, like Milton's "Fiend"

"O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings or feet, pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies"—

that enormous and shapeless birds—tadpoles—oysters—centipedes—have somehow contrived to preserve the memory of their having *lived*, and appear again in the museums of science, so preserved that their forms can be determined; that their habits can be described; that the age when they appeared can be ascertained; and that the causes why they disappeared can be stated with accuracy: but man—proud, intelligent, warlike, Godlike man; man, that subdues the world; that builds cities; that employs metals to accomplish his purposes; that has control over iron, and gold, and brass—in all those twenty thousand years found out nothing to perpetuate the memory of his

being, and suffered all the means of informing future ages that he lived upon the earth to "slip through his fingers," save what a few old priests in Egypt sketched, in strange and mysterious forms, to be interpreted by two very respectable Germans, Lepsius and Bunsen, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era. Verily it may be presumed that *all* credulity will not have passed away from the earth when the last believer in revelation shall have died—when the last man that supposed that Moses made a true record shall, by death, have escaped from the ridicule of the "scientific" world.

3. The third point which it is demanded shall be surrendered, in order to the readjustment of Christianity, pertains to the origin of species. What that demand is, we have stated above.

There are no opinions more absurd than many which have been held by "scientific" men. With all that there is that is bounded, and fixed, and accurate in true science, yet a collection of the theories advanced and the opinions held by men of "science" in different periods of the world, would have much more the aspect of wild romance than the Arabian Nights, and would surpass in absurdity the wildest legends of the Talmud. Each age has its own theories; and it is remarkable that the general progress of the world does nothing to check and restrain men in the suggestions of absurdities, and in the fact that they find believers in the age in which they are proposed.*

The theory which we are required now to believe, and to which the Bible is to be adjusted, is, that the different beings on the earth had no original prototype that could properly be regarded as the head of existing species; that the orders of animated beings are separated by no fixed and impassable limits; that any one, under certain circumstances, may melt away in its peculiarity, and be moulded into another; that vegetables may become mollusca, and mollusca quadrupeds, fishes, or fowls, men; that there was no original centre of creation for each of the orders of beings now on the earth, but that they have sprung up by spontaneous generation, or by

* Nihil tam absurde dici potest, quod non dicatur ab aliquo philosophorum.
Cicero, De Divinatione ii. 58.

successive acts of creation, or by developement, at various convenient centres on the earth or in the waters; that all the varieties of species on the earth, including man, are the results of "struggles" carried on for indefinite ages, in which countless millions of the "weaker" have become extinct, while the "stronger" have survived, to engage in new "struggles" for the development of new orders of species; and that, in fact, *all* the varieties of beings on the earth *may*, by a more profound analysis, be found to have sprung from a single "monad," in its struggles to develop itself, and to originate new forms of being. This is the latest form of belief, as presented, with great learning, by Dr. Darwin "On the Origin of Species."

This view appeals to man's *faith*; we will not now say to his credulity. It presents, however, some propositions to be believed of such a nature that when a man *has* received them he has come to the Ultima Thule of faith. Beyond the exercise of the faith which will be required to receive this theory, there will be little or nothing to stagger him in any doctrine of revealed religion; in the doctrine of transubstantiation; or in the revelations of Swedenborg. For, according to this theory, elephants, and tadpoles, and men; Bacon, Newton, Plato, the orang-ou-tang and the ape; the lizard, the scorpion, the oyster; the oak, the cedar, the apple, the laurel, and the bramble; the hero of a hundred battles, and the mastiff snarling over his bone; the hunter, the dog with which he hunts, and the animal which he captures and kills; the angler, the worm with which he baits his hook, and the fish which he catches and devours; the malt that lay in the "House that Jack built," and the rat that eat the malt, and the cat that caught the rat, and the dog that worried the cat, and the cow that tossed the dog, and the maiden "all forlorn" that milked the cow, and the man all "tattered and torn" that wooed the maiden, and the priest "all shaven and shorn" that married the man—all are derived from the same origin; all are the results of the "strugglings" of the "strongest" in the formation of "species;" all have, in fact, come from one little "monad," in its "struggles" to develop itself.

It has often happened, it may therefore happen again, that

in the warfare which Science, "so called," has waged against Christianity, the defenders of infidel principles have become engaged in a warfare with each other, and, so far as the Bible is concerned, the issue of the conflict may be safely left with them. It was, not long since, maintained, and it is still maintained in many quarters, that the diversities in the human race are so great that it is impossible that all can have been descended from one pair, and that, consequently, the account of the unity of the race in the Bible must be false. Accordingly, it has been held that there have been different "centres" of creation, or "development," in regard to the races of men; that the Caucasian, the Mongolian, the Ethiopian, and the American races have had each a distinct ancestry and origin; and that although they have, in many respects, the characteristics which distinguish man from the beast, yet that they are in fact separate, and can be called a *race* only as having certain properties in common. This was the argument of Messrs. Nott and Gliddon; this has long since been assumed as one of the settled matters of science by the Westminister Review; and this has been received with special avidity by the advocates of slavery, as justifying the subordination of the African to the Caucasian race.

It is now maintained, however, by Dr. Darwin, and *this* theory, also, is endorsed and commended by the Westminister Review, that, so far from its being true that the diversities in the *human* race are so great that they could not have had the same origin, or that the different races or "species" could not have been derived from one pair, it is a fact that *all* the "species" on earth, all the diversities of existence, have been produced by the "strugglings" of the strongest, and can all be traced to a single "pair," or even to a "monad," in its efforts to develop itself. According to *this* theory, therefore, the believer in the unity of the human race, as stated by Moses, must be *quite safe* in supposing it possible that the Caucasian and African races *may* have sprung from a single pair.

In the mean time, until these "Doctors shall agree," and shall inform us which of these theories is to be believed, it may be prudent for the world to act as if the Bible gave the true

account of the matter; and it may be regarded as wise to act on the opinion generally entertained by mankind, that in the origin of things there *was* a diversity; that the different departments of the material, the vegetable and the animal kingdom had separate and fixed boundaries, now ascertainable by science; and that Lavoisier, and Linnæus, and Buffon have been endeavoring to develop laws actually existing and operative *in* the different departments of the works of nature. It is true that it is not easy to mark the *exact* boundaries between the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal kingdoms, but there *are* such boundaries; it is true that it is not easy to arrange and define the different genera, orders, and classes *in* any one of those kingdoms, and that the work is not yet done, but it has been commenced, as every well-arranged museum will show.

But, though it is not easy to show exactly where one department ends and another begins; where the laws of chemistry cease, and the laws of vegetable life begin; where the laws of vegetable life cease, and the laws of animal life begin; where the kingdom of instinct ends, and the functions of rational life begin, yet there *is* such a limit; and God, not Nature, has so determined the boundary that it cannot be passed. In the world of matter there are sixty or more original elements made known to us by chemistry, where the boundaries between those elements are so *fixed* that they cannot be passed; where the one cannot be transmuted into another; where, however it may unite in combination with others, it remains the same. The oxygen does not become hydrogen, nor the hydrogen nitrogen, nor the nitrogen carbon; lead does not become iron, nor iron tin, silver or gold; gold does not become platinum, nor platinum potassium, nor potassium sodium, nor sodium barium or strontium. However these, any or all of them, may be combined, in the ocean or the atmosphere—in the violet, the oak, the oyster, the panther, or in man—they *are* oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, carbon, lead, iron, tin, silver, gold, platinum, potassium, sodium, barium, strontium still; and when any of them are combined with *life*, and the life which has detached them from their original chemical combinations, and united them in a new form ceases, they return unchanged into their original

forms. A bramble may be cultivated, but it will never become a rose; and the sensitive plant, though it shrinks, as if with virgin modesty and purity, from the most delicate touch, is not a nerve, nor can it can be converted into a nerve. The "philosopher's stone" has not been discovered, nor will it be; but gold will remain gold, and the baser metals will remain baser metals forever, after all the labors of the alchemists and the chemists. We think, therefore, that "the way is not yet prepared" for the adjustment of the Bible to the idea that there have been different "centres" for the creation of man; or that the varieties of the human race have had a different origin; or that all the diversities of "species" on the earth are but the results of the "struggles" of the "strongest"—of the crossings and recrossings of a few original pairs made millions of ages ago, or of the throes of parturition of a solitary "monad" in the inconceivably remote past.

4. The fourth point on which, as we have seen, Christianity is to be readjusted, is prophecy. What concession is demanded on this point, or what view is to be taken of prophecy, in order to meet the demands of this period of the world, we have stated above. The so-called prophecies are to be regarded as old Oriental poems, full of "symbolism," and happy, in some instances, like Virgil's *Pollio*, or like dreams, by coincidences; or, as having been written after the events, and ingeniously composed in the gorgeous style of eastern imagery, to describe those events as if they were yet to occur; or, when these solutions fail, the aid of mesmerism and clairvoyance is to be called in, and this unknown and mysterious power is to furnish the solution of the difficulty.

It is not to vindicate prophecy that we now write, nor to refer to specific prophecies with reference to their fulfilment. That is a task far beyond what could be accomplished in an article like this, and the consideration of this subject must be looked for in the volumes that have been professedly devoted to the vindication and elucidation of the prophecies. Our remarks must be confined to the solution thus proposed of a great and momentous subject.

(a) That God *can* so enlighten, influence or control a human

mind that the future may be perceived and recorded, no one can doubt. As all this knowledge must be with Him, and there is no absurdity in supposing that he *could* in some way, by visions, or signs, or dreams, or words, communicate it to mankind. To deny this, men must deny everything that properly pertains to the idea of *God*.

(b) That God could not have endowed man—all men—with the power of foreseeing the future, as well as of remembering the past, no one can demonstrate. In the nature of mind there does not seem to be any reason why its power should be limited to the range of the *past*, and not embrace also the *future*. It is undoubtedly a characteristic of the divine mind, that, so far as the idea of *past* and *to come* can be applied to God, the one is as equally before Him as the other. In the nature of *mind*, therefore, there is nothing that necessarily confines its powers to the past; and as God made man in his own “image” in one respect, so he could, if he had so willed, have made him in his own “image” in the other respect also. If it were necessary, it could be shown that the fact that he has *not* done so is an arrangement of pure benevolence. On the one hand, most valuable objects, it is hardly needful to say, are accomplished in respect to the comfort of man, and to the progress of the world, by the power of treasuring up the results of the experience of individuals, the inventions of past times, and the lessons of history; while, on the other hand, the stimulus to discovery and invention would be paralyzed, and individuals would be filled with sadness and sorrow, if the future could be seen as the past can be remembered. For the good of the world, therefore, and for the happiness of individuals, the occasions must be few in which it would be proper to make known to men what so perfectly lies in the divine mind, the knowledge of what is to come.

(c) There is a limit, therefore, affixed to the capacity of the human mind in this direction, and that limit is soon reached. Burke, indeed, in his work on a “Regicide Peace,” indicated, with remarkable sagacity, what would be the result of the French Revolution; and, in our own times, Mons. Gasparin has anticipated, with almost prophetic sagacity, in his “Up-

rising of a Great People," what would occur in our country; but there is, and must be, in each and every such case, a limit in regard to dates, and names, and details. In like manner, the politician, from his knowledge of men and parties, may often predict, with great moral certainty, what will be the result of an election; but, in order to understand the limits of the human powers in this respect, we must take into account the *failures* in such anticipations, as well as the fulfilments; the new combinations which may be formed, or the results which must depend on the human *will*, whose acting no man can anticipate. On a similar principle it is that a merchant may evince so much natural sagacity; may have such knowledge of the course of trade; may calculate on what may occur so much in advance of what others may be able to anticipate—that he may shape his own course as if he *saw* what would happen. But none of these things furnish an explanation of the prophecies in the Scriptures. They are not mere matters of coincidence, like dreams; they are not bare general statements, for they enter into detail in regard to times, and persons, and places; they are not cases where one prediction is fulfilled, and where many fail—as, for example, in the struggle in regard to "the origin of species," as described by Dr. Darwin, there may be a hundred failures before there is one new form of a vegetable or an animal thrown off that is strong enough *not* to perish; they are not the statements of one man or one age, in reference to a possible event; they are the statements of many men, of different ages, one stating one circumstance and another another, yet all relating to the one future event, and all to be combined and arranged, in order to obtain the whole prophetic view—for *the prophetic view of a future event is what it is stated to be by ALL the prophets, as the narrative of a Scriptural event is what it is stated to be by ALL the sacred writers.* Thus, in the predictions respecting the Messiah, it is not a single statement made by Moses, or Jacob, or David, or Balaam, or Isaiah, or Daniel, or Malachi; it is the result of *all* the statements made by these, and by the other prophets—statements scattered at intervals through many ages. These, *when combined*, constitute the *prophetic view* in regard to the Messiah. In asking whether these

prophecies have been fulfilled; whether these varied circumstances of time, and place, and character—of the Messiah's mode of teaching, his manner of life, and the circumstances of his death, have been found actually in one person, we look at the improbability, the absolute impossibility, that all these should be the result of mere *coincidence*, or that there could have been any *conspiracy* to impose in this manner upon the world. We ask whether it *could* have happened that, in an age lying far back in the past, one man should have thrown out a most obscure *hint* in regard to a future deliverer, and then in another age another pretended prophet should have improved upon the hint by suggesting a new circumstance, and then another and another should have added a suggestion in itself equally obscure, until, in a far distant future, the *idea* of the Messiah should have become so complete that a cunning impostor could embody them all, and carry them out in his own life, in an attempt to impose upon mankind? Cuvier, indeed, was able to "reconstruct" an animal of an extinct race; that is, from a single bone, or from a few fossil remains found in certain localities, he could throw the mind back, perhaps, for tens of thousands of years, and tell when the animal lived, what was its form, and what were its habits: but is that the way in which the Apollo Belvidere, and the Laocoon, and the Dying Gladiator have been formed? Was it true that, in far distant times, remote from each other, and with no knowledge of any general purpose to *form* an Apollo, or such a group of statuary as the Laocoon, or such a figure as the Dying Gladiator, one artist gave a hint about an arm, and another about a foot, and another about an eye, and another about the position, until the whole figure *could* be combined by the future sculptor? Is it true that, in regard to the cartoons of Raphael, and the Last Judgment of Michael Angelo, they are the results of the imaginings of numerous artists, scattered through many ages, with no general conception of the design, and with no knowledge of the intention of each other; that one ancient artist has given a hint in regard to such future paintings, and another another, in almost endless variety, until long after all were dead, some cunning artist, Raphael or Michael Angelo,

gathered all these hints together, and combined them in the splendid works of art that now adorn the Vatican? Not thus were those immortal works made; not thus could they have been made; and yet we are asked, by those who deny the truth of the prophecies in regard to the Messiah, to believe what would be much more improbable than this: not a prediction respecting a piece of statuary, or a painting, but respecting a living man—a messenger sent from God; one who had an individuality, a will, a character, an origin, a rank, such as no other one has ever had who has appeared among mortal men.

In reference to the Scripture prophecies, and the proposed mode of adjusting the faith of the world in regard to them, we have two things to add to what we have already said.

One is, that the principles advocated by the 'Essayists,' by the Chevalier Bunsen, and by the German Rationalists generally, would destroy all faith in ancient records, and reduce nearly all the ancient literature in the world to fable and myth. The world has not forgotten the literary skepticism first applied by Wolf to the works of Homer, and the fact that among those of that school it is still a question whether any such man as Homer ever lived. The same principles of literary skepticism which have been applied to the ancient classics, it is proposed to apply to the Hebrew sacred literature, and with no more reason in the one case than in the other. The genuineness of the writings of the Hebrew prophets is as firmly established as the genuineness of any other ancient writings, and the principles of criticism which would destroy confidence in the genuineness of the works ascribed to Moses, to Isaiah, to Daniel, would annihilate all confidence in the genuineness and authenticity of Thucydides and Herodotus, of Homer and Virgil, of Sallust, Livy, or Tacitus. No literary facts are better established than that Moses, Isaiah—alike in his earlier prophecies and in his later prophecies, (chs. xl.—lxvi.)—Daniel, Jeremiah, and Malachi, wrote long before the events occurred to which their predictions are applicable, and the principle which would call these in question would introduce universal literary skepticism.

The other remark which we have to offer on the subject of

the prophecies is, that either their inspiration must be admitted, or the facts of the case must be explained by mesmerism and clairvoyance. We have seen that the Chevalier Bunsen admitted the reality of this pretended power, and applied it to the explanation of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and to this he was driven by the necessity of the case. He was not prepared altogether to abandon faith in the writings of the prophets, or to maintain that they were forgeries of a later date, and hence he was compelled to adopt some theory by which the apparent fulfilment of the prophecies could be accounted for. It was clear that revealed predictions were beyond the limits of natural sagacity; it did not occur to him to adopt the solution suggested by Vice-Principal Williams, ("Essays and Reviews," p. 79, Am. Ed.) when he says of his belief in clairvoyance, "One would wish he might have intended only the power of seeing the ideal in the actual, or of tracing the Divine Government in the movements of men." Whatever that may mean, he was not willing to be a universal skeptic, and hence he adopted the theory of mesmerism and clairvoyance as a solution of the mystery. Now, we maintain that one or the other of these theories *must* be adopted by those who would readjust Christianity on the principles of the authors of the "Essays and Reviews." Either *all* faith in ancient records must be destroyed, or some such solution as that of clairvoyance or mesmerism must be resorted to, for the predictions in the prophets are clearly beyond the limits of any natural sagacity possessed by man.

5. The fifth point on which it is proposed to readjust Christianity relates to miracles. What the demand on this point is, we have stated above. The fundamental idea in the position taken by the authors of the "Essays and Reviews," by Bunsen, by the Westminster Review, and by the rejecters of miracles in general, is derived from the supposed fixedness, stability, and unchangeableness of the physical laws by which the universe is controlled, as established by science. It does not differ essentially from the position assumed by Mr. Hume, and to whose reasoning on the subject no substantial addition has been made by the labors of subsequent writers: "A miracle is a

violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof of a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined.* Of this it is well remarked by Prof. Mansel, (*Aids to Faith*, p. 21,) that "the argument, as thus stated, was just as strong or just as weak at the day when it was written as at the present time; it has received no additional strength from the progress of science during the interval; indeed, it is hard to see how the evidence of 'a firm and unalterable experience,' if such existed at any time, is capable of being made stronger." All that could be said in addition would be, that, since the days of Hume, science has lent its aid in *establishing* the unalterable nature of those laws; in extending them into regions and worlds at his time unknown; in reducing under fixed laws phenomena which in his time seemed to be beyond the range of strict observation; in diminishing, as science has advanced, the number of marvels. Thus the mysteries of the Middle Ages were dispelled by the science of the fifteenth century; (see Brewster's "Natural Magic,") and thus from the experience of the past it may be presumed that much still that has the appearance of the marvellous may, by a more profound analysis, and by more accurate and extended observation, be reduced to the operation of strict and accurate law.

It is not our purpose to enter on any general examination of this subject, or to repeat what has been so well said by Campbell, by Dr. Thomas Brown, by Prof. Mansel, and others, in reply to this argument. We shall merely offer a few remarks on the question whether *it is an ascertained fact* that the world progresses under the operation of fixed and uniform laws.

The essential idea of a miracle is, that God interposes, on fit occasions, to accomplish any thing *by his own direct power*, without reference to the 'laws of nature,' or to his ordinary mode of securing results. The real question at issue is, whether God, in ordaining the 'laws of nature,' has reserved to himself the right of interposing by direct acts of his power in accom-

* Philosophical Works, Vol. IV., p. 133.

plishing his purposes, or whether the world advances *solely* by the operation of those laws; that is, whether there are any events in the progress of things which can be traced *only* to direct divine interposition.

(a.) The first point here would be, of course, the question whether any such certain and fixed stability of 'the laws of nature' has been ascertained. When it is said that this has been ascertained by 'experience,' if the word has any meaning, it must refer to experience that *embraces the whole subject*; that is, in relation to *all* the events to which the question of such uniformity would be applicable. But it is clear that among men there has been no such experience. There have been, and are, many events that lie quite beyond any such range of observation hitherto made; there are, undeniably, many things which have not as yet been reduced to any known laws, and it is yet an open question whether they can be:—that is, whether the powers of men are adequate to the inquiry, and whether, if they are thus adequate, the events are of such a nature that they can be reduced to regular and fixed laws. In the earlier periods of the world there were many things that passed under the name of 'miracles' and wonders—phenomena which there were then no ways of accounting for—whose causes are now familiar to us, for in the ruder ages of the world they seemed to lie wholly in the regions of the marvellous and the miraculous. As science advances, the circle of those marvellous works is contracted, and a large part of those wonders are reduced to the dominion of known laws. It is but recently that the whole subject of electricity was in this condition as viewed by the human mind; it is but recently that the phenomena connected with it have been reduced to the control of law. The laboratory of a chemist now exhibits many a phenomenon, which in the Middle ages would have been classed among the marvellous, now reduced to the regular operation of law; and it cannot be doubted that there may be yet in nature many a secret power that has not yet been made the subject of scientific observation, or been brought under the general word '*experience*.' It cannot be regarded as improbable that many of these things *will* thus be carefully observed, arranged, and classified, and

that they will be found to be under the control of fixed and unchanging *laws*; but the world is not yet far enough advanced to justify the assertion that the 'experience' of mankind extends to *all* these things. Still less was it proper to assert this in the time of Mr. Hume.

(b.) The next remark to be made is, that there is an utter improbability, amounting now to absolute certainty on the subject, that science ever *will* make such advances as to bring within the range of natural and fixed laws the things *alleged* to have been performed by the Saviour and the apostles. There have been no forces developed in nature; there have been no discoveries in the laboratory of the chemist; there have been no occult powers laid open by well ascertained principles of science, by mesmerism, or by any kindred power, that will produce what is said to have been produced by Jesus of Nazareth—the healing of the sick, the giving of sight to the blind, the restoration of hearing to the deaf, or the raising of the dead, by a word. This thought, which seems to us a very important one in its bearing on the subject, we cannot better express than in the words of Prof. Mansel:—

“In one respect, indeed, the advance of physical science tends to strengthen rather than to weaken our conviction of the supernatural character of the Christian miracles. In whatever proportion our knowledge of physical causation is limited, and the number of unknown agents comparatively large, in the same proportion is the probability that some of the unknown causes, acting in some unknown manner, may have given rise to the alleged marvels. But this probability diminishes when each newly-discovered agent, as its properties become known, is shown to be inadequate to the production of the supposed effects, and as the residue of unknown causes which might produce them, becomes smaller and smaller. We are told, indeed, that ‘the inevitable progress of research must, within a longer or shorter period, unravel all that seems most marvellous;’ but we may be permitted to doubt the relevancy of this remark to the present case, until it has been shown that the advance of science has in some degree enabled men to perform the miracles performed by Christ. When the inevitable progress of research shall have enabled men of modern times to give sight to the blind with a touch, to still tempests with a word, to raise the dead to life, to die themselves, and to rise again, we may allow that the same causes might possibly have been called into operation, two thousand years earlier, by some great man in advance of his age. But until this is done, the unravelling of the marvellous in other phenomena only serves to leave these mighty works in their soli-

tary grandeur, as wrought by the finger of God, unapproached and unapproachable by all the knowledge and all the power of man.

“In proportion as the science of to-day surpasses that of former generations, so is the improbability that any man could have done in past times, by natural means, works which no skill of the present age is able to imitate. The two classes of phenomena rest in fact on exactly opposite foundations. In order that natural occurrences, taking place without human agency, may wear the appearance of prodigies, it is necessary that the cause and manner of their production should be *unknown*; and every advance of science from the unknown to the known tends to lessen the number of such prodigies by referring them to natural causes, and *increases* the probability of a similar explanation of the remainder. But on the other hand, in order that a man may perform marvellous acts by natural means, it is necessary that the cause and manner of their production should be *known* by the performer; and in this case every fresh advance of science from the unknown to the known *diminishes* the probability that what is unknown now could have been known in a former age.”—*Aids to Faith*, pp. 21, 22, 23.

This thought is also admirably illustrated in the “Replies to Essays and Reviews,” in the article on miracles, in answer to the article of Baden Powell “on the Study of the Evidences of Christianity,” by the Rev. C. A. Heurtley. We have not space to give an abridgment of this article, or even to make an extract from it, but we commend the whole of it as worthy of profound attention.—*Replies, &c.*, pp. 125—176.

(c.) The next remark which we make is, as a sequence from that has been just said, that the effect of true progress in science in regard to the miracles of Scripture, is to demonstrate that the hypothesis which refers them to ‘unknown’ natural causes is utterly baseless, and to establish the fact that if the events occurred they were *real* miracles. The only possible opinions in regard to the miracles of the New Testament are, that they were not performed at all; or that they were performed, as those who wrought them declare, in virtue of a supernatural power, and in attestation of their own divine mission; or that they “are distorted statements of events reducible to known natural causes.” This latter was the solution suggested by Paulus, who proposed to explain them on “naturalistic” principles. This theory has been abandoned even in Germany, the land of its birth, and is not likely to be revived there again. There remains, therefore, for mankind, only the

“choice between a deeper faith and a bolder unbelief,” (Mansel,) and to one or other of these the world is advancing. It can never rest on the intermediate theory proposed by the authors of the “Essays and Reviews,” and whatever may be the result in regard to the general faith of mankind on the subject, it is plain that the principles of true science will not allow the human mind to rest there. The miracles as referred to in the New Testament are put forever beyond the possibility of being explained by natural causes, or the operation of the laws of nature. If they occurred, they were direct interventions of divine power. There is not the slightest approximation in the progress of science towards any ‘laws’ by which the eyes of the blind can be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped, and by which the dead can be raised, by a word.

(d.) Our next remark, therefore, is, that, as bearing in an important manner on this subject, there is a sense in which it is very common that the ‘laws of nature,’ so fixed and determined, are set aside, or are ‘violated’ by the action of other ‘laws of nature,’ or are held absolutely in check as long as those other laws prevail. When the lightning strikes a tree “it puts an end to all the orderly development of vegetation,” and seems to be a bare conflict of “force with law.” Yet it is also true that the lightning follows a law of its own, and that law seems to conflict with law, and that there are meteorologic laws to which both the lightning and the vegetation are subject. *Tracts for Priests and People*, P. 342. The same thing is true when the wind raises up the waters of the ocean and piles them in mountains, or when the vapor is upborne and carried by the clouds over valleys and hills, or when the dust of the earth is raised up by the whirlwind—in each case suspending or ‘violating’ for the time, the law of gravitation—the most universal law in nature. The result is perhaps still more manifested in the principle of *life*—that mysterious and unknown principle, which seems to have the power of suspending or ‘violating’ during its continuance all the physical laws of nature. By that principle, the chemical elements which enter into the composition of the lofty oak are detached from their natural connexions; the chemical laws which united

them before are suspended; they enter into new combinations, constituting now the component parts of a tree—the organic structure, the fibre, the bark, the branch, the leaf, the fruit, and they are held there by all the power needful to lift up the enormous mass from the earth, and to keep it steadfast against the influence of tempests and storms for generations, until the principle of life is extinct, and then, and not before, the chemical laws resume their power, and the old oak returns to gases and earths under the operation of those chemical laws. The same thing is still more strikingly manifest in the *animal* structure, under the principle of life. The elements that make up the human body—carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, phosphorus, lime, iron, sulphur, sodium, potassium, magnesium—are all detached from their natural chemical connections in the air, the earth, the waters, the animal, the vegetable, the mineral world, and are formed into an entirely *new* combination of bone, sinew, nerves, muscle, with a definite size and shape, until *life* decays, and *then* the natural chemical laws resume their functions, and the human frame is resolved into its natural elements. The chemical laws begin *at once* to react as soon as *life* departs, and those laws *act* until every particle that composed the human frame enters under chemical laws into natural inorganic combinations, or under some *new* principle of life, vegetable or animal, the process is arrested midway, and new forms of life appear. All over the earth, therefore, on the land, in the water, in the air, nothing is more common than that what are called the ‘fixed and uniform laws of nature,’ those laws which Mr. Hume informs us ‘*a firm and unalterable experience has established,*’ are in fact suspended, ‘violated,’ held in check, by this principle of life. That a higher power than *life* may not suspend them; that even the principles which regulate *life itself* may not be suspended, has not been established by a ‘firm and unalterable experience.’

(e.) Our next remark is, that in order to a proper understanding of this subject it is necessary to take into consideration the element of the *will*, and the power consequent on that, in reference to the ‘laws of nature.’ However fixed and settled those laws may

be, the power of the will in man is constantly operating to suspend or interrupt them; that is, is constantly producing effects which are not to be traced to regular and fixed laws, and which never would be produced by those laws. In other words, the effects in the case are not produced by laws of nature, but the laws of matter are, for the time, as really *disturbed* as in the case of a miracle, and only fail of striking us as being as remarkable and perplexing, because they are matters of constant occurrence. It may be said, indeed, that the *will* is itself subject to fixed laws, and that, after all, the effects are produced by regular and fixed laws; but, whatever may be true of that in reference to the *human* will it is no more true than in reference to the *divine* will, and the difficulty in the one case is, as to this point, the same as in the other. In either case it is the introduction of a new *power*, apart from the power of force in the physical laws of nature, which are regarded as so settled and fixed—"the work of an agent wholly independent of those laws, and who, therefore, neither obeys nor disobeys them." For the time being, and so far as the result is concerned, the new agent or the new power sets aside or suspends the operation of those laws, and the result in the case is to be traced to this new and independent power. Whether God has reserved to himself this power and right to *interfere* with the regular laws of matter, as he has actually conferred it on man, is simply a question as to a *fact*, and not at all as to the *possibility* of the thing.

When a man by the exertion of his *will* raises his arm, or walks, or lifts a weight from the earth, he so far, in each case, *suspends* or *overcomes*, for the time, the law of gravitation as to produce an effect which is not to be traced to that law, but which is to be accounted for *wholly* by a power above and regardless of it—the power of the *will*; and in estimating the '*experience*' of the world on the subject in reference to Mr. Hume's argument, we are to take *that* fact into the account as a *part* of the '*experience*' of mankind—a matter of '*experience*' quite as common as that pertaining to the '*firm and unalterable experience* which has established those laws.' When a man of his own free will throws a stone into the air, "the motion of

the stone, as soon as it has left his hand, is determined by a combination of purely natural laws—partly by the attraction of the earth, partly by the resistance of the air, partly by the magnitude and direction of the force by which it was thrown." But by what *law* came it to be thrown at all? By what law of nature fixed, 'by an unalterable experience,' did it happen that it left its quiet bed on the earth; that the principle of *inertia* was overcome; that the law of gravitation which held it there was for the time interrupted, and that it *commenced* its course through the air? Neither the law of gravitation, by itself, nor all the laws of nature put together, would ever have caused it to leave the ground and commence this flight through the air, but all the 'laws of *nature*' in fact combined to *resist* this, as really as the 'laws of nature' combined to resist the raising up of Lazarus to life, or the 'laws of nature' in the Sea of Tiberias combined to keep up the storm, and to resist the power of Jesus who commanded the winds and the waves to be still. It remains to be proved that when God's free will interposes to produce effects which are to be traced to that will alone, there is more *real* violation of the laws of nature than there is when the human will interposes and produces changes which are to be traced to that will alone. It may be further added, that if the will of man *does* produce such disturbances and interruptions of the laws of nature, then so far from its being true, as Mr. Hume says, that 'a firm and unalterable experience has established those laws,' it is true that there is almost nothing that is more *liable* to be unsettled and changed, or that nothing is more common than that there are effects which are not to be traced to those laws.

(*f.*) Our final remark is, that the progress of our world, and, as far as we know, of the universe, has not been uniformly under the operation of regular and fixed laws. We mean that there are evidences of divine interposition apart from the operation of regular laws, and that the results are such as cannot be traced to those laws, but are to be traced to a direct divine interposition, and *therefore* miracles are not absurd or improbable.

There are two methods by which, subsequent to the act of

creation, the existing state of things on the earth and in the universe at large, has been produced—the one by development, the other by the institution of a new order of things which, in no proper sense, can be the result of any antecedents in nature, but which must be traced to a new interposition of power.

That the former—that of *development*—exists, no one can doubt, and it cannot be denied that this is the regular and usual course of events: that is, there is something which in the order of nature *precedes* the effect; which is the *cause* of it, or which *measures* it; which contains in embryo all that is produced. Thus the germ in the acorn is developed into the oak, and the ovum is developed into the crocodile, the ostrich, or the barnyard-fowl; and thus the slumbering powers of the infant are developed into the physical strength, the poetic genius, or the eloquence of the man. In all such cases there is nothing *produced* which is not a fair *unfolding* of what preceded; nothing which is the result of mere power *ab extra*. The precise *limit* of this class of operations in nature has not yet been fixed. It is well known that attempts have been made to explain all the phenomena of the universe on this principle. The author of the "Vestiges of Creation" regards this as a sufficient explanation of the origin of the worlds and systems which compose the universe; Dr. Darwin supposes that the varieties of 'species' on the earth can be explained on this principle; and in this manner it is supposed—as may be true—that new worlds are constantly forming, and that the nebulous masses are now resolving themselves into suns and stars. Perhaps it is not within the range of the human powers to determine the exact limits of this process, and it is not material for any purpose connected with revealed religion.

But, while we would concede all that true science can ask on this point, it is still a fact that this is not the sole or main agency by which our world exists as it is now. In very many respects it has made advances—has reached higher elevations, from age to age, by some *new power* that has come in, over and beyond anything that can be regarded as the result of mere *development*, and that can be best explained on the supposition that it is by direct divine interposition. It is rather

per saltum—by impulse—than by development. It has been by a new act of creation, bringing a new order of beings upon the earth; it has been by some great invention in the arts, putting the affairs of the world on a higher level; it has been by some new disease that has materially affected the progress of things; it has been by some new discovery that has enlarged, not by the slow progress of development, but by a sudden impulse, the limits of human knowledge; it has been by bringing upon the earth some man endowed with transcendent gifts, who has materially changed the current of human affairs; it has been by storm, tempest, plague, famine, the best explanation of whose existence *at that time* is that God saw such things to be needful, and arranged their coming by his own wisdom, or sent them by his own direct power.

Thus geologists tell us of successive acts of *creation* before the earth was fitted for the residence of man; of orders of beings that had their day, and that passed off the stage to give place to higher orders in the progress of things. The essential *fact*, which no man properly informed on the subject will deny, is, that races have been entirely swept away, and have been succeeded by others which were, in no proper sense, the *development* of the former; for the Plesiosaurian and Ichthyosaurian races have no *successors* on the earth. The fossil remains of the old geological periods reveal successive *creations*; not successive *developments*. Thus man appeared, at last, not as a *development* of the ourang-outang or the monkey, but as a new *creation*. Thus now, also, God *creates*, as he pleases, some great mind, and brings it upon the earth to lift the race to a higher level, and then suffers the race to move *on* that level, or to *develop* the result of the changes wrought *by* that great mind, until the occasion shall demand a new manifestation of his power, in lifting the world in this manner from that condition to a higher. So he made the mind of Plato, of Socrates, of Newton, of Bacon, of Pascal, of Edwards, of Shakespeare, of Watt, Fulton, Morse, Columbus, Cuvier, Alfred, Charlemagne, Washington. As we have before remarked, the mind of Shakespeare was, in no proper sense, a *development* of what existed in the mind of the glover and wool-stapler in Stratford-upon-

Avon; nor was there, in any of the progenitors of Newton, anything that could properly be regarded as developed into his great powers. The bringing of such minds upon the earth can be regarded as in no proper sense the "result of a firm and unalterable *experience* in establishing the laws of nature," but is as much the result of a divine agency as the creation of a world, or as the healing of the blind man at the pool of Bethesda.

Thus the world advances by some new invention in the arts that can in no proper sense be regarded as a development of a previous order of things, or as the result of "fixed and certain laws." Such inventions are often the result of a *suggestion* that comes into the mind from some unknown quarter—one of the thousand *suggestions* that may come into a man's mind, that can be traced, by no law of association, to anything existing previously in the mind, and the origin of which no system of mental philosophy will explain. The suggestion which gives birth to the invention is retained in the mind; reflected on; developed; matured; experimented on, *until* the invention appears before the world, modifying human affairs, raising the race to a higher level, lifting it up on a new *Steppe* or *Plateau* along which it travels, or by the help of which it rises higher, until some newer invention, still more brilliant and important than that which preceded, shall lift the race to a higher level still, and be the cause of a still higher advancement. Thus the discovery of the art of writing, of printing, of gunpowder; the discovery of the properties of the magnet, of the telescope, of the microscope, of the application of steam, of the telegraph, have successively modified human affairs, and put the condition of the world on an *elevation* from which it is never to descend—not by development, but by a new power.

So some new form of disease occurs in the progress of things which appears to have all the marks of a direct divine intervention for the accomplishment of important ends in the government of the world. The small-pox, the cholera—in what sense were they a *development* "under the laws of a firm and unalterable experience," as Mr. Hume would say? Of what previous disease were they the "development?" Nothing is

more certain than that the "experience" of the world was *against* the small-pox and the cholera; and, according to the argument of Mr. Hume, all our faith in those diseases has been a delusion.

The cases to which we have thus referred show that God has not bound himself to govern the world always and in all circumstances by the fixed laws of nature; that he has reserved to himself the right to interfere when he has important ends to accomplish, by his own free will, in some manner corresponding to the fact, though far above it, that *we* thus, by *our* wills, interfere with those laws; that, as there were occasions in which it was proper that he should interfere by new acts of *creative* power in the old geological periods of the world, and when the present order of things was to be inaugurated by the creation of a new order, so he may now interpose by acts of creation in the distant parts of the universe by bringing new worlds into being and new orders of creatures upon them; and that, as there *have been* occasions when the affairs of the world were to be raised to a higher elevation by the creation and endowment of some mind of extraordinary powers, or by some brilliant discovery in science or invention in the arts, so there *may have been* an occasion in which it was proper to interfere by the introduction of a new religion upon the earth, and by attesting its divine origin in so far suspending the established laws of nature as to open the eyes of the blind, to unstop the ears of the deaf, to cause the lame man to leap like a hart, and to raise the dead from their graves.

In conclusion, we would say that we by no means intend to deny that there may be, in our times, occasion for the readjustment of Christianity. We are disposed fully to admit that there may be; but we trust that we have shown that what is demanded is not that which is suggested by the seven authors of the "Essays and Reviews;" by what would be in the line of the labors of the Chevalier Bunsen; by what would meet the approbation of Unitarians in our country; or by what would be sanctioned by the Westminster Review.





