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ART. I.—*Morell on Revelation and Inspiration.*

MORELL'S Philosophy of Religion has been long before the public, and its anti-evangelical character has been generally understood. There are, however, some reasons why it should, at the present time, receive some further notice, especially with regard to its views of Revelation and Inspiration. These views have obtained a wide currency. They are so speciously put forth under the forms and names, and as if in the interest, of evangelical religion, that many are disposed to regard them with favor; and some have adopted parts of them as not only consistent with the evangelical belief on these subjects, but as relieving that belief of many errors and difficulties with which it has been unnecessarily encumbered. Morell's work is a type of the class of writers who oppose the commonly received views with regard to revelation and inspiration, both in the views themselves and in the manner in which they are advocated. It has become the common method of the opponents of evangelical truth, while endeavoring to destroy the evangelical faith, to put forth their doctrines under the guise of evangelical terms. Thus, the terms "Divinity of Christ," "Vicarious Sacrifice," "Justification by Faith," are phrases which

have had, for ages, a distinctive and established meaning, as expressive of the system of evangelical faith; they have been used in a reverse meaning, to indicate doctrines directly opposite to that system, and utterly destructive of it. Why this change of names? Why is it now attempted to destroy the evangelical faith, under the guise of friendship? Is it the homage which error [unwittingly] pays to truth? Or is it that the evangelical scheme is so in accord with Scripture, and has so commended itself to the conscience and judgment of people who are earnest in religion, that its very garb disarms suspicion, and is worth adopting, even by its enemies who are laboring to destroy it?

It will be noticed how very much of the speciousness of Morell's views is owing to this change of the meaning of terms. He regards "Christianity as a Revelation from God" (p. 127). "The idea of Revelation," he says, implies "a ease of intelligence in which something is presented directly to the mind of the subject, in which it is conveyed by the immediate agency of God himself; intelligence which our own efforts would have been unavailable to attain, and in which the truth communicated could not have been drawn by inference from any data previously known" (p. 131). "Revelation in the Christian sense," he regards as "that power by which God presents the realities of the spiritual world immediately to the human mind" (p. 148).

He distinguishes between Revelation and Inspiration. The presentation of the object to the mind is Revelation; that elevation of the intuitional consciousness, which enables the mind to apprehend the object, is Inspiration. Inspiring, as God's work, consists in "the special means employed by God to induce the highest spiritual intuition at some period of the world. He calls these special means "Divine arrangements," and the result, a "miraculous elevation" "of the religious consciousness." These "Divine arrangements" and the "miraculous elevation," he says, are "what we mean by Inspiration." He speaks of "the superhuman element;" "extraordinary influences;"—"assuredly the most extraordinary instrumentalities to work upon the minds of the apostles, and to raise them to a state of spiritual perception and sensi-

bility, such as has never before been realized at any other period of the world ;” “ a Revelation,” and “ Divine arrangements, through the medium of which the loftiest and purest conceptions of truth were brought before the immediate consciousness of the apostles, and through them, of the whole age ; at a time, too, when, in other respects the most universal demoralization abounded on every side.” And though Morell holds that the inspired man has no faculty beyond what all men possess in common, and though the subjective intellectual process differs not in kind from any other process of intuitional consciousness, he is careful to say, “ we are not by any means intending to shut away out of sight the Divine agencies which were employed in introducing the Christian Revelation specifically to mankind.”

Could we stop here, and receive these terms, definitions, and disclaimers, in their ordinary sense, and as they would naturally and almost necessarily be understood, we should be obliged to conclude that Morell does not differ essentially from the common evangelical belief with regard to Revelation and Inspiration. Many have so concluded, and have been led so to conclude by the passages which we have cited. But we shall see that by “ Revelation,” or the direct presentation of intelligence “ by the immediate agency of God himself,” Morell does not mean the communication or direct impartation of any intelligence to the mind of one more than to the mind of another ; nor the objective presentation of any thing before the mind of one, that is not equally presented before the minds of others at the same time. There is simply a natural presentation of objects, before the natural capacities of all. The presentation is Divine, because God made all objects, and presents them before the faculties of all, to be apprehended by their natural powers, according to the degree of the elevation of intuitional consciousness in each ; with no peculiar faculty in any, nor with any intellectual process in one different from the intellectual process in the other. Morell’s “ Revelation ” is simply the natural revelation of deism.

And Morell’s “ Inspiration,” though he calls it “ supernatural,” “ Divine,” and “ miraculous,” is simply the elevation of

intuitional consciousness by "arrangements" that give to all, at the same time and under the same circumstances, an equal advantage. It is "supernatural" only as God works all things above nature; and "miraculous," only as Divinely effected by natural means. The circumstances, and the Divine work, are alike to all.

In such Revelations and Inspirations, therefore,—and so Morell holds,—absolute truth, either in morals or religion, is never reached. No such absolute truth is ever imparted by the Divine agency, but each one advances *toward* the truth according to the degree of exaltation attained by his intuitional consciousness. Prophets and apostles made grand attainments, but they were imperfect, and never reached absolute truth. The Old Testament writers were indeed quite up to their age, but their religious views, and their views of morality, were so low, as to make it horrible to regard their teachings as the Word of God, or as to be received as of Divine authority. Apostles were inspired, but not so inspired as to be able to teach absolute truth; much less were they inspired or commissioned to *write* any thing to be received as of Divine authority. Their inspiration was simply an imperfect elevation of their intuitional consciousness, to reach such views as they were able, in the natural use of their natural faculties, extraordinarily elevated by natural means, and according to natural laws. They gave, not the Word of God, but a transcript of their own advanced, but imperfect consciousness. A revelation "by word or pen," Morell holds to be impossible; and useless, if it were possible, since it can convey no higher views to the one whom it addresses, than he has already attained in the elevation of his intuitional consciousness. The Bible, therefore,—Morell holds,—is not inspired. It is no standard of faith or duty. No doctrine should be attempted to be proved by it. We ourselves, according to our goodness and intuitional exaltation, are as truly inspired as prophets and apostles. We may use the Bible as a help, but by no means as an authoritative standard. It is a help, as all good books are helps, but by no means a guide to be followed implicitly or as a rule.

What then is the standard? Where shall we find the Gos-

pel in its simplicity and in its purity? Morell says we must seek for it "in the clear elimination from *all systems*, or rather from the religious intuitions of all good men, of the vital elements of Christian faith and love and joy." But why eliminate from "*all systems*?" What security is there that we shall find it in these? Morell says, "the religious intuitions of the human mind, in accordance with their very nature, grow up to an *ever-increasing perfection*, in *humanity at large*, when it is brought under the influence of Christian ideas and principles." But if these intuitions in humanity at large are naturally growing up to "an ever-increasing perfection," to what shall we make the *final* appeal? Morell has thought of that. He says, "the highest appeal must be the "*Catholic expression of the religious consciousness of purified humanity, in its eternal progress heavenward*?" Oh, then, the standard to which we are to make our final appeal, is "in an eternal progress!" Where are we to find "the catholic expression of the religious consciousness of purified humanity?" When we have found it, how shall we determine the degree of "progress" which it has reached at present? Plainly, we ourselves must judge of that; and having searched "all systems," and examined "the religious intuitions of all good men," we must judge for ourselves what in them is right and true. No certain truth is attainable; no standard of truth is possible. Man can only judge for himself of the degree of "eternal progress" toward truth which "humanity" has reached, and run the hazard of changes in the eternal progress yet to come!

Is this Christianity? Is it Revelation, or Inspiration? Is it not, rather, Naturalism as opposed to Revelation or Inspiration; and Rationalistic Deism as opposed to Christianity?

But let us be more particular, in order to be certain that we have characterized Morell's philosophy justly, and to show more fully that such is the religion which he proposes for the acceptance of mankind. Morell regards "Revelation" as necessarily signifying "*a mode of intelligence*;" and next, undertakes "to determine *what mode of intelligence* it is, which the term Revelation implies" (p.129). He shows, as he supposes, "that there are two modes of intelligence possi-

ble to man in his present state :” the “*intuitional* and the logical.” “In the former, we arrive at truth by a direct and immediate gazing upon it,”—when we come in contact with the external world through the senses, it is a “*perception* ;” when “we have a direct knowledge” of “higher and more spiritual realities” through “the interior eye of consciousness,” it is an “*intuition*.” “In the logical mode of intelligence, on the contrary, we arrive at truth *mediately*,” by calculation or inference of our own, or by some definition or explanation from the lips of another. “These two modes of intelligence, then, are the *only two* adapted to the present state of the human mind. To imagine a third mode is a psychological impossibility.”

He goes on to show that Revelation can be only through the *intuitional*, and not through the *logical*. Nothing can be a *revelation* to us that is told, communicated, or described to us. No power, no intelligent being, can so *reveal* any thing to us. Our intuitional consciousness must be so elevated as to see the truth in the exercise of our own powers. Revelation and Intuition are alike in this, “that the object of intelligence is in each case “presented *directly* to our contemplation.”

They agree also in this, that the “knowledge involved,” is, in each case, “presented to us immediately *by God*.” Thus : “our knowledge of the material universe is a revelation.” “As far as its real nature and mode of communication is concerned, it must be *always* a revelation”—a “Divine manifestation”—“to the human reason.” So “forms of beauty, and the high ideas embodied in *nature*” are “immediate manifestations of the thoughts of God to the human mind.” We must have faculties for the purpose; God must present the object; “if either be wanting, there is no Divine manifestation.” “The process by which we gaze admiringly upon the wonders of nature, is a mode of intelligence that implies, in its generic sense, a direct revelation *from God* himself.” The case is still plainer “when we turn to the higher sphere of intuition”—of “the true, the beautiful, the good.” There is this further agreement between Intuition and Revelation, Morell supposes, in that the “knowledge imparted” could not have been gained by our own efforts, nor derived from the

data of any other and previous knowledge. There is no intermediate step or process: the object, the truth, the beauty, the eternal law of right, are seen immediately in themselves; no logical process can reach them; they cannot be *told* us; we must see them ourselves, or they can by no means be *revealed* to us. When we ourselves immediately behold them in direct intuition, and when the things which we behold are presented to us by God, then the process of intelligence is a case of Divine Revelation. "The light which first broke in upon chaos" was "in the strictest sense a revelation." "So we may say, in perfect truth, that the universe is a revelation to the human mind"—"as much a revelation as every thing else which comes home to our consciousness by direct and immediate presentation." In all this Morell holds that in Revelation, nothing is told or communicated to one man more than to another. Nothing is objectively presented before one which is not at the same time objectively placed before others; and that, "by the direct agency of him who is the source of all truth and goodness and beauty." The only difference is that the intuitional consciousness of one is more elevated than that of the other. Nor is any thing directly told, or in any way communicated, or a knowledge,—as of religious truth or of future events,—imparted *ab extra*, to one, by any process that is not equally employed in the case of others. Such *telling*, or *communicating*, as a revelation either of religious truth, or of a knowledge of future events, Morell holds to be impossible.

But, really, is this so? Such a notion seems so strange, and so subversive of every idea hitherto considered as involved in Revelation or Inspiration, that doubtless ample proof will be required that this is Morell's position. Let Morell speak for himself. On page 135, he says: "There is, however, one more process coming within the province of the logical faculty, which might appear at first sight to be far more compatible with the idea of a revelation; and through the medium of which, indeed, many suppose that the actual revelations of God to man have been made." "The process to which I refer is that of verbal exposition. Could not a revelation from God, it might be naturally urged, consist in an *exposition of truth*; made to us by the *lips* or *pen* of an *inspired messenger*—"

ger; that exposition coming distinctly under the idea of a *logical exposition of doctrines*, which it is for mankind to receive, as sent to us on Divine authority?"

Morell answers, no. He has considered the matter well; the Lord cannot do it. He means no irreverence; but the Lord has limited himself by the constitution which he has given to the human mind; and he cannot do it. No "inspired messenger," can, "by lips or pen," set forth a message from God, which "it is proper for mankind to receive as sent to us on Divine authority" (p. 136). And this he argues at length. This principle draws deep. If this be true, then "the word of the Lord" never came to any prophet predicting any judgments, or foretelling the riches of the Divine mercy, and the glories of the Redeemer's kingdom. There has never been a "thus saith the Lord," which it is "proper for man to receive as sent to us on Divine authority." Holy men of God spake a vision out of their own intuitional consciousness, and not, as "they were moved by the Holy Ghost." They never spoke any thing "not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." Paul was much mistaken when he commended the Thessalonians because when they received the word of God, which they heard of him, they "received it not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God." It was no word of God; it was but Paul's imperfect exposition of his own imperfect intuitional consciousness. Morell distinctly declares that the Bible is neither inspired nor a standard of religious truth. He acknowledges no volume, and no utterance, as the word of God. No, a revelation could not be made by "*lips or pen*" to be received "as on the authority of God." It can be made "only in the form of religious intuition," nor can it be a revelation save to him to whom it comes as a personal intuition.

But how unphilosophical is this theory; how contrary to facts; how utterly opposed to the declarations of Scripture!

Unphilosophical; for no man can know that God cannot make a communication to the mind of man, in just that method. And men, contrary to the assertion of Morell, have already all the ideas necessary for the full comprehension of such a message in words; *e. g.*,—that "Babylon shall be



destroyed," and by whom, and under what circumstances. And not only so, but Divine tokens can be given, that such a revelation, "by lips" or "pen," may properly be received as on the authority of God.

Morell's notion is also contrary to facts. The thing has been done, and often done. Many and many a prediction of occurrences which no human mind could foresee, has stood written for ages, and the exact and wonderful fulfilment was demonstration that the message was from God. So of the religious truth, that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" men might already be possessed of all the ideas necessary to comprehend such an utterance, so that expressed by "lips" or "pen," it could be sufficiently understood for the purpose of their salvation. And how can any man know that God could not impart such knowledge of a coming Messiah, and so reveal the great salvation, without elevating the intuitional consciousness of the inspired man to see all these future events by his own natural powers; and without so elevating his consciousness as to foresee, of itself, and to comprehend, the mystery of God manifest in the flesh, and of redemption by blood? These mysteries were, in fact, so revealed. A series of prophets, in different countries, and for a series of ages, spoke of a coming Messiah. No one saw the whole. Age after age, and prophet after prophet, added another and another particular, which no human consciousness could be elevated to see by its own intuition, or see it with no special presentation of any thing objective, and no especial communication, beyond what was made to other men. What human intuition could see that God was to be incarnate? That the Saviour should be born in Bethlehem; of a virgin; of the lineage of David? What human intuition could have foreseen, and fixed the time, so that the Messiah should come while the second temple was standing, and before the ceasing of the daily oblation, and in the height of the Roman empire? And then the seeming contradictions of these prophecies: that the Saviour should be a child, and yet the Everlasting Father, the Mighty God? That he should be a king of everlasting and boundless domin-

ion, and yet despised, cut off as a transgressor, and have his grave with the wicked? The prophets themselves could not reconcile these seeming contrarieties. They searched diligently, "what, or what manner of time, the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." But it was revealed unto them, that they searched these things not for themselves but for later believers; and later believers saw their complete and exact fulfilment. Yet Morell thinks it all impossible! He has considered the matter: nothing like this could have been so revealed "by lips or pen," to be received "as on the Divine authority." He holds—what no man can know—that God could not so have communicated these things to the human mind! No other way was possible in the case, save to exalt the intuitional consciousness, which all men have in common, and—as we shall see—to exalt it by natural means, so that men shall, in the exercise of their own powers, see all these mysteries of redemption for themselves! How unphilosophical this view! How unscriptural! How contrary to the facts! For, we repeat it, no man can know that God cannot—beyond the exercise or exaltation of any natural power—directly communicate these mysteries and these future events to the mind of man. And the Scriptures constantly represent that the doctrine of Christ and him crucified was a mystery hid in God from the foundation of the world. Eye had not seen it, nor ear heard it; neither had it entered into the heart of man. But God had revealed it by his spirit. No intuitional power of man could have penetrated into the secret of the Divine purpose of redemption; "for what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so, the things of God, knoweth no man, but the spirit of God." Not only were these Divine mysteries revealed as to the matter, but inspired men so recorded them, under the Divine direction, that they themselves, even by diligent searching, were unable to comprehend what, or what manner of time, the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. And apostles, to whom the full revelation of Christ was made, spoke them, "not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

These are not only the declarations of Scripture, but the facts themselves show that such must have been the method of communication. Morell's scheme is, therefore, every way unphilosophical, contrary to Scripture, and contradictory to the facts in the case. So in the prediction of many things, which involve no such mystery as the mystery of Redemption; no man can know that God could not reveal these future events save by exalting the intuitional consciousness of the man, so that he could see things future by the exercise of his own power. No man can prove, in any instance, that such future events were foreseen by the mere exercise of the human intuitional faculty. For example: "it was revealed" to Simeon, "that he should not see death, till he had seen the Lord's Christ." Can any man know that this knowledge could not have been directly imparted to Simeon, by the Spirit of God? Can any man know so much of the methods possible to the Holy Spirit, as to be able to know that this was not, and could not have been, the method by which it was revealed to Simeon, that he should not die till he had seen the Lord's Christ? On the other hand, can any man show that the intelligence was communicated to Simeon on Morell's plan of revelation, viz., by exalting Simeon's natural power of intuition so that he should foresee the time of Christ's coming, and of his own death, by his own faculties, without any communication of the intelligence *ab extra*?

Morell is consistent in this view. He holds that no revelation was ever made in any other mode than the one which he describes. "The aim of revelation" was not "formally to expound a system of doctrine," but to educate the mind gradually to see truth for itself through the intuitional consciousness (p. 140). "Judaism was propædeutic to Christianity, but there was no formal definition of any one spiritual truth in the whole of that economy." What! No declaration in words, of the unity of God, and forbidding idolatry; when it is said, "Hear, O Israel, *the Lord thy God is one Lord: thou shalt have no other Gods before me?*" So Morell says, that "there is no formal exposition of doctrine in the whole discourses of the Saviour." What! No exposition of Christian morals by the "lips" of Christ, in the Sermon on the Mount?

No declaration of the work of redemption, when Christ says, "*The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many?*" No doctrine, when he says, "*Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you?*" No doctrine preached by apostles! No truth to be believed as of Divine authority, when apostles went forth preaching Christ and him crucified, and when in their preaching they turned the world upside down? Oh, no! No doctrine at all! Morell holds that they went forth on a simple mission of educating the intuitional consciousness! Paul, indeed, could say, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." John could say, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God-speed." Oh, no! No doctrine! "No formal exposition of Christian doctrine!" No particular gospel exclusive of "*another,*" and that may be distinguished from *another!* No declaration of a Divine method and offer of salvation, which if men receive and follow, they shall be saved, and which, if they believe not, and obey not, they shall be damned! But only a general, undefinable mission of educating the intuitional consciousness, was the work of Christ and the mission of apostles!

It is time now to inquire about Inspiration. On Morell's scheme, what power, or faculty, has the inspired man beyond other men? What is presented to his mind? What influences are brought to bear upon his mind, beyond what is presented to other minds, and beyond the influences which are brought to bear upon the other minds around him at the same time?

As to *power* or *faculty*, Morell says, p. 159: "It is a *higher potency of a certain form of consciousness which every man to some degree possesses.*" And, p. 148, "Inspiration does not imply any thing new in the *actual processes* of the human mind: *it does not involve any form of intelligence essentially different from what we already possess; it indicates rather the elevation of religious consciousness.*"

That is, God tells nothing; communicates nothing to the inspired man more than to others; objectively presents

nothing more. But let Morell explain this for himself (p. 148).

“We must regard the whole process of inspiration, accordingly, as being in no sense *mechanical*, but as purely *dynamical*; involving not a novel supernatural faculty, but a faculty already enjoyed, elevated *supernaturally* to an extraordinary power and susceptibility.” (Observe how, and what it is)—“indicating in part an inward nature so perfectly harmonized to the Divine, so freed from the distorting influences of passion and sin, and so recipient of the Divine ideas circumambient around it, so responsive in all its strings to the breath of heaven, that the truth leaves an impress upon it which answers perfectly to its objective reality.”

Here is no *telling*, or *communicating*, any thing to the inspired man; no *presentation* of any object before him more than to others; but his mind being freed from distorting influences, and harmonized to the Divine, becomes “so recipient of the Divine ideas *circumambient around it*,” that it sees more than others of a different character, around whom “the Divine ideas are equally circumambient.”

The “circumambient ideas” are the *Revelation*. Freeing the mind from passion and sin, harmonizing it with the Divine, till it becomes recipient of the Divine ideas, is *Inspiration*.

But Morell speaks of the mind being elevated “*supernaturally*,” and of “*miraculous* elevation.” What is this? Morell says: “The *supernatural element* consists in the extraordinary influences employed to create these lofty intuitions, and to bring the subject into perfect harmony with truth.”

Well, what are these “*extraordinary influences*?” Are they influences of the Holy Ghost? Are they truly “supernatural,” or are they wholly natural, and working by natural [*i. e.*, by ordinary and established] laws? They are wholly natural. Morell has but changed the meaning of the words “supernatural” and “miraculous.” He ignores entirely any influences of the Holy Ghost. It does not appear that he has any belief at all in the Holy Ghost, as inspiring men by leading them into all truth, bringing all things to their remembrance, showing them things to come, and giving them what

to say, so that it is not they that speak, but the spirit of their Father which speaketh in them. The "extraordinary influences" which he specifies are all outside circumstances, objectively presented to others as well as to the inspired men. Morell specifies, in the case of the apostles, their "personal experience of the life, preaching, character, sufferings, and resurrection of Christ, together with the remarkable effusion of spiritual influences which followed his ascension," as "assuredly the *most extraordinary instrumentalities* to work upon the minds of the apostles, and to *raise them to a state of spiritual perception* and sensibility, such as has never been fully realized at any other period of the world's history." "Jesus Christ is a revelation." But he was objectively presented to others besides the apostles. They saw his life and heard his preaching. If these "extraordinary influences" and "extraordinary instrumentalities" were the "supernatural element" in inspiration, then were not others also inspired?

But Morell specifies "Divine arrangements" and "miraculous elevation." He does so, indeed; but his "Divine arrangements" are nothing out of the ordinary course of Divine providences, and his "miraculous elevation," he is careful to tell us, is by a natural miracle, and that he is only affirming—"what is constantly done in the case of outward miracles themselves"—"that God always employs *natural means*, whenever it is possible to do so, in order to accomplish his *supernatural purposes*." The common idea of the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost is not found in his scheme. He discards it as "mechanical."

Since, then, nothing is objectively presented, and so revealed to one more than to others around him, and since the elevation of consciousness takes place according to natural laws, in whom does the inspiration take place?

Morell teaches that it takes place in all men, according to their degree of goodness; and that, subjectively, it is identical with what takes place in men of genius. On p. 78, in reply to the objection that if "intuition be the direct presentation of truth," it should be infallible, he answers, that "if our intuitional nature were absolutely perfect, then indeed its results would be infallible." "If we were to imagine our minds

to be perfectly harmonized, morally, intellectually, religiously, with all truth—if we can imagine them without any discord of the interior being, to stand in the midst of a universe upon which God has impressed his own Divine ideas”—“then, indeed, we should comprehend things *as they are*. A mind, so harmonized with nature and with God, would perceive at one glance the processes and end of all things; just as Goethe, without the labor of any inductive reasoning, saw the metamorphosis of plants; just as genius in the philosopher grasps the hidden analogues;” “just so a high spiritual sensibility feels the reality of moral and religious truth long ere it is verified or logically expounded.” And, p. 178, “Genius is a remarkable power of intuition;” “a power which arises from the inward nature of a man being in harmony with that object, in its reality and its operations.” So, p. 174, “in affirming that the inspiration of the ancient seers and of the chosen apostles was analogous with these phenomena, we are in no way diminishing its heavenly origin, or losing sight of the supernatural agency by which it is produced.” “God employs natural means, whenever it is possible to do so, to accomplish even his supernatural results.” But what are the natural means to accomplish the supernatural result of Inspiration? Morell does not leave us in doubt: “Let there be a due purification of the moral nature, a perfect harmony of the spiritual being with the mind of God, a removal of all inward disturbance from the heart, and what is to hinder the immediate intuition of Divine things? Not only do we now comprehend its nature [viz., of inspiration], not only do we feel its sublimity, not only does it rise from a mere mechanical force to a phenomenon instinct with grandeur, but we are taught”—mark here what we are taught—“we are taught, that in *proportion* as our own hearts and our nature are brought into harmony with truth, *we may ourselves approach the same elevation.*”

Inspiration, then, takes place, according to natural laws, in all men according to their degree of goodness. We ourselves may approach the same elevation as prophets and apostles, in proportion as our hearts are purified, and our natures brought into harmony with truth.

But how is it that the knowledge is of Divine origin, since it is humanly acquired, and by natural processes and natural means, and without having it objectively and directly imparted to them by Divine communication? Morell provides for this difficulty. "Knowledge is Divine because humanity itself is Divine. It comes from God because we came forth from God." "The truth that knowledge is Divine remains; but it remains *not* to bear witness to the delusiveness of the human faculties, *as though they never could have perceived the truth, had it never been imparted to them objectively, but rather to show that our spiritual knowledge is Divine, for just this reason*, that man who realizes it is himself a child of the Divinity, and is permitted to gaze upon that world from which he came" (p. 282).

But had prophets and apostles received that degree of inward goodness which rendered their teachings infallible? An important question, since, unless we can gauge their spiritual attainments, we cannot tell, on Morell's plan, what degree of authority to allow them, or what degree of credit to allow to the Bible. On this point Morell answers, unequivocally, No. They had not reached that degree of goodness which made their teachings infallible. The writers of the Old Testament were inspired; a little more than other men of their day; but they taught an "impure and imperfect morality"—"one frequently at variance with Christian principles"—"and highly revolting to our best and religious sensibilities," if we suppose them to come direct from a "Holy God." Their inspiration could but exhibit their own "religious consciousness." This was "the spirit of humanity, on its pathway to Christian light and love"—"the purest representations both of their own natural and individual vitality." "Hence, accordingly, the imperfections both in moral and religious ideas are mixed up more or less with all their sacred writings" (pp. 160, 161, 162).

It cannot fail to be observed here, how sadly Morell mistakes and misrepresents the morality and piety of the Old Testament. It does not, as he supposes, inculcate the spirit of "fierce war and retaliation"—"hatred of enemies," and other vices which he attributes to it. Nowhere are the sins, even



of the heart, more thoroughly condemned than in the Old Testament. At no time, more than at the present, had the words of the Psalmist a higher appreciation, when he says : "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul ; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes ; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever ; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." Nowhere is there found a more spiritual, or a more exalted religious experience than is delineated in the Psalms. If we compare the spiritual attainments of any man that ever lived, with the attainments demanded in these, we may say, with emphasis : "I have seen an end of all perfection ; but thy commandment is exceeding broad." Our Lord himself, when he gave his Golden Rule as the sum of moral duty to our fellow-men, said : "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye the same to them, *for this is the law and the prophets.*" But Morell holds the morality of the law and the prophets to be defective and obsolete, far behind "*the spirit of humanity* in its pathway to Christian light and love."

What, then, does Morell mean, when he says of these Old Testament writings, that "they stand before us their own witness to the truth?" and when he speaks of them as "the wondrous symbols;" "the miraculous history;" "the sublime devotions;" "the halo of glory which nothing can obscure?" "*Their own witness to the truth?*" What, to permanent and unchanging truth? Oh, no : nothing of the kind! They "present us with facts—facts in the religious life of a people; facts in the *progress* of the human mind *toward* a loftier view, which speak for themselves." "Herein lies their inspiration, and in this sense, and in this alone, can we maintain our hold on the Old Testament canon as a spiritual and Divine reality, profitable for doctrine" (p. 170).

"The spirit of humanity," then, "on its pathway to Christian light and love," has left the Old Testament behind. Come we then to the New Testament, to whose writers he attributes "the highest inspiration ever yet reached." He denies that these *writings* were or contain a revelation, or that they were inspired, or that they are the word of God, or that they contain that word. They are indeed "*veritable representations*

of the religious life, which [the writers] had derived by special inspiration from heaven." But that inspiration was the simple intuition of very good, yet imperfect men; a record of their own consciousness, according to the degree of elevation which they had then attained, and their writings are no standard for us. But tell us, were not their memories guided, and their minds led into all truth, by some special aid of the Comforter? Or if not this, was there not, at least, some special *superintendence*, so that we may confidently rest on their teachings as safe and sufficient guides?

Morell answers, and answers distinctly, p. 172: "If it be said that the providence of God must have watched over the composition and construction of a canonical book, which was to have so vast an influence on the destiny of the world, we are quite ready to admit it, and even to assert it; but in the same sense Providence watches over every other event which bears upon the welfare of man, *although the execution of it be left to the freedom of human endeavor.*"

That is all. They gave an account of their own intuitional states, while they were imperfect, and their intuitions could not possibly have infallibility, or their utterances be regarded in any sense as the word of God. They gave a human record of fallible and imperfect intuition; and as to Divine superintendence, they had no providential superintendence even, save as Providence watches over all events which are "*left to the freedom of human endeavor.*"

As to the logical parts of the New Testament, Morell holds that these could be in no manner inspired. "To some it might doubtless appear very irreverent to speak of errors in reasoning, as occurring in the sacred writings; but the irreverence, if there be any, lies on the part of those who deny their possibility." "To speak of *logic*, as such, as being inspired, is a sheer absurdity." Infallible conclusions cannot, he holds, be secured in that way "by any amount of inspiration whatever."

No: the Lord could not do it. Paul need not think to *reason* with us out of the Scriptures to prove that "by deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified" in the sight of God; nor to prove justification by faith, the Scriptures are no rule, and reasoning can have no inspiration.

But can an infallible inspiration ever be given? And can a record of this be given, which shall at least be a *human* record of an inspired and infallible intuitional consciousness? Morell thinks the first possible; he is not so certain of the last, since there is no certainty that men are ever inspired to speak or to write, but only in the mental intuition. We ourselves—all men—“indefinitely approved the same elevation,” as prophets and apostles, *in proportion* “as our hearts are purified, and our nature brought into harmony with truth.” As that “proportion” approaches perfection, we approach infallibility in our intuitional consciousness. And when our moral nature is entirely pure, and undisturbed, in perfect harmony, then, Morell holds, our intuitions must be infallible (p. 78).

But may we not go to the Bible for instructions, in order that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work? Morell forbids it. It is true that the apostles reasoned out of the Scriptures, and so did some other disciples, mightily convincing the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. It is true that our Lord rebuked his disciples for not receiving the Scriptures as authoritative, and for not understanding what the Scriptures so clearly taught: “O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” But Morell allows no such searchings of the Scriptures for doctrines of final truth. How differently he views these things from the way in which our Lord views them!

But if the Bible is not the word of God, nor any final standard of truth, and if we may not search it as a final guide as to what we shall believe concerning God, and what duties God requires of man—nor to know what we must do to be saved—where then shall we go? Well did one of old say, “Lord, to whom shall we go, *thou* hast the words of eternal life.” But Morell is at no loss. He sends us somewhere else. He has formed a better standard than the Bible. He has found a better exposition of the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ than the New Testament. Hear: “*I contend, there-*

fore, most earnestly, for this position; that the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ is to be sought in the clear elimination from all systems, or rather from the religious intuitions of all good men, of the vital elements of Christian faith, and love and joy" (pp. 24, 81).

Plato, Confucius, Phasters, Vedas, "all systems" must be laid under contribution! Or would he limit his meaning to "all systems" calling themselves Christian? How shall we determine what to eliminate from these systems? By what test shall we determine whether any tenet belongs to the "elements of Christian faith and joy?" How shall we come at "the religious intuitions of all good men?" How shall we determine their degree of goodness, so that we may judge that they have any thing worth eliminating? Is not "the spirit of humanity" still on its march "toward Christian light and love?" Do not "the religious intuitions of the human mind, in accordance with their very nature, grow up to an ever-increasing "perfection in humanity at large?" Where then shall we rest? To what is the final appeal?

Morell is very explicit on this point. "The theology of every age is the formal statement of the truth which these intuitions convey, and consequently *the highest appeal must be to the catholic expression of the religious consciousness of purified humanity in its eternal progress heavenward.*"

Farewell, prophets! Farewell, apostles! Farewell, Bible! Farewell, Jesus of Nazareth! The highest appeal is no longer to you, but to "*the catholic expression of the religious consciousness of purified humanity, in its eternal progress heavenward.*"

Where shall we find that catholic expression? Oh, we must "eliminate" it "from all systems." "Purified humanity!" Where is it? Has it reached a resting-place, where we may find the truth? Oh, no! Purified humanity is on an "*eternal progress.*" What then is the present stage of its progress? Who is to gauge for us the degree of "perfection" and "progress" which it has already reached? Plainly each one must judge of these things for himself. The only standard by which he is to judge is himself. Neither prophets, nor apostles, nor humanity, in any stage of progress or perfection, is any standard of certitude. Poor, erring, lost man is left without a guide, save as

he is persuaded that he is himself Divine, and his intuitions from God, since "he himself came from God." No revelation or inspiration has authority over him, any further than it commends itself to his own consciousness. Such is the conclusion which Morell draws himself. He holds that the Bible is no standard of religious truth; and even if it were so in itself, it could be no "basis of religious certitude," since when we arrive at its meaning through interpretation, "the actual text would be the reason of the interpreter" (p. 287).

Is this scheme capable of being developed into any form of evangelical religion? To us it seems utterly opposed to all revealed religion. Indeed, in his definition of "subjective Christianity," he wholly omits every thing that distinguishes Christianity from unchristian Deism. He defines "subjective Christianity" as "that form of religion in which we are conscious of absolute dependence and perfect freedom being harmonized by love to God" (pp. 116, 123). Here is no Christ in the religious experience; no redemption from the curse of the law; no death in sin; no renewing of the Holy Ghost; no recognition of our being bought with blood. It is such a subjective Christianity as no Christian ever had, or ever can have. Indeed, why should not Morell leave these things out of his Christianity? They are truths which no mere intuitional consciousness of man could ever reach, and which Morell will not allow us to search out from the Scriptures. They are mysteries hid in God, which none of the mere intellectual princes of this world knew; but God has revealed them to us by his Spirit. Morell recognizes no Holy Spirit, unless, indeed, he might give that name as Chevalier Bronson does, to "the whole humanity;" "God as existing and working in the sentiment and feeling of the Church, or whole humanity;" so that the Bible is only "a leaf in the past progress of developing truth *by the whole humanity, or Holy Ghost.*" Rejecting the Bible as the word of God, or as a standard of religious truth; and making the final appeal to the "Catholic expression of the religious consciousness of purified *humanity* in its eternal progress heavenward," how *can* such a scheme differ at all from the peculiar views advocated by Theodore Parker—views utterly destructive of every thing belonging peculiarly to Christianity?

Morell omits no opportunity of extolling Schleiermacher. Nothing in his scheme gives us any intimation that he too does not hold, that sin, in the sight of God, is no *sin*, but only a necessary process of development; that sin demands no punishment, save that itself is a source of evil; that it demands no redeeming sacrifice, no satisfaction of Divine justice; that atonement is only a reconciliation effected in the mind of the sinner; and redemption a simple subjective purification and exaltation, which is a natural process and not a regeneration.

But, it may be asked, does not Morell reclaim the evangelical elements of Christianity in his objective definition? "In this point of view," he says (p. 123.), "we may define Christianity as that religion which rests upon the consciousness of redemption through Jesus Christ." These words sound well. But what does he mean by redemption?—Redemption by blood? Christ bearing our sins in his own body on the tree? So that Christ was a propitiation brought forth in his blood? Nothing like it. No such idea is hinted at in his whole philosophy; but a redemption, and a process of redemption, that excludes it. He himself immediately explains what he means by redemption. "The redemption of the world, in the most general acceptance of the term, involves the notion of a universal change of mankind from one, and that an evil condition, into a better and holier state" (p. 124). That is all! Redemption from the *curse* of the law; the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost himself, are strangers to his whole philosophy. He has no place nor functions for these.

But suppose he does not specify these as elements of Christianity—though without them Christianity is not—does he not imply them? He sets forth a scheme in which there is no need of them, and no place for them; a scheme which is spoiled utterly if these are not excluded. But may we not, in consistency with his scheme, search the Scriptures, and fill up for ourselves what is deficient on the doctrines of sin, depravity, redemption, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost? He does not allow us to search the Scriptures for any doctrine, but only to use them as helps to elevate our own intuitional powers. And we know to how many, who leave the Scriptures, and set up their own alleged intuitions for truth, Christ

crucified is a stumbling-block, or foolishness; atonement by blood an absurdity shocking to reason and derogatory to the character of God.

We might go further; we have unearthed but a few of the limbs of the monster of a religion indicated by the scheme of Morell; but these are quite sufficient to determine its genus. These *disjecta membra* cannot be constructed into any thing like the religion of Christ; they belong, of necessity, to another Gospel, which is not another, but a religion at war with any evangelical scheme of Christianity known to the Church since Christianity began.

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#### ART. II.—*Christian Work in Upper Egypt.*

IN proceeding now to give the reader, in accordance with our third division, some acquaintance with one of the native congregations, we shall embrace the opportunity presented by the journey from Osiout to Kous—the congregation which it is our purpose to sketch—to refer to a sphere of mission work which has not yet been alluded to.

One of the most interesting and successful departments of the recent evangelistic efforts in Egypt has been the dissemination of religious literature throughout the land. Commenced at first on a very humble scale, it was afterward carried on with so much system and energy, that it may now be said that there is scarcely a town or village between Luxor and Cairo which has not received the Word of God, in whole or in part, either by the direct visitation of the missionary or by the instrumentality of its own inhabitants. And the stations which are now occupied as so many centres were first cultivated in these tours; some of the best individual fruits of mission labor in the land are the product of the seed thus sown broadcast; and there can be little doubt that after years will see the springing forth of “first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear,” in many other places. The soil, as we have seen, has not been of the most promising