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ARTICLE I.

*The Principles of Moral and Political Economy.*—By  
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Dr. Paley's system of Moral Philosophy, like most other modern treatises upon the subject, is divided into two general parts. The first discusses the *theory* of morals, the other comprises the *rules* of life; the first is *speculative*, and the other *practical*. His design, in the theoretical or speculative part, is to determine the nature and criterion of right, to trace moral distinctions to their source, and evolve a principle which shall enable us to settle our duty in all the circumstances in which we may be placed. With him, accordingly, the theory of morals bears very much the same relation to practice as subsists between theory and practice in other sciences. His rules are all applications of his speculative principles, and his speculative principles have evidently been adjusted with a view to their practical results.

There are obviously three questions which every complete system of moral philosophy must undertake to answer. 1. How we come to be possessed of the notions of right and wrong?—whether by that faculty which perceives the distinction betwixt truth and falsehood, or by a peculiar power of perception, which is incapable of any further analysis? 2. In what the distinctions betwixt right and wrong essentially consist?—or what is the quality, or qualities, in consequence of which we pronounce some things to be right and others wrong?

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“Each crawling insect holds a rank  
 Important in the plan of *Him*, who framed  
 This scale of beings; holds a rank, which lost  
 Would break the chain, and leave a gap,  
 That nature's self would rue!”

Man is, however, the master-piece of life. His anatomical structure is more complicated, his characteristics more striking, and his existence more glorious than any other creatures. His traits are more striking, from the fact that he is created after the image of his Maker. Rational pursuits afford him alone enjoyment, and the prospects of eternity give to him an unbounded field for contemplation. Yet, no matter how brilliant his hopes, or lofty his aspirations, they must be eclipsed and prostrated by the hand of Death. He is at last triumphant, and claims the trophies of his victory. We yield “to his own strong arm,” in the belief, and with the hope, that “the life to come” will more than compensate for the momentary pangs of dissolution.

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## ARTICLE V.

### THE RELATION OF JUSTICE TO BENEVOLENCE IN THE CONDUCT OF SOCIETY.

The two virtues which stand at the head of this article are usually put into a sort of antagonism with each other. It may be seriously questioned, however, whether, in *essence*, they are not the same, and that it is only the varying conditions under which the generic virtue is exercised, that causes it to be called by the one or the other name. What is justice? It is that principle which regulates our conduct towards others, according to the relations existing between us. What is benevolence? It is the same principle, associating itself with hearty goodwill to others, and adapting itself to any circumstances of need or suffering into which they may have fallen.—Thus, justice approaches its object in the way of right; benevolence in the way of love. The former demands a claim; the latter an occasion. Still, the generic prin-

ciple is the same; and our Saviour announced as much the law of benevolence as of justice, when he said—“Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets.”

This union of two seemingly contradictory elements is not peculiar to morality, but is often realized in the investigations of science. Previously to the days of Franklin, it was believed that there were two kinds of electricity,—the vitreous, and the resinous. That philosopher proved, however, that there was but one; and that what created the difference was, the excess or defect of this element in any one body, or set of bodies. So, at the present time, some persons are beginning to conjecture, that the forces which carry the heavenly bodies around their centres, are not two adverse agents, but the same agent, acting under different conditions.

Now, it must be evident, that if this common nature of justice and benevolence be maintained, the injury done to the one, must be equally inflicted upon the other. He who strikes a man upon the head, may not, it is true, with the same blow, strike also his foot. But the foot suffers as well as the head; and a death-wound inflicted upon the latter member, will as surely carry the foot to the grave as the head: it kills *the man*, including both members. Wherever, then, the doctrines or practices of men have exalted one of these cardinal virtues at the expense of the other, they have as essentially injured their favourite as their foe. To invade justice, is to invade benevolence, and to harm benevolence, is to harm justice. Whenever justice transcends the line of benevolence, it becomes itself unjust; and whenever benevolence oversteps the bounds of justice, it is itself unkind. Thus, if we consider these virtues as having a sort of two-fold personality, but a common nature, the one keeps the other in perpetual check; and each has fixed bounds beyond which it cannot pass.

There is no *perfect* adjustment of these virtues, probably, but in God himself. In Him, justice and benevolence are so harmoniously linked together, that he never can perform an act of benevolence that is not just, or an act of justice that is not benevolence. And in propor-

tion as men and angels approximate in character to Him who is the All-Perfect, in the same proportion will their acts and conduct be under the control of the two-fold, yet ever-perfectly adjusted dominion of these noble virtues. On earth, among men, we perceive the wildest irregularity on this subject. Here, on the one side, we see a class of men, the vigorous adherents of justice. All they demand, in any case whatever, is, the rule, the law, the claim, the decision of the court. All virtue, with them, after this, consists in the unmitigated execution of the sentence pronounced. The rights of humanity, and the sympathies of a common nature, must be hushed to the sterner voice of justice and law. Now, these men are as *unjust* as cruel. They are invading the territory of justice, as savagely as they are that of benevolence. On the other side, we see a different class of men,—men who, nauseated at the inhumanities of past ages, and of present despots, are almost ready to conclude, that government is a curse, and well-regulated society a burden too heavy to be borne! The contrast here alluded to, is well exemplified in the present condition of continental Europe. On the side of government in that country, there is a vast preponderance given to what is meant to be justice. But Americans, who look at these acts of legislation across the Atlantic, and from the bosom of a very different kind of civil government, see clearly that the governments in Europe are, for the most part, tyrannizing over their subjects. On the contrary, this very tyranny seems to find a justification in the fact, that just so soon as kings and statesmen yield, the people are disposed to run into such excesses as to threaten all Europe with absolute ruin. It is easy to see the proper remedy for evils of this kind. It consists in a spirit of mutual concession and confidence between sovereigns and subjects. But how is this to be effected? We answer, without hesitation, the *entire morality of Europe must be placed upon a different basis*. The Bible must be opened to her millions, and preachers, teachers, and Sabbath-schools must be scattered abroad in every hamlet and neighbourhood. Nothing else will ever deliver these mighty governments from the perpe-

tual alternations of tyranny and revolution, oppression and radicalism.

In our country, the tendency, with one solitary exception, is more to *liberalism* than tyranny. The exception to which we refer, is the politico-ecclesiastical government of the Papal church. That government is now, and ever has been, of the most absolute kind. And although in this land, it does not as yet control the greater masses of the nation, so far as it does go, it is as despotic as that of Turkey or Japan. The great sin of this Power is, its withholding a *free Bible* from the people. By thus depriving its subjects of the only means that can either enlighten or christianize them, it consigns to absolute ignorance and oppression, some two or three millions of American citizens! And if this work should go on, and the Bible be taken from the people of the United States, as in Italy and South America, no wisdom or device of man will ever be able to rescue our vast *population* from the same alternating changes from tyranny to radicalism, and radicalism to tyranny, that are now devastating both Europe and South America, as with the "besom of destruction." Apart, however, from this Un-Saxon, Un-Republican element, the general tendency of the American mind is to *latitudinarianism*. The power in this land is now, and, in one form or another, ever must be, in the hands of the people. And, so long as this is the case, we may expect a more or less leaning of the laws to the personal and immediate good of individuals. The great and abiding principles of government will be made to succumb to expediency, and a system of utilitarianism will succeed to that of even-handed justice.

We see the tendency here referred to, in the *political opinions* of our countrymen. There can be no doubt, but that an over-ruling Providence has been preparing our race, through scores of generations past, for wiser and better systems of government than now exist upon the earth. This preparation, however, can only be effected by severe experiences and protracted discipline. Society does not, and cannot, leap from barbarism to civilization at once. Nor can any great error that has

found its way into a political system be soon eradicated. Time, changes, instruction, circumstances, must all combine to effect these moral and social revolutions. The forms which the existing governments of our world have assumed, are the work, not only of centuries, but of thousands of years. To imagine that such institutions can be soon changed by the agencies now in operation for that purpose, or that even the powerful influence of our government can, at any early period, produce essential ameliorations in their condition, is to exhibit utter ignorance of man's past history, and of his nature, as a social being. No; national opinions, usages and laws, like the mountains and valleys, the rivers and lakes, that indent the surface of a country, are not things to be removed by the mere breathings of philanthropy, or the impulsive action of well-meaning charity. Yet, the opinion is exceedingly prevalent in this country, that man can be happy and useful only under free institutions, and that the great mission of our government is to propagate civil liberty throughout the earth. There is a sort of sickly compassion felt for every stranger who happens to have been born under the dominion of a crown, or who happens, in any way, not to possess the general freedom of the great American Republic. Such an one, particularly if opposed, is welcomed to our shores by a thousand hands, while hundreds of pens are calling for the sword, possibly to redress his country's wrongs! Yea, we go further than this. We need but the slightest offence,—the weakest occasion, to call forth our battalions to invade the provinces of a sister country. The justification here is, not that we have received a righteous call to war, but that our neighbour manages her people and provinces so illy, that it were far better for us to take them under wiser and better control! Now, if the history of the past teaches any thing, it teaches this, that a spirit of this sort, if pampered and gratified in its cupidity for foreign conquest, will next seek that which is domestic, and will as exultingly triumph in the destruction of its country's institutions, as it once did in the invasion of those that belonged to strangers.

We see this tendency to set a spurious benevolence against justice, in the spirit and action of many of the

*voluntary Societies* of the present age. These Societies are all based upon the principle that the laws and usages of nations are to be reached and altered by means of the people. To a very good degree this principle is correct. But where it so addresses the people as to set them against existing institutions,—as to alienate them from their authorized rulers,—as to incite them to rebellion and revolt, “evil, and only evil” can result. Should the people, who may have been the down-trodden serfs of centuries,—should they so unite as to get the power into their own hands,—what then? What! but such scenes as revolutionary France witnessed, under the bloody reign of terror and the guillotine! And having swept away all the higher and better classes of men, who, then, is left to control the dashing and heaving elements of the political chaos that remains? No one: until some great and daring spirit, far more oppressive and arbitrary than the “powers that *were*,” comes forth, like a Cæsar, or a Buonaparte, to hush the storm and re-establish tyranny! Or, suppose, what is far more likely, that the efforts of the people at revolution should fail. What then? What, but a series of bloody executions, shocking to humanity, followed by an iron yoke of bondage, far heavier than ever pressed the necks of the people before! Such must inevitably be the results of all injudicious attempts, through a false spirit of benevolence, to mitigate the evils which men suffer under their various systems of social order.

Modern Abolition Societies furnish apt illustrations on this subject. It is an amazing fact, that while these Societies exist wholly in States whose constitutions recognize no such relation as that of master and slave, their chief object is to operate upon territory where that relation has been recognized by the laws for centuries past!

Is such a course wise? Is it modest! Can any sensible man suppose for a moment, that human nature can be so down-trodden as tamely to submit to such dictation? It is absolute madness to conceive of such a thing; and so the result has proved. For some twenty years the moral batteries of the world have been turned loose upon the slavery that exists in our Southern States. Argument, appeal, wit, ridicule, local excommunication,

church anathemas, books, pamphlets, political speeches, and even legislation, have all been used, *ad furorem*, to despatch this monstrous evil! What is the issue? A calm and thorough investigation of the whole subject of slavery by Southern Theologians and Statesmen, and a firm conviction, from all the lights that history, philosophy and revelation furnish, that the relation of master and slave is a lawful one, and that there are many circumstances in which men may exist in a state of servitude, in a far happier condition, than in the possession of that nominal freedom, that is not inconsistent with almost every species of oppression, from the laws and usages of the higher ranks in life. Yea, at this moment, the South is willing to challenge *the whole world*, to exhibit a labouring class less burdened, better provided for, or who enjoy more real happiness, than the Africans who are, in the course of Providence, held as slaves by her laws! What, then, has been gained by this foreign assault upon the domestic usages of other States? Two things—the permanent lodgement of slavery as a fixed element in our government, and a vast amount of hatred and opposition between the Northern and Southern sections of our country!

We see the tendency, here referred to, in a very prevalent disposition *to separate punishment from crime*, by considering transgressors as unfortunate, and needing pity, rather than as guilty and deserving the penalty of the laws. Now, the difference between misfortune and crime, is like that between Heaven and earth,—light and darkness. The one we are to hate and avoid; the other we are to compassionate and welcome to our bosoms.—For the one, we are to provide the means of punishment; the other, if borne with a right spirit, exalts to honour and admiration. The suffering martyr becomes, in after ages, the object of universal esteem; but the traitor goes down from age to age, accursed by all, hated by all.—And yet, notwithstanding this absolute opposition of nature between misfortune and crime, multitudes there are who profess to see no difference between them, and who call upon others to sympathize with the vile and abandoned, as heartily as they do, to render aid to the virtuous and pure in their afflictions. True, crime does



not ordinarily place a man beyond the reach of human sympathy and aid. In all else, save his *crime*, the criminal should be treated with humanity. Efforts should also be made to reclaim guilty persons from the ruin to which they are hastening. But, through a false charity, to extend not only to the men, but also to their *misdeeds*, the hand of friendship, is to annihilate moral distinctions of the most permanent and unalterable kind. And what must be the result of such a course? What? but the almost indefinite increase of criminals,—the destruction of law and order,—the banishment from society of all virtue, and the total extinction, at last, of all the hopes and joys of the human species.

The false benevolence, here alluded to, has taken under its charge, specially, the care of all debtors, murderers and sinners. Justice requires that all pecuniary liabilities, voluntarily assumed by men, should be met in good faith, and settled when they become due; and also that, should the debtor be unwilling to meet the claims against him, there should be some power in the law to compel payment. The sickly charity, however, to which we allude, has provided so many subterfuges in the law itself, for a dishonest debtor, and the usages of society have supplied so many others, that in a great many instances he is permitted to set his creditor at defiance, and though “dressed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day,” to trample upon the rights of his neighbour, and even to insult him, after having robbed him of his goods! The patronage extended to murderers is still more bare-faced. That Wisdom that cannot err, has declared from Heaven, “whosoever sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.” This law is both just and necessary. It is just, for there is no equivalent by which a murderer can expiate his crime but his own life. It is necessary; for were such punishment abolished, murderers would so be increased, that no man’s life would be safe. But these pseudo-philanthropists, far wiser than their Maker, seem to imagine that murder is simply a crime against the State, and that when one man has irreparably been put out of the way, it becomes the State to settle with the survivor on the mildest terms possible! Wonderful legislators, these!—

Wiser than Solon, Solomon, or even Jehovah! But these opinions extend themselves to another world. God has said, "the soul that sinneth, it shall die;" and our Saviour has declared, "He that believeth not, shall be damned." Our good-natured theologians, however, have undertaken to qualify this harsh language of the Almighty, and after abating much of its meaning, to limit the penalty, whatever it be, to the present life! No matter how much a man sins,—no matter how much he contemns the mercy of God offered in Christ, he is to be saved any how; for it is impossible to conceive that a benevolent God should punish men in hell for the sins committed in this life!

A tendency to *Socialism*, both in this country and Europe, by certain classes of persons, is also proof of the existence of this spurious benevolence. This manifestation of the evil is, in many respects, the worst of all. It seeks the absolute submission of political and social institutions, that have been ordained by God himself, and that, in one form or another, have been observed by all nations. The rights of property and marriage are to be abrogated,—all classes in society are to sink to a common level, and men and women, who can scarcely live peaceably when scores of miles apart, are to be placed in the juxtaposition of a united brotherhood! A state of things like this might have occurred to the dreamy imagination of a maniac, but how it ever took possession of an intellect entirely sane, is a mystery that even philosophy must labour to solve.

Such are some of the more definite forms of that spurious benevolence which seems to be leading so many otherwise sensible persons astray in the present age.—Besides these more marked manifestations of the evil, however, there is what may be termed a *diffusion* of it into the universal heart and mind of the existing generation of mankind. The present is considered, *par excellence*, the age of benevolence. Efforts are made to turn almost every thing in that direction. Now, if the benevolence here referred to were *pure* benevolence,—if no false zeal,—no revolutionary spirit,—no wild fanaticism,—no selfish ends, were associated with it; then, such praise might be just. But perfectly sure are we,

that a very large amount of the sympathy and action of the present age, is wholly spurious. In many cases this is perfectly manifest; but it is to be feared that it often exists where least suspected, and often produces its crop where even the *seeds* were not known to have been planted!

We shall now proceed to specify some of the *causes* that have *dissociated* justice from benevolence, giving to the latter, in almost every instance, an unbecoming preponderance over the former. And the first cause we name is, *a corrupted theology*. Many political economists may see but little connexion between the teachings of the pulpit and the debates of the legislature. They may imagine that theology and jurisprudence are entirely distinct sciences, and that their connexion, if existing at all, must be extremely remote. But in this they are mistaken. Every man has his theological opinions, derived too, mainly, from those religious teachings to which he has been subject from infancy. These opinions are not mere loose speculations, exercising no control upon the understanding and the life. True, they may not realize to every man "the good hope through grace" that the true Christian enjoys. Still, their influence is great, and they associate themselves with the views the mind takes on almost all subjects. Hence, we see the phase of their theology spread over the face of the civil code of all nations, ancient and modern. Men's religious opinions are, for the most part, the *matrixes* of their political tenets. Now, a very large portion of the theology of the present age seeks to magnify the benevolence of God, at the expense of his justice. The inherent guilt and malignity of sin have been mitigated,—the absoluteness of human depravity has been qualified,—the hereditary impotency of the human will to virtuous acts has been disputed,—the definite character of the atonement has been denied,—the sole agency of the Spirit in regeneration has been controverted,—and the whole system of Christian theology, divesting itself of the sterner features of immaculate justice, has been lowered, for the accommodation of reluctant and sceptical humanity! Others, again, transcending even these alarming boundaries, have plunged into positive heresy, substituting human

goodness for Divine grace,—the merit of repentance for the merit of Christ's blood, and denying all the doctrines that constitute the *essence* of Christianity, as a remedial system for the ruin of man! Now, to all these various classes of Divines, together with their disciples, the sterner features of the Divine character and government are obnoxious. Justice, that *original* virtue, without which no other *can exist*,—justice, that eternal pedestal on which rests the Throne of God, and the scheme of Redemption,—this virtue of virtues, is underrated by them,—is supposed to be kept by the Deity, far in the back-ground of his other attributes,—and is only to be called forth when some Sodom is to be sunk, or some Judas to be executed! Surely, there is a most remarkable resemblance between these good-natured publishers of “glad-tidings,” and those “false prophets,” that were so much in the way of Isaiah and Jeremiah. It is really amazing, what heterogeneous classes of mankind, these kind-hearted preachers have gathered into the covenant and promises of God! Is a man idolatrous,—is he immoral? It matters not; receive him; his *ignorance will atone* for all that. Again, is a man unregenerate,—is he a stranger to an inner, divine life? This matters not; receive him,—his honesty and morality will compensate for all that! And so, these heralds of “smooth things” go on, making out their catalogues for Heaven from men, whom the Scriptures, again and again, doom to a dreadful condemnation. Oh, what clerical quackery is this! And so these “false apostles” will find it, when they stand at the Bar of an insulted Saviour, and shall there be accused by those whom they now deceive, of being the *authors* of their perdition?

Another source of the prevalence of this pseudo-philanthropy, is to be found in *utilitarian philosophy*, that is so popular in our colleges and schools. There is an intimate connexion between theology and ethics: indeed, the latter may be considered as the outward expression of the former. Where Paganism is the prevalent creed in religion, the morality of the people will correspond; and the theology being low, the morality will also be debased. On the contrary, where a sound orthodoxy prevails, and the great truths of Revelation are cordially

embraced, the moral system of a people will be high, and vice and sin will be frowned upon with severity.— There is a strong affinity, indeed, a very close relationship, between Pelagianism, in its various forms, and the Utilitarian philosophy. Both of these systems proceed upon the same principle—the exaltation of benevolence at the expense of justice. The great point to be reached under this philosophy, is the *utile*. Governments, churches, associations, and societies of every kind, must form all their plans, and direct all their action to the promotion of certain *benevolent ends* previously agreed upon. The usefulness of these ends are of course to be judged of by their governments, societies and associations, themselves. Others may take a very different view of the subject. They may consider as exceedingly pernicious, the very ends to be accomplished by these champions of benevolence. To interpose a doubt here, however, is to interfere with the rights of conscience; it is to deny human liberty. You must, therefore, permit these men to determine this primary matter for themselves. If they agree that a certain part of the constitution is pernicious, and ought to be changed; or, if they conceive that a certain social custom is harmful, and ought to be abolished, you must not interfere, but bid them “God-speed” forthwith upon their mission of love. As to the *means* to be used, for the accomplishment of these ends, they are to employ any and all that will promise a favourable issue. If petitions are necessary, then they must be raised to such a number, that, like the locusts of Egypt, they shall darken the very heavens. If eloquent statesmen are to be employed to effect these purposes, committees must be appointed, and addresses and appeals made, to secure these services. If the press, the pulpit, or the stump, will promote the objects, why, any or all must be used, as circumstances shall direct. And such is apt to be the zeal of these disinterested partizans of benevolence, that often, when a question arises as to the lawfulness and propriety of certain means, they are ready at once to decide it, by simply considering its connexion with the end,—“Will it accomplish our purpose?” This is the question—“If so, adopt it—the end is good, at any rate.” Thus, deciding upon their own ends, and selecting

their own means, in each of which they are not always scrupulous, these modern reformers go forth "conquering and to conquer." The histories of modern Revivalists, of modern Abolitionists, and of the modern Propagandists of liberty, all furnish lamentable examples of the facts here stated. By all these, and many others like them, the stablest principles of society have been shaken,—long and established usages have been assailed,—good men have been maligned,—sound doctrine has been ridiculed,—and all to give place to some upstart Luther, pressing forward by "might and main" some wayward and fictitious reformation. The philosophy of Hume and Paley, may not, it is true, be chargeable with all this folly; but certain it is, that to a large degree, they have opened the flood-gates through which these bitter waters have proceeded. The prevalence of these systems of ethics has corrupted the *consciences* of men; and have furnished them with moral rules, that, if carried out, can only lead to the very worst consequences. Fix, for instance, in the creed of some hot-headed, restless spirit, that maxim of Paley—"whatever is expedient is right,"—and you give him an instrument of tremendous power, which he is ready to apply in all cases, and to press forward with all possible zeal. It renders him bold, rash and daring; and, if at the head of some of those numerous associations so prevalent in our country, he is never at a loss to fix his point of expediency, or to lead forward his zealous adherents to its attainment.

*The influence, too, of our free institutions upon the public mind,* is another source of the evil we are here considering. This effect is produced in two ways: by imparting false notions as to the nature and value of civil liberty, and by furnishing the people with every sort of privilege and opportunity for expressing and propagating their opinions. In estimating the freedom of governments, that is usually considered the freest that allows to individuals the greatest amount of personal liberty consistent with public safety. Any degree of personal liberty that would endanger or harm the government in any way, must be dangerous; and any restrictions placed upon a people, above what is necessary to their proper

control, must be oppressive. Here, however, arises a nice point in legislation, which it is exceedingly difficult to determine. Indeed, it is a point which must vary its position according to the character of the people to be governed, and of the government under which they live. In a country like ours, where the government originated with the people, and was made for the people,—and where, too, the people themselves are sober, calculating and moral, this point may descend far down the scale towards personal freedom. Hence, as a matter of fact, North Americans are the freest people on the globe. But where the character of the people is not such as to make the possession of a large amount of personal freedom consistent with the public welfare; where, too, the people are ignorant and immoral, and have always been accustomed to strong government,—there, the point of equipoise between liberty and power must approximate much nearer to the latter. Now, it is evident, since these things are so, that if any nation is to enjoy a large degree of freedom, it must first pass through a long and tedious probation. Many of our upstart politicians seem to imagine, that our liberty as a nation, began with our Revolution. But this is by no means true. It was then consummated. The freedom of this country began with Magna Charta,—was forwarded by Hampden's refusing to pay ship-money,—was heralded by the May-Flower, and was established by the victory that followed our Revolution. It was of long and difficult growth; and if its trunk now appears large, and its branches far-extended, and its immense foliage rich and luxuriant, it is because it is the Tree of ages, and the frosts of centuries have rested on its boughs. Now, what has happened with us, can happen again to no nation on the globe. True, since the establishment of our Federal Republic, we have seen many bold attempts in various nations, to imitate our example. France revolutionized,—Greece revolted, and Mexico and South-America conquered. But, what has been the result? The first has an Emperor,—the second a king, and the rest are perpetually tossed between anarchy on the one hand, and the Dictatorship on the other! No; there are millions on millions of men, living in our world, who are no more fit for freedom than children or

brute animals. Now, the greatest evil that could possibly be done to these immense masses of human beings, would be to increase largely their amount of personal liberty. The axe and the spade, the shop and the field, industry and frugality, would soon all be laid aside, while a vagrant and half-starved population would go forth to revel on the honestly-acquired possessions of their more worthy neighbours. Americans should not, therefore, be under the delusion, that what is suitable to them, is suitable to all men, and that what is a blessing to them, must also be a blessing to all men. Indeed, our own great Republic has not as yet endured all the tests that are to demonstrate its permanence and security. Uncombined, as yet they may be, but floating all around us, are disorganizing elements, that, at some future day, may make an onset upon American Freedom, such as Greece never knew,—Rome never experienced. Let us, then, not boast, either too soon, or too loud. A quiet, self-sustaining policy, is that which suits us best.

But, if our far-extended personal freedom is calculated to give us erroneous notions as to the nature and value of civil liberty, it also grants us every conceivable opportunity for expressing and propagating those notions. There never has been a country in which the powers of thought, of speech, and of the press, are as free as in these United States. Has a man, then, some new theory to propose,—some new Society to organize,—some new ends to accomplish,—there is the pen, the lecture-room, the printer's office, the steam-car,—all at his bidding.—True, he may not go so far as to shock decency and morality, or the mob will put him down; and he may not advance doctrines subversive of social order and domestic quiet, or the police will arraign him. But, any where this side these boundaries, he may write, or speak, or publish, as he pleases. All idea of checking, restraining, or defeating such a man, save in the use of the same privileges he enjoys, would be considered, on all hands, as tyrannical and anti-republican. Now, it is easy to perceive, that a nation like ours, enjoying the greatest amount of freedom that any people ever enjoyed; valiant and successful in the establishment and defence of their own institutions; full of energy and zeal for the happi-



ness of all mankind; abounding in schemes and plans for the amelioration of human suffering every where,—it is easy to perceive, that such a nation, wholly unfettered in all these things by law and authority,—may often go further on the mission of benevolence than either prudence or justice would warrant. And such we find to be the fact. Sometimes evils exceedingly small are magnified by us. Others, again, that are remote, and which do not lie within our jurisdiction, are assumed by us, nevertheless,—means not at all calculated to accomplish our ends are employed; and numerous blunders and mistakes are made, all going to prove, that we have begun to work without counting the cost, and that we have entered upon a warfare without estimating our forces.

The last source of the spurious benevolence we are here discussing, is to be found in what is termed, by way of eminence, "*the spirit of the age.*" There can be no doubt, but that there have been epochs in the history of our world, distinguished by certain great features from all others. There have been colonizing ages, martial ages, ages of philosophy and discovery, ages of monasticism and ignorance, ages of revolution and change, ages of despotism and of liberty. What is meant in the present instance by "*the spirit of the age,*" we suppose to be, that ours is the epoch of *benevolent action*. That Charity, which has been slumbering for centuries, has now gone forth with her numerous ministers and attendants, and is summoning all mankind to the universal and pleasant work of disenthraling the nations, and of uniting them together in one great and glorious kingdom of love and good-will. The picture is a splendid one, and every benevolent heart in heaven and on earth, must pray for its accomplishment. But good hath its evil; and although this conception originated in the purest love, yea, in the love of God himself,—and although we are assured in the Scriptures, that it is no prophetic dream, but a Divinely decreed result, yet, there are thousands of hearts in our world in which this first peal of the trump of earth's universal jubilee, has produced but an irregular and unhealthful action. Such persons see the noon at day-break, and seek to realize the end at the begin-

ning. Every thing with them must be placed under a system of high-pressure, and the church is to be marched into the Millennium in far less time than it took the Israelites to travel from Egypt to Canaan. Such a spirit manifested itself in the days of Christ. On one occasion "the people thought that the kingdom of God was immediately to appear;" and James and John were so sure of it, on another, that they began to petition their Master for "the places at his right hand and at his left hand." Now, if such men as the Apostles, and enjoying as they did the daily instructions of Him, who is emphatically the Prophet of God,—the great Revealer of the Father to mankind,—if the Apostles could thus err, we may certainly expect that at this day of feverish excitement about the world's conversion, many would fall into various hallucinations, and even be led by "spirits that are not of God." Hence, as there were "false Christs," and "false signs," in the days of our Lord, so are there now false Millenniums, and false Reformers, springing up in many parts of the earth. These, however, are but the scum and froth that the deep inward agitation of the heart of the universal church has cast upon the shore. It is not to these that we chiefly allude. It is to a far better class,—men of standing,—men of thought,—men of the best intentions. Even these are liable, so to be intoxicated with the magnificence of the picture before them,—so to be touched by the glorious out-gush of so much munificence and joy,—so to be captivated by the promises and prophecies that secure such results,—as to lose their just equipoise, and to select modes of accomplishing these ends that are neither scriptural nor practical. No doubt a mighty moral, and even political revolution, has begun upon our globe. The materials of this revolution have been gathering for ages, and Providence is evidently beginning now to put them together. The work is in progress; this we cannot, do not doubt. But what is any man's specific portion of this work,—what field he is to occupy and what instruments he is to use,—how far he is to go, and where he is to stop,—these and many more, are *practical* questions, which every man must decide for himself, and in the decision of which he needs not only the light of a sound understanding, but also the teachings

of that "wisdom which cometh from above, and which is first pure, then peaceable, easy to be entreated, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

Thus have we considered the causes of that spurious benevolence, which has deluged our country, and which is seeking to deluge the world. Of pure philanthropy, of genuine benevolence, there cannot be too great a display; but the *base counterfeit* of these virtues, which we have been here exposing, is *evil in its nature, evil in its action, evil in its results*. Its prevalence in society can have no other tendency than to subvert, revolutionize and destroy. It is emphatically an *Abaddon*—a *Destroyer*. It regards neither right nor wrong, peace nor war, order nor confusion, God nor man. It has *one ultimate object* to accomplish, and that is the *only idea* in the universe that is worth any thing! From such a Monster may a merciful God ever protect our Republic and our people! As a nation, we have certainly been raised up for some great and noble ends. But, if our highest privileges as a free people shall be employed only for self-annoyance, and the disturbance of our neighbours,—if a spirit of fanaticism shall be allowed to supplant that of true philanthropy,—if prejudice shall be substituted for reason, and impulsive action for well-premeditated progress,—if, instead of seeking those great and commanding destinies which are so obviously before us in the future, we turn aside to petty evils and petty controversies,—then may our sun go down in obscurity, and the *zenith* of our glory become the *nadir* of our disgrace. To rescue ourselves from a gulf like this, it is necessary that we return more closely to the principles of eternal justice. Benevolence is not every thing, after all; yea, if there must be pre-eminence, we should rather concede it to justice than benevolence. At any rate, justice is the anterior virtue; and wherever an attempt is made at being benevolent, in default of justice, the benevolence is always spurious and worthless. God himself, is at infinite pains, so to speak, to demonstrate to the universe that his benevolence to men is based upon the most immaculate justice. Grace never destroys right, or forgiveness law, under his administration. Is the sinner saved? then Christ must die! Is justice trampled upon,

even in the gospel ? then, the fires of an eternal hell must burn. No ; we find none of this sickly, base, and fanatical charity displaying itself in the government of God. Not only "are clouds and darkness round about Him ; but judgment and justice are the habitation of His throne." And so must it be on earth, if human institutions are to answer any valuable purposes, and human society attain any desirable end.

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## ARTICLE VI.

### THE SECONDARY AND COLLATERAL INFLUENCES OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES.

Society is the result of varied influences. As we look more carefully upon it, we perceive that the manifold wants of men bring and keep them together, and that as they are thus associated, there are complex forces at work to restrain, guide and control social organizations in their outward form and their inward spirit. As we examine more narrowly, we find all society to be developed from the family relation,—that the first family on earth was also the first civil and ecclesiastical association, and that all others have resulted (more or less) from the expansion of this original germ of the Church and the State. The warm affections of the soul, exhibited in filial or fraternal love, become modified into the affection of friendship, respect, or reverence, towards our fellow men, according to the relations they sustain to us. But the most important of all our original instincts, if so it may be called, is that of conscience, which makes us cognizant of a higher law, of a superior tribunal, of an after reckoning, and prepares us to receive whatever intimations, even though they be mere hints, and whatever fuller teachings may from any quarter reach us, of the existence and presence of a supreme and all-wise Creator, to whom we are also bound, and who binds us through himself and by his retributions, to our fellow men.

*Civilization* is a term difficult to define. *Civility*, in