

picture of Turkish despotism in Greece, occasionally inter-  
rupted by bloody but fruitless wars against the Venetians  
and the Republics and always terminating in a still more gloomy  
and oppressive condition of the people.

# THE MERCERSBURG REVIEW.

APRIL, 1859.

ART. I.—SKETCHES OF A TRAVELLER FROM GREECE, CONSTANTI-  
NOPLÉ, ASIA MINOR, SYRIA AND PALESTINE.

VIII. MY WANDERINGS AMONG THE MANIOTES IN SOUTHERN  
PELOPONNESUS.

*Description of Southern Laconia—Bardunian Filibusters—  
Levetzova—Battle of Trinasa—Marathonisi—Mantrovouni  
Capture of Bavarian Troops—Zanel-Bey—Colonel Feder—  
Castle of Passava—Charming Scenery—Kakovouli and its  
Robbers—Langadi—Dangerous Defile—Tsimova—Man-  
ners and dress of the Maniotes—Kutrakos the Pirate—Anti-  
quities—Vtilos—Battle of Condura—Messenian plain—His-  
torical recollections—Charles O. Müller—Temple of Diana  
Linniatiss—Border Stones—Rhome—Messene and its ruins  
—Fall and restoration of ancient Messenia.*

IN several earlier numbers of our Review,\* I have attempt-  
ed to give some account of modern Sparta, its fate during  
the Slavic invasions of the middle ages and the amalga-  
mation of those barbarians with the native Greek popula-  
tion. I then described the conquests and feudal settle-  
ments of the French Crusaders, their victories and defeats  
in the fourteenth century, the re-establishment of the By-  
zantine Emperors at Sparta and their final overthrow by  
the Turks.

Instead of continuing with the melancholy and dull

\* See the three articles on "Sparta and the Dorians" in Mercersburg  
Quarterly Review for 1856 and 1857.

peasants of Mauromati, a pretty village, built in this paradise, around the copious spring of Mount Ithome, have cultivated every span of ground with Indian corn, wine and tobacco—in such a manner that the traveller at the present day must rest satisfied with the grand sweep of walls and towers, running up hills and down valleys, in an immense curve toward Mount Ithome—with the magnificent view from the summit far away on sea and land,—with the pleasing or exciting recollections of the joys and sorrows, the virtues and crimes of the ancient Dorians,—*Messenians* as well as *Spartans*, who here met in deadly strife. And at last, wearied in mind and body by all these impressions, he, like myself, will be glad to retire to the frugal supper and excellent wine of the hospitable monks of Vurkano !

Lancaster, Pa.

A. L. K.

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ART. II.—NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL.

*Nature and the Supernatural, as together constituting the One System of God.*

By HORACE BUSHNELL. New York: Charles Scribner. 1858.

A truly interesting work, as may be easily presumed at once from its authorship and title. No subject could well be more important, especially for the present time, than that which is here brought into view ; and there are few men better fitted than Dr. Bushnell to discuss any theme of the sort in an earnest, vigorous, and manly way. We welcome the book, with all our heart, as a most valuable accession to the theological literature of the age, and trust that it may exert a large and wide influence in the service of truth. It is no hasty production, but the carefully studied and well digested treatment of a great question, which has been before the mind of the author for years, and

on which plainly he has bestowed the whole force of his ripest and best thoughts. The book, therefore, is one which requires study also on the part of the reader. It is not just of the *current* literature sort, formed for the easy entertainment of the passing hour. It grapples with what the writer holds to be the religious life question of the age; its course is everywhere, more or less, through inquiries which are felt to be both intricate and profound. And yet with all this, the work is never either heavy or dull. On the contrary, it may be said to overflow with genial life. Dr. Bushnell has contrived to throw into it the full vivacity and freshness of his own nature. It is rich throughout with thoughts that breathe, and words that glow and burn. A sort of poetical charm is made to suffuse the entire progress of its argument, relieving the severity of the discussion, and clothing it oftentimes with graphic interest and force. Altogether the book is one which deserves to live, and that may be expected to take its place, we think, among the enduring works of the age. It is of an order, in this view, with Hugh Miller's *Testimony of the Rocks*; and as an argument for the truth of the Christian religion, may compare favorably with Reinhard's *Plan of the Founder of Christianity*.

So much we may say, without pretending to endorse in full the course of thought presented in Dr. Bushnell's book. The worth and importance of such a work are not to be measured simply by what may be considered the validity of its opinions at particular points. We may find reason to question many of *its* propositions—we may feel ourselves constrained to pause doubtfully in the presence of much to which it challenges our assent—and yet be fairly and rightly bound, notwithstanding, to own and honor its superiority, as shown in the profound significance of its general thesis, the reigning scope of its discussion, the reach and grasp of its argument taken as a whole. The claim to such respectful homage, in the case before us, is one in regard to which there can be no dispute.

We agree fully with Dr. Bushnell, in believing the ten-

dency of the present time to be fearfully strong toward Rationalism—that form of infidelity, which seeks to destroy Christianity, not so much in the way of direct opposition to its claims, as by endeavoring to drag it down from its own proper supernatural sphere into the sphere of mere nature, making it thus to be nothing more in the end than a particular phase simply of natural religion itself. On both sides of the Atlantic, we find a large amount of intelligence enlisted openly in the defence of this view; seeking, with no small measure of learning and ingenuity, to resolve all the higher aspects of the Gospel into poetry and myth, and pretending to bring out the full sense of it at last in the experiences of a purely humanitarian culture. But it would be a most inadequate view of the case, to suppose the evil of such unbelief confined to any formal demonstrations of this sort. As a silent tendency—a power secretly at work to sap the foundations of faith and piety—the rationalistic spirit in question takes in a vastly wider range of action. Multitudes, as Dr. Bushnell observes, are involved in it virtually as a system of thought, without being themselves aware of the fact. They profess to honor Christianity as a divine revelation, take its language familiarly upon their lips, persuade themselves it may be that they continue strictly loyal to its heavenly authority; and yet all the time they are false in fact to its claims, casting it down from its proper excellency, and substituting for it in their minds another order of thought altogether. In this way, we are surrounded on all sides with a nominal Christianity, which is little better in truth than a sort of baptized Paganism, putting us off continually with heathenish ideas expressed in Christian terms.

Our public life is full of such essential infidelity. It reigns in our politics. It has infected our universal literature. The periodical press floods the land with it every week. It makes a merit generally indeed of being friendly to religion; but it is plain enough to see, that what it takes to be religion is something widely different from the old faith of the Gospel in its strictly supernatural form. It is,

when all is done, naturalism only, of the poorest kind, dressed up in evangelical modes of speech. That it should be able to pass current for any thing better—that the public at large, the so called Christian public, should show itself so widely willing to accept any such authority as having any sort of force in matters of religion—is only itself a most painful sign of that general weakening of faith, of which we are now speaking as the great moral malady of the times. Already too the disease has entered deep into our systems of education ; and there is but too much reason to fear, that its worst fruit on this ground is yet to come.

Our system of public schools is often spoken of, as being the strength of our institutions, the safeguard of our liberties, the crown of our civilization, the distinguishing glory of our truly enlightened age. But we hazard nothing in saying, that it proceeds from beginning to end, not on the believing recognition of the supernatural claims of Christianity, but on their virtual rejection and denial. It does not help the matter in the least, that it offers no formal contradiction to the idea of revealed religion ; the burden of the difficulty lies just here, that claiming, as Christianity does, to be a supreme authority for men's minds, it is notwithstanding prohibited by the system from the exercise of any such authority in what is allowed on all hands to be a fundamental interest of our life—that it is politely bowed to the one side, and made to stand out of the way, while another theory of religion altogether is practically introduced into its place. The case is too clear for any controversy. Education, to be Christian, must make earnest with the realities of a higher life in their own true and proper form, subordinating all merely natural and temporal ends to the claims of God and the eternal world, under such explicit and positive view. Under any other character, it must stand condemned at once, as being hostile in fact, and not friendly, to religion. Tried by this rule, our common school system, as it now prevails, loses all title to respect. It ignores positive Christianity, and pretends to educate the young without its help ; as though it were pos-

sible to fit them for the duties and trials of life, by holding their minds down to the things of the present world only, without any sort of reference to their highest destiny as it is comprehended in the "powers of the world to come."

All such education is in truth "God-less." It reflects honor on the Catholic Church, we think, that she condemns it, and requires her membership to keep clear of it, though it be at the heavy cost of forming and maintaining separate schools for their own use. For what better proof could she furnish, that for *her* at least the truths of religion, in the form in which she holds them, are indeed articles of faith, which as such carry with them supernatural authority, and are not to be set aside, or suspended in their force even for a moment, in favor of any other interest or opinion whatever? If other ecclesiastical communions show themselves more liberal here, and less jealous for the rights of what they hold to be the glorious Gospel of the Blessed God, it is hard to see certainly how it can redound much to the credit of their faith. It would seem to imply rather one or the other of these two things: either that they have no clear apprehension of any positive distinctions in the Christian scheme, or that all such distinctions are with them at last matters of opinion only rather than the power of a living creed. To speak of an extra-ecclesiastical training in the case, that may be allowed to provide for the interest of religion in a general way, handing over its subjects afterwards to the care of the different religious communions, to be completed by them severally in their own way, is only to expose the radical defect of the whole scheme. Every such view proceeds on an assumption, which is found to break down in the end all real distinction, between positive Christianity and the religion of mere nature clothed with its name. Neither is it enough, as some dream, to have the Bible regularly read in such schools; as though that somehow, in and of itself, were positive Christianity, and sufficient in this naked way to meet and satisfy in full the demands of a Christian education. They show a wonderfully poor conception of religion, who think to vindicate its supre-

macy, and to gain free field for its proper action, in any such easy manner as this. As the use of the Bible falls in readily, we can see everywhere, with the conflicting views of all religious parties and sects, so has it been abundantly shown in our time, that it may be made to suit itself just as readily also to the views and wishes of those who turn all revelation into a mere fable. Infidels and naturalists have shown themselves, in many cases, most zealous for the honor of the Bible in such abstract view, and none commonly are more apparently cordial in crying out for its untrammelled use in the public schools. They are perfectly content to have it thus dignified as a text book of morality, patriotism, and sentimental humanitarianism, if only it be to the exclusion of Christianity in its concrete supernatural form, and in the midst of associations that go always to sink the heavenly sense of it down to the level of their own miserable unbelief. It needs more a great deal than this, we repeat, to redeem our schools from the charge of being against Christ, because they are not with him, and for him, in any direct positive way.

The case indeed speaks for itself. If there be anything that may be said specially to distinguish our system of common schools, it would seem to be the intense worldliness of their spirit, as opposed to all practical belief in the existence of things unseen and eternal. They are the agency of the State, directed only toward secular and political ends. The spirit that breathes through their administration is predominantly earthly. Their educational apparatus looks everywhere only to the things of this world. All turns on knowledge—the knowing of things in a simply natural way, for the ends and uses of the present life; as though this, after all, were the “chief end of man,” and the highest good proposed to him this side the grave. No wonder, that in such circumstances the very atmosphere of the school room should come to be impregnated, as it were, with the poison of unbelief, and that the minds of the young, exposed to its daily influence, should grow up cold, hard, materialistic, impassive to heavenly impressions, and



ripe at last only for the deeds of the flesh. Is not this result showing itself plainly enough already, for any observing mind? And is there not every reason to fear, that it will come out more terrible still with the progress of time?

Unfortunately the evil answers but too well to the reigning temper of the times. The education of the schools finds no proper corrective in the tone of thought which prevails generally on the outside of the schools. Indeed if that were the case, no such education could be allowed to exist. It argues an eclipse of faith, that so great an interest can be thus passively surrendered, in a Christian land, to the power of unbelief. That must be at best a low sense of what religion is, which can suffer mere intellectual training in any view to be regarded as something of more account than virtue, piety, and holiness. It involves infidelity, to magnify such culture, as is commonly done in our time, at the expense of these higher interests; as though knowledge under any circumstances—and more especially an ability to read, write, and cast up accounts—must needs be a blessing to the possessor of it, and to the community at large; as though the whole problem of individual and social prosperity were to be successfully solved by the art of the schoolmaster, going abroad and letting light into human souls in such style; as though education, in any form like this, might be expected ever to do away with the evils of life, and to beautify it at last into anything like the character designed for it by God. Away with all such abominable glorification of mere naked mind, without any regard whatever to the wants and necessities of the immortal spirit! It is the very cant of infidelity itself. The chief end of man, is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. The "one thing needful" is not to *know* the shadows of this world, but to *be* in the powers of the world to come. The smallest measure of faith, is a higher accomplishment than any amount of learning without faith. Devout ignorance is infinitely better than profane unsanctified science. These are first truths, foundation maxims we may say, in the kingdom of Christ; and not to know



them, not to have them in mind, not to be spontaneously disposed to fall in with them at once as the only true order of thought and life, is necessarily to have the proper sense and glory of that kingdom obscured to our view, and to be thus to the same extent under the dominion of an opposite antichristian mind. That precisely is the ruling defect of our time. We read of what are called the "ages of faith." Ours, it is plain to see, is no such age. We glory in our intelligence; but it is more earthly in its order than heavenly. We boast of our improvements and arts; but they serve to fix our minds on material interests, far more than on such as are spiritual and divine. We exult in our general civilization, as though it carried in it somehow the promise of the Christian millennium itself, and might be taken for the harbinger of the "new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness." But, alas, it is hard to see how it may be shown to be, either the product of those supernatural forces which are revealed to us by the Gospel, or the proper expression of their presence in the world, or a positive momentum in any way bearing them onward to their ultimate destination and end. It is not just the "wisdom and power of God unto salvation," we apprehend, in the old sense of St. Paul. The angel of St. John flying in the midst of heaven, and having the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation, kindred, and tongue, can hardly be expected to appear in any such form and shape.

We feel the full force of what Dr. Bushnell says on this subject. As an argument for the supernatural truth of Christianity, against the naturalistic tendencies of the age, his book is altogether timely. The evil enters into all spheres and departments of our modern life. It needs to be met in a bold and strong way. "We undertake the argument," says the distinguished author, "from a solemn conviction of its necessity, and because we see that the more direct arguments and appeals of religion are losing their power over the public mind and conscience. This is true especially of the young, who pass into life under the combined action of so many causes, conspiring to infuse a

distrust of whatever is supernatural in religion. Persons farther on in life are out of the reach of these new influences, and, unless their attention is specially called to the fact, have little suspicion of what is going on in the mind of the rising classes of the world—more and more saturated every day with this insidious form of unbelief. And yet we all, with perhaps the exception of a few who are too far on to suffer it, are more or less infected with the same tendency. Like an atmosphere, it begins to envelope the common mind of the world. We frequently detect its influence in the practical difficulties of the young members of the churches, who do not even suspect the true cause themselves. Indeed, there is nothing more common than to hear arguments advanced, and illustrations offered, by the most evangelical preachers, that have no force or meaning, save what they get from the current naturalism of the day. We have even heard a distinguished and carefully orthodox preacher deliver a discourse, the very doctrine of which was inevitable, unqualified naturalism. Logically taken, and carried out to its proper result, Christianity could have had no ground of standing left,—so little did the preacher himself understand the true scope of his doctrine, or the mischief that was beginning to infect his conceptions of the Christian truth.”

Dr. Bushnell's argument for the supernatural, is made to rest centrally upon the person of Jesus Christ. This constitutes its main beauty and force. It forms the best distinction, and greatest merit, of the later modern theology generally, so far as it shows itself to be possessed of power and life, that it seeks more and more to make Christ in this way the principle of all faith and knowledge; taking up thus anew, as it were, the grand Christological views of the Nicene age, and laboring to carry them out in full order and harmony to their last results. Great praise is due here to the mighty genius of Schleiermacher; who, however defective his own views of the person of Christ were, may be said to have inaugurated a new era of theology in Germany, by forcing attention to this point as the true begin-

ning of all reality and certainty in religion. Under the inspiration of this thought, all theological studies there might seem to have started again into fresh vigorous life, rising from the tomb into which they had been cast by the melancholy reign of Rationalism in previous times. A new interest was felt to be infused into all the facts and doctrines of revelation, by the light which was shed upon them from the acknowledged centre of the Christian system. They acquired a deeper significance, and became in this way subjects for more earnest inquiry and profound study. Christological thinking—that which, instead of looking primarily to the things taught and done by Christ, fixes its whole gaze at once on the mystery of his person, the glorious fact of the incarnation, and uses this as a commentary and key for the right understanding of all things besides—has come to pervade and rule more or less all spheres of religious science. The method is so plainly founded in the very nature of Christianity, and grows forth so immediately from the apprehension of its supernatural character, that it must prevail more and more, not only in Germany, but in all other countries also, wherever it may be felt necessary to deal earnestly with the mysteries of religion, over against the growing naturalism of the age. If these are to be upheld successfully as objects of faith, transcending the constitution of nature, it can only be by falling back upon their ultimate ground in Christ, and asserting in the first place the absolute verity of his person, as the principle and source of what is thus to be regarded as a new creation altogether. Not only our systematic divinity, but our homiletic teaching also, needs to be fortified in this way against the downward tendency of the times, by being brought back to what is substantially the method of the old Apostles' Creed—that most simple, but at the same time most grand and sublime confession, into which, as a mould, the faith of the universal Church was cast in the beginning.

Nothing is more certain, than that Christ himself, as the author of the Gospel, claims for his own presence in the world a supernatural character, which is regarded as reach-

ing out to the whole Christian system also from his person. He is not of this world, according to his own declaration—not the efflorescence and perfection simply of its natural life in any view, but the introduction into it really and truly of life and power in a new and higher form. The great men of the heathen world, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and such like, with all the towering superiority of their nature, were nevertheless the historical product always of laws and forces belonging to humanity as it existed before. We may say the same also of such men as Moses, David, Isaiah, and the prophets generally, among the Jews. The supernatural as it appeared in them, and by them, was not properly of themselves, formed no part of their being, but met them, as it were, from abroad, in a sort of outward and transient way. Moses could not say: "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." "I proceed forth and come from God"—"Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world"—"I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and go to the Father"—"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." All men would be shocked with language any way approaching this, from his lips. But all is different with Jesus Christ. This exactly is the universal tenor of his language in regard to himself; and with such high assumption agrees in full the whole theory of the Gospel exhibited to us in the New Testament. In no other view is it intelligible. The strictly supernatural origin of Christ and his salvation is everywhere taken for granted, and rested upon silently as a first truth lying at the foundation of all its doctrines and facts; so that it is really one of the strangest things in the world, to find any class of men pretending to accept it as true in connection with any other hypothesis—so intimately interwoven this thought, of an order of existence higher than the whole constitution of the world as it stood before, would seem to be with what we may call the self-representation of the evangelical scheme at every point.

The position of Christ, his relations to the world, all the aspects of his character, all his works and all his pretensions, are brought into view everywhere as being in full unison and harmony with his bold claim to a heavenly and divine origin. His birth is by the Holy Ghost; on which account he is called the Son of God. Angels herald his advent into the world. The powers of heaven descend upon him at his baptism. He is no prophet simply among men, closing the Old Testament line, but the bearer of truth and grace in his own person. A new order of existence opens upon the world, in the mystery of his being. In him was life—life in its original, fountal form—and the life became the light of men. It was not his office, therefore, primarily, to publish the truth as something different from himself, to mediate between earth and heaven, man and God, in any mere outward way. His own *being* constituted the deepest and last sense of the Gospel, the burden of its overwhelming mystery. "I am the way," we hear him saying, "the truth, and the life"—not the index simply to these things, but the actual presence and power of the things themselves. "I am the resurrection and the life"—not the promise and pledge only of such glorious boon, but the full realization of it as a fact now actually at hand in my person. For "he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Again, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life—Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." God was in him, reconciling the world unto himself. He is the propitiation for our sins—our righteousness—our peace—the organism of our redemption—the everlasting theatre of our salvation. He stands in the world a vast stupendous miracle—the miracle of a new creation. He is greater than all the powers, higher than all the glories of the natural world. Nay, he is before all things, and by him, and in him, all things consist. His life, therefore, included in itself, from the beginning, even under its human form, the principle of full

victory over all the vanity and misery which are in the world through sin; so that when he went down into the grave, and descended into hades, it was only that he might return again, leading captivity captive, and ascend up on high, to inaugurate his kingdom, in its proper spiritual form, as a new immortal constitution, against which the gates of hell should have no power to prevail to the end of time.

So lofty, so wide, so every way large, beyond all the measures of man's merely natural life, or simply human history, are the terms and representations in which the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in wonderful, unflinching consistency with itself throughout, bears witness to its own origin, character, and power. If it be not in the fullest sense—first in the person of Christ himself, and then in the outworkings and ongoings of his grace and power in the system of Christianity as a whole—the presence of a new supernatural life in the world, an order of existence which was not in it before, and which is not in it still beyond the reach and range of this fact; if it be not this, we say, and nothing short of this, then must it be denounced at once as being the most daring and wicked imposture ever practiced upon the credulity of the human race.

But let any one pause now, to consider what an amount of peril is involved in so vast and broad a claim, and to what an ordeal Christianity has necessarily subjected itself, in presuming to take this lofty position, and thus binding itself to satisfy in full the terms and conditions of its own world-embracing problem. A consistent fiction is hard in any case, where it has to do with concrete realities under a known form, and is allowed to extend itself at all to specific details; but it becomes of course more and more difficult, and at last is found to be utterly impracticable, in proportion precisely as the points to be met and answered in this way become more and more significant, multitudinous, and complex. Suppose Christianity then to be such an *invention*—a bold hypothesis merely, got up to solve the

inmost meaning of the world's life, and to play off in spectral style a supernatural economy of salvation commensurate with all the wants and aspirations of our fallen race—and how certainly may it not be expected to break down, by its own incongruities and contradictions, almost immediately at every point. Never did a scheme of religion, surely, offer itself of its own accord to a more searching trial of its merits and claims.

For the supernatural here is no transient phenomenon merely, no fantastic avatar, no theophany only in the Old Testament style; much less a doctrine simply, or theosophic speculation. It is made to challenge our faith and homage, as an abiding fact, linking itself organically with the general life of the world, and carrying it out historically to its highest and last sense. It must then be supremely natural, as well as overwhelmingly supernatural; no product of nature plainly, and yet in such harmony with it, that it shall seem to be at the same time its full outbursting glory and necessary perfection. The relation between God's first creation, and that which claims to be in this way God's second creation, may not be conceived of as contradictory, violent, or abrupt. The divine economy which embraces both—proceeding, as it does, from the mind of Him, to whom all his works are known from the beginning—must be a single system at last, in absolute harmony with itself throughout.

The whole constitution of the world, therefore, both physical and moral, must be found to come to its proper conclusion in Christ, showing him to be in very deed the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, of all God's works.

The physical must show itself every where the mirror of the spiritual and heavenly, as these come out fully at last only in the form of Christianity. Not as having any power to make them known by its own light originally; but as answering to them, in the way of universal parable, when it comes to be shone upon from their higher sphere; even as to the mind of Christ himself, the birds of the air, and



the flowers of the field, become types and symbols of righteousness at once, the moment they are needed for any such purpose.

In its whole organization again, the physical, as being plainly a progressive order of things reaching towards the unity of some common end, must put on the character of a ground preparation and prophecy, from first to last, looking continually to the advent of Christ as the only sufficient fulfilment of its sense. This it will be found to do, if it have no power to stop in its own order, or to come to an end in itself, but be forced and driven, as it were, upward and forward always, from one stage and level of existence to another—each lower range foreshadowing still the necessary approach of a higher—till it gains its full summit finally in man ; and so transcends itself, if we may use such an expression, in the presence of a new *moral* world, which afterwards again shows itself in its own turn unable in like manner to come to any pause or rest, till it is filled out and made complete by the supernatural grace of the Gospel.

It will be then, more especially, as tried by the actual conditions of this moral world—the circumstances and necessities of our general human life—that the Christian system, in the view now under consideration, must pass through its severest ordeal. Its theory of humanity must be such as to fall in plainly with the actual condition of humanity in the world ; while all the lines of history, and all the deeper forces of man's life, shall be found every where struggling toward it, and either consciously or unconsciously bearing witness to its claims.

The general fact of man's sin and misery must be such, as to agree with the hypothesis of a strictly supernatural redemption. If the evil were found to be of a superficial character only, neither deeper nor broader in fact than the measure of our life in its ordinary natural form—and in such view capable, accordingly, of being surmounted in some way by the powers and possibilities of this life in its own sphere,—the idea of a redemption descending into it from above, in the form of a new creation brought to pass

by the mystery of the Incarnation, would be convicted at once of being unreasonable and false. To justify any such mystery, it must appear that sin is a disorder which underlies the universal nature of man as it now stands; that it is itself a sort of supernatural fall or lapse in his life; that the whole present order of his existence is subjected to vanity and death by reason of it; that all other remedial agencies brought to bear upon the case, philosophical, educational, political, socialistic, and such like, have proved themselves thus far, and must prove themselves, utterly inadequate to its demands, coming, as it were, infinitely short of the last ground and seat of the evil; that it can be conquered, therefore, and rolled back in its consequences, if conquered ever at all, only by a force deeper and more comprehensive than the whole order of the world in its natural view, which, as such, shall show itself sufficient at the same time to break through this order altogether, and to rise above it, abolishing death itself, and bringing life and immortality to light. The New Testament doctrine of Christ, involved necessarily a corresponding doctrine of man. No Pelagian Anthropology, denying or slurring over the fact of Original Sin, can move hand in hand, in one and the same line, with a strictly theanthropic Christology.

It must appear still farther, if Christianity be true, that the religious life of the world generally, under what may be denominated its merely natural form, looks toward it, calls for it, reaches after it in all manner of ways, and finds the burden of its dark riddle fully solved at last only in its august presence. Rooted as they are in the same ground, the constitution of human nature itself, all religions must have to some extent a common character, must be concerned with the same problems, must work themselves out into more or less analogous results. The relation then of the absolutely true religion to religions that are false, can not be regarded as one of abrupt and total difference; it should be taken rather to resemble the relation that holds between man in the natural creation, and the manifold forms of animal life in the world below him—which, however far they

may fall short of his perfection, carry in themselves, notwithstanding, though it may be in very distorted and fantastic style, some portion still of the idea which is finally disclosed in his person, and thus join in foreshadowing this darkly from all sides as their own last end and only proper meaning. False religions, in such view, should open a wide field of analogical comparison, serving to establish the idea of religion in its true form ; not as leading over to it in their own order, not as being on the same plane with it in any sense ; but as bringing into view wants, aspirations, questions, problems, soul-mysteries in every shape, which only the true religion at last is able fully to satisfy and solve. Should the grand supernatural facts and doctrines of Christianity seem to be met in this way with dull echoes, and wild visionary caricatures, of their heavenly sense, in the mythologies of the heathen world, the fact would form certainly no ground of objection to its claims, but only a powerful argument in their favor. Heathenism *ought* to be, in such manner, through its whole wide empire of darkness and sin, an unconscious prophecy of Him, who proclaims himself the desire of all nations and the light of the world.

All History again must come to its proper unity in Christ, if he be indeed what he is made to be in the Gospel. Here, as in the constitution of Nature, God must have a plan in harmony with itself throughout ; and this plan can not possibly go aside from his main thought and purpose in the government of the world. It must centre in the Incarnation.

Then after all this, what a range of comparison and trial for the Christian system is presented to us in the general economy of Revelation itself. For this is no single or narrow fact simply ; nor yet a multitude of separate, disjointed facts ; but a vast and mighty organization of facts rather, involving the most manifold relations, and reaching through long ages back to the very beginning of the world. Religion in this form is exhibited to us under different dispensations, and yet as being always the same, from the first obscure promise in the garden of Eden, down to the

fulness of time, when the Word became flesh and tabernacled among men in the person of Jesus Christ. "God," we are told, "who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds." All these voices of old then—in paradise, before the flood and after the flood, through the patriarchs, in the giving of the law, and by the whole long line of the prophets from Moses down to the ministry of John the Baptist—must come together at last in Christ as their only full sense and necessary end. The correspondence cannot limit itself to a few predictions and types, put forward here and there in an abstract outward way; it must enter into the universal structure of the entire revelation. The Old Testament throughout must be, not only in full harmony with itself, but in full organic union at the same time with the central idea of the New Testament; so that everywhere, in all its oracles, histories, and institutions, it shall be found prefiguring this, reaching toward it, and laboring as it were to find in it its own true rest and glorious consummation.

But by far the most difficult part of the whole problem, it is plain, must be finally to satisfy what we may call the internal conditions and requirements of this New Testament idea itself; by setting it forth in such a form, that it shall appear to be every way worthy of itself, and true throughout to its own constituent terms. Only think, what is involved in an attempt to *construct* a full historical Christ in the manner of the Gospel. Not only to dare so bold a thought as that of the Incarnation, but to dare also beyond this the reduction of such a thought to full artistic representation, in the form of an actual human life; to project and carry out a biography of "God manifest in the flesh," the Word Incarnate, in whom dwelt the "fulness of the Godhead bodily;" the portraiture of such a character, the picture of such a life, brought down to particulars and details; and exhibited as moving, speaking, acting and working, through a course of years, in the midst of actual

human relations—the whole so ordered as to show itself in all its connections, antecedents, and consequents, harmoniously consistent with the grand fundamental thought on which it is made to rest. It is not possible surely to conceive of an ordeal more severe, than that to which Christianity has subjected itself, in coming before the world with its history of Jesus Christ, as we have it briefly outlined in the Apostles' Creed, from his miraculous birth of the Virgin, on to his resurrection from the dead, and his glorious ascension to the right hand of God. For so coming in the flesh, he must have an advent answerable to the glorious mystery of his person ; such as shall bring with it the full presence of a new creation, and yet serve to set him really and truly in the bosom of the old creation. He must have a mission commensurate with his nature. He must be at once perfectly human, and yet no less perfectly divine, in all his teachings and doings. He must be in the world, as being all the time above it, and as comprising in himself the power of a life destined to triumph over it at last through all ages. His history may not end in the grave ; and just as little may it come to a Gnostic conclusion in the clouds. Such a manifestation in the flesh must justify itself in the spirit ; opening the way for a new order of grace among men, that shall be found in fair keeping to the end of time with the vastness of the economy serving thus for its introduction—a thought which leads at once to the idea of the Church, exactly in the order of the Creed, as being the body of Christ, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

The terms and conditions of the Christian problem being in such general view what we have now seen them to be, the truth of Christianity, it is easy to see, must turn mainly on its power to solve them in a satisfactory way ; and in such case, this must be taken always as the first and strongest of all arguments in its favor. Indeed no argument can be of force aside from this. The Christian Evidence thus centres ultimately in Christ himself. He is emphatically the "Light of the world." For the natural cannot reveal,

or make certain in any way, the supernatural; but needs this rather to bring out clearly its own sense; and so Christ descending into the world as the fullest and most perfect revelation of the supernatural, must be regarded necessarily as the very principle and source of all real illumination for men. As the absolute truth, he must in the nature of the case prove and authenticate himself.

This, however, does not imply of course that little or no account is to be made of evidences for the truth of Christianity beyond the person of Christ; miracles, for example, prophecies, types, providences, voices of nature and grace conspiring in its favor. It goes only to hold such proofs to their right order and place. Their proper force lies in their organic relation to the presence of Christ himself in the world. They bear witness to him, only by means of the significance and power which they themselves derive from his person. They are the necessary seals of his supernatural mission; which however have force, like all seals, only as they are attached to what they thus serve to authenticate, and not as torn from it, and viewed in any separate and independent way.

The main weight of the argument for the supernatural, in Dr. Bushnell's book, is made to rest on Christ, as being the grand first principle of proof in this order of existence—an order which completes itself fully at last only in the fact of the Incarnation. "The character and doctrine of Jesus," we are told, "are the sun that holds all the minor orbs of revelation to their places, and pours a sovereign self-evidencing light into all religious knowledge." Still, before coming to this, the first part of the work is very properly occupied with the subject under a more general view; the purpose being to show, that the supernatural itself is not something absolutely foreign and strange to the constitution of the world in its natural form, but an order rather which is anticipated and called for by this, and that comes out at last, therefore, in full harmony with its deepest wants, in full explication, we may say, of its inmost meaning and sense.

Here we find a great deal, of course, that is entitled to our admiring interest and attention, as going to establish, in the way of analogical and presumptive reasoning, both the possibility and the necessity of the supernatural, considered as being the proper complement or filling out of the natural—both joining to constitute what the book denominates “the one system of God.” The argument, however, as conducted by Dr. Bushnell, is made to involve and assert some things which it seems to us not easy to allow.

In the first place, we demur to his line of distinction between the natural and the supernatural. Nature he defines to be the simply physical order of the world, made up of causes and effects flowing in constant succession, by a necessity that comes from within the scheme itself; in which view, we are told, “that is supernatural, whatever it be, that is either not in the chain of natural cause and effect, or which acts on the chain of cause and effect in nature, from without the chain.” In this way, the supernatural is brought to assume at once a most familiar every day character, by entering into the very conception of our own personality; for this, as involving intelligence and will, is not under the law of cause and effect in the manner of the simply physical world, but carries in itself the power of acting on the course of this law from without, in a free self-determining way, so as to produce results, that nature of itself, as here defined, could not bring to pass.

Now it is perfectly fair, to make use of this relation of mind to matter in the world, as an analogical argument for the possibility of an intervention, that shall be found descending into the world miraculously from a higher sphere. But it is pushing the matter too far, we think, to make the first relation of one order, and parallel in full, with the second. That is not the common view of the case certainly; and the interest of the supernatural is likely to lose by it in the end, it strikes us, much more than it may seem at first sight to gain. As distinguished from the supernatural, in the old theological sense—which is at the same time here also the popular sense—the natural includes in its



conception a great deal more than the simply material and physical. The term is often used indeed to express the idea of difference from the moral ; but never so as to refer this last to the supernatural. When *that* distinction is to be expressed, the moral itself is made to fall at once, along with the physical, into the economy of nature. This includes in its constitution mind as well as matter, self-determining forces or powers as well as simply passive chains of cause and effect. Man belongs primarily to the present world ; he is incorporated into it organically from his birth ; his relations to it are part of its proper system, quite as much as the conditions and laws of things below him. True, he possesses in himself, at the same time, the capacity of a higher life, original and constitutional relations to an order of existence far more glorious than the present world, the powers of which must be brought to bear upon him in a most real way, if he is to fulfil at last the great purpose of his creation. But this does not of itself lift him out of the order of nature. It shows only how truly he is in it, as needing thus the power of the supernatural, under an objective form, to perfect his existence in that higher view.

We are by no means satisfied, in the next place, with Dr. Bushnell's theory of the origin of evil. Sin, if we understand him rightly, is not only a bad possibility in any such world as ours, but a tremendous necessity. He holds indeed that our first parents were created in a state of "constituent perfection," having an inward fitness and disposition for good, that served to carry them toward it spontaneously without or before deliberation. But holiness in such form can have no sufficient strength or security. "Deliberation, when it comes, as come it must, will be the inevitable fall of it ; and then when the side of counsel in them is sufficiently instructed by that fall, and the bitter sorrow it yields, and the holy freedom is restored, it may be or become an eternally enduring principle. Spontaneity in good, without counsel, is weak ; counsel and deliberative choice, without spontaneity, are only a character begun ; issued in

spontaneity, they are the solid reality of everlasting good." It does not help the case materially, to say that there was no positive ground or cause for sin in man's nature; and that our first parents fell by their own free choice. The difficulty is, that their free choice is supposed here to be so circumstanced, in the way of "privative conditions," as to be absolutely shut up to this conclusion and no other. "The *certainty* of their sin," we are told, "is originally involved in their spiritual training as powers." Their condition privative was such as to involve "their *certain* lapse into evil."

Sin is made to be thus a necessary transitional stage, in the process of full moral development. The condition of man in Paradise was not, and could not be, a direct onward movement in its own form to confirmed holiness, and so to glory, honor, and eternal life. It was necessary that he should taste evil, in order to become afterwards intelligently and resolutely good. His innocence could be strengthened into its full ripe virtue, only by being required to descend into the rough arena of the world through the fall, for the purpose of needful discipline and probation. This is not a new thought by any means. We recognize in it the familiar face of a speculation, which in one form or another has made itself altogether common in much of the thinking of modern Germany. But we do not consider it for this reason any the less wrong. It agrees not with the old doctrine of the Church on the subject; and the natural sense of the Bible is against it. It turns the Garden of Eden into a mere allegory or myth. It seats the necessity of sin in the very constitution of the world itself; a view, which goes at once to overthrow its character as sin, making it indeed the fruit of man's freedom in form, but so conditioning this freedom, that it is found to be only another name at last for what is in fact inevitable fate.

Dr. Bushnell carries his view of the certainty of man's fall so far, as to hold that the entire natural constitution of the world was ordered and established by God from the beginning with reference to that terrible fact; which in

such view, therefore, could be no doubtful or uncertain contingency in any sense, but must be considered rather as forming from the very start the fixed central pivot and hinge, we may say, on which the whole plan of the world was made to turn. Sin thus has its disordering consequences in the natural creation, not simply as they are found coming *after* it in time; but also, on a much broader scale it would seem, as they have been made in God's plan to go before it, in the form of dispositions and arrangements contrived prospectively to anticipate its advent, and to lead over to it finally as the full interpretation of their own sense. Even the long geologic ages, stretching away back of the Adamic creation, are taken to be prelusive throughout in this way of the surely coming fact of sin. "This whole tossing, rending, recomposing process, that we call geology," our author tells us, "symbolizes evidently, as in highest reason it should, the grand spiritual catastrophe, and Christian new creation, of man; which, both together, comprehend the problem of mind, and so the final causes or last ends of all God's works. What we see, is the beginning conversing with the end, and Eternal Forethought reaching across the tottering mountains and boiling seas, to unite beginning and end together. So that we may hear the grinding layers of the rocks singing harshly:

Of man's first disobedience and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree—

and all the long eras of desolation, and refitted bloom and beauty, represented in the registers of the world, are but the epic in stone of man's great history, before the time."

On all this, we venture here no particular criticism. The subject, in the hands of Dr. Bushnell, is full of imagination and poetry, while it is made to overflow at the same time with rich suggestive thought. Our great embarrassment with it is, that, by making the universal order of the world dependent centrally upon the fall of man, and the introduction of sin, it makes this no less necessary than the geologic cataclysms, that owe their existence to it anticipatively so many ages before. Calvin's supralapsarianism,

and the pantheistic world-progress of Hegel, seem to us always to run out here to the same conclusion, a Manichean notion of sin on the one hand, and as the necessary counterpart of this, a Gnostic conception of redemption on the other.

Through whatever stages of imperfection and disorder our world may have passed previously to the Mosaic creation, described in the first chapter of Genesis, we know that it was then at least pronounced by God himself to be in all respects "very good." There can be no doubt, too, that this goodness, in the view of the sacred narrative, was held to consist in its full correspondence with the nature of man as he stood before the fall. The world was good, not in the light of a penitentiary prepared beforehand to suit the circumstances of his case in a state of sin, but as a fit theatre for the free harmonious development of his life in a state of innocence. How the fall wrought to disturb this original order, is of course a great mystery. It may have been largely by changes and privations induced upon the nature of man himself, causing the world to be in its relations to him something wholly different from what it would be if he were not thus hurled down from his first estate, and making it impossible for him even to conceive now of what might be comprehended for him in any such normal order. One thing is certain; had he continued sinless, the law of death, as it prevails in nature, could not have extended itself to his person; and how much of superiority this might have involved, in other respects, to the constitutional vanity and misery of the world as we now find it, no one may pretend surely to say.

Dr. Bushnell's idea of the necessity of sin extends logically to all worlds. Even the good angels, spoken of in the Scriptures, he tells us, "for aught that appears, have all been passed through and brought up out of a fall, as the redeemed of mankind will be." The celebrated Christian philosopher, Richard Rothe—one of the profoundest thinkers of the age—adopts the same thought, we remember, in his *Theological Ethics*. We let it pass here without further remark.

We have been somewhat surprised to find Dr. Bushnell denying also the proper personality of Satan. He allows the existence of evil spirits; but is not willing to admit the idea of their organization under any single head. Satan, he tells us, is a collective term simply, designating "the all or total of bad minds and powers." This is neither biblical, we think, nor ecclesiastical—though it be supported, curiously enough, by the authority of *Davenport*, "the ablest theologian of all the New England Fathers." It detracts also seriously, in our opinion, from the objective realness, and full historical significance, of the work of redemption, regarded as an actual supernatural conflict between the powers of light and the powers of darkness. A real personal Satan seems necessary, to bring out in full relief the idea of a real personal Christ. And so far as the danger of any Manichean dualism is concerned, we do not see that we are brought so nigh to it by any means in this way, as by the hypothesis of our respected author himself; which, as we have seen, makes sin to be a necessary thing—a fact *sure* to come to pass—in the very constitution of the world itself. It carries indeed to our ear, we must confess, a very Zoroastrish sound, when we are told up and down, that evil is "a bad possibility that environs God from eternity, waiting to become a fact, and certain to become a fact, whenever the opportunity is given;" so that, "the moment God creates a realm of powers, the bad possibility as certainly becomes a bad actuality—an outbreaking evil, or empire of evil, in created spirits, according to their order."

We have said, that the great merit of Dr. Bushnell's book, as a plea for the supernatural, is its Christological character. Its argument centres in Jesus Christ; whose whole personality, as we have it portrayed in the Gospel, is shown with great beauty and force to be an altogether superhuman fact, and such a self-evidencing miracle in its own nature, as may well be considered sufficient to flood with the light of heavenly demonstration the universal *kosmos* of the new creation. And yet we do not feel after all, that

enough is made still of the significance in this view of the great "mystery of godliness," as related to the supernatural on the one side and to the world of nature on the other.

The revelation of the supernatural in and by Christ is not of one kind, with the revelation of it in any other way. Nature in its own order needs the supernatural, reaches after it, and through the human-spirit aspires toward it continually as the necessary outlet and complement of its last wants. This aspiration, however, is in itself something negative merely, which as such can have no power of course ever to grasp the supernatural or to bring it down to its own sphere; for what nature might so fetch into itself by powers of its own would be no longer *super-natural*; the negative want or *nisus* here must be met, by a positive self-representation of its object from the other side. In these circumstances, there is room for imaginary or false relations to thrust themselves in as substitutes for the true. Men may invest their own speculative fancies and dreams—the shadowy projections of their spiritual nature itself reaching forth toward the dark void—with a sort of spurious objectivity; thus creating for themselves whole worlds of religion, that shall be found to mimic and caricature the truth in its proper form. Again, the powers of the invisible world may play into the economy of nature in an irregular, abnormal way, through Satanic inlets, offering themselves to the inward craving of the human spirit, as the very presence and sense of the supernatural which it needs for its perfection, and so hurrying it away, by the force of its religious instincts themselves, into a still more gloomy region of horrible unrealities and lies. To this sphere belong the sorcery, magic, and witchcraft of all ages, as well as the oracles and wonders of the heathen world generally, as far as it may be necessary to admit their more than natural character; and we have no hesitation, in referring to it also—as Dr. Bushnell does too—the so called "spiritual manifestations" of our own day, on the supposition of their being what they pretend to be and not mere tricks of jugglery; a question which it is not necessary

here to discuss. The world, however, God be praised, has not been left hopelessly to the dominion of these phantoms and lies, growing out of such false relations to the supernatural. The truth has descended into it, under its own proper form. This is the idea of Revelation.

In one view, nature itself is a divine revelation. A supernatural presence underlies it, and works through it, at every point. But still as man now is, he has no power to come by this to any right knowledge of God, and much less to any firm and steady apprehension of a higher order of life in his presence. Hence an actual coming down of God into the world under a wholly new form, becomes the proper full sense of the supernatural as required now to meet our wants. Revelation, so understood, is a single fact; announcing its own advent by heavenly oracles and signs, making room for itself more and more by preliminary heaven-appointed dispensations, from the time of Adam down to the time of John the Baptist; but bursting forth at last, in its whole reality and glory, only in the ever-adorable mystery of the Incarnation. The supernatural in Christ thus is not in one line simply with the supernatural exhibited in previous divine revelations, a fact ranking high and conclusive among other facts of like superhuman order; it is the organic root rather of all true revelation from the beginning of the world; the one absolute truth in this form, which, coming in the fulness of time, makes good finally the sense of all previous oracles and outshinings from behind the veil, disclosing the real ground of them in its own presence. And being so related to what went before in the way of prophetic word and type, with still more certainty must the mystery be organically joined with all that comes after it, in the progressive unfolding of the Christian salvation. The Incarnation constitutes the gospel—being in its very nature a new revelation of God in the world, by which the life of heaven is made to unite itself with the life of earth, in a real abiding way, so as to bring the supernatural home to men in a form fully answerable to their inmost wants. In such view, it is the



beginning of a new order of existence, the principle of a new creation, which in the nature of the case must hold under an objective, historical character, as something different from the world in its simply natural constitution, on to the end of time. This is the old Patristic idea of the Holy Catholic Church; and it is not difficult surely to see how, in the light of the subject as thus explained, so much account should have been made of it from the first, as being absolutely necessary for the full carrying out of the Christian mystery to its proper end.

We have the feeling, as we have said, that Dr. Bushnell's system of the supernatural, with all its Christological merit, fails somehow after all to lay hold of the full significance of the Incarnation, in the broad organic view now mentioned. In such way, we mean, as to make this, not merely the greatest of all arguments for the supernatural in a general view, but the absolute whole revelation of it, in the only form in which it can ever be truly and steadily objective to faith, and practically efficient for the purposes of redemption; so that all relations to it, all communications with it, on the outside of this great Mystery of Godliness, can never be anything better than relative only, dream-like, apparitional, or it may be absolutely magical, demoniacal, and false. For Rationalism, it should ever be borne in mind, has two sides, two opposite poles of unbelief, that are forever playing into each other with wonderful readiness and ease; an abstract naturalism on the one hand, that owns no reality higher than the present world; and then an abstract spiritualism on the other hand, by which the sense of the supernatural is not allowed to come to any real union with the sense of the natural in the way of faith, but is made to float over it fantastically in the way of mere Gnostic imagination. The one absolute Truth, according to St. John, as against both these antichristian extremes, is the real coming of Christ in the flesh (1 John 4: 1-3); in making earnest with which under such view, it is not easy to see how faith should not feel itself constrained to make like earnest also with the old doctrine of the Church.

This doctrine, we are sorry to say, struggles in vain throughout Dr. Bushnell's book to come to its proper clear and full expression ; and the want of it, in our view, is a serious defect in his otherwise admirable Christological argument. He shows indeed at various points the power of churchly ideas—for all profound thinking on the historical significance of Christ's person *must* run more or less that way ; he is ready enough too, of course, to acknowledge the existence of the Church in the general New England sense; but the conception of the Church, as it is made to be an article of faith, a first principle or ground element of Christianity, in the Apostles' Creed, and in all the ancient Creeds, has seemingly no place in his system whatever.

Thus the Gospel seems to be regarded by him too commonly, in the light of a constitution or fact qualifying the natural condition of the world generally in a supernatural way, and setting it in new relations to God within its old order of life ; in virtue of which, it may be supposed capable then of coming at once, on its own level, within the range and scope of the powers of redemption, flowing around it spiritually at all times like the air of heaven. Whereas the mystery of the new creation in Christ would appear plainly to require, that we should conceive of it, not as any such system of heavenly possibilities added to the world in its general natural character, but as an objective constitution rather, having place in the world under a wholly different form, and carrying in itself relations and powers altogether peculiar, and not to be found anywhere beyond its own limits ; an order of supernatural grace, into which men must be introduced first of all, (the old ecclesiastical idea of re-birth through the sacrament of baptism,) by an outward "obedience of faith," in order that they may come into the full use afterwards of its quickening and saving help. Any such view must necessarily exclude Dr. Bushnell's suggestion, that a regenerate life may be capable of passing, like the corruption of the race, by natural propagation, "under the well known laws of physiol-

ogy," from parents to children; as it demands also a material qualification of a good deal that he says besides, on the subject of Christian experience, the work of the Spirit, and the new creation in Christ Jesus.

It is owing to this want of ecclesiastical feeling, no doubt, that Dr. Bushnell falls in so readily with the stereotyped Puritanic way of thinking in regard to the historical Church of past ages, by which it is made to be from the beginning, a systematic falling away from the proper sense of the Gospel, in all its points of difference from the prevalent spiritualism of modern times. In one of his chapters, we have an argument to show, that "the world is governed supernaturally in the interest of Christianity;" which, carried out in any sort of consistency with itself, would seem to involve necessarily a powerful presumption in favor of the old Catholic Church—the only form, in which, by general acknowledgment now, the truth of Christianity was maintained, through long ages, against all manner of infidelities and heresies seeking its destruction. But our author's theory will not allow the argument in any such way as that—he contrives to find here a wheel within a wheel, an esoteric *under-sense*, by which the outward complexion and first impression of God's providence are made to be one thing, and its hidden ulterior meaning another thing altogether. We are gravely told, accordingly, that Christianity *must* "go into a grand process of corruption at first," to make room for its own regeneration finally to a higher and better life. And so if the course of events, century after century, fall in concurrently with the march of Christianity in this false shape, verifying apparently in the fortunes of the Catholic Church the symbol of the bush that burned with fire and yet was not consumed, we are not to be moved by it at all as proving anything in favor of the Church, but to read in it on the contrary only a profound ordering of God's providence, designed to open the way for its ultimate confusion and defeat. Need we say that the providential, or historical, argument for Christianity, in any such form as this, is shorn of all force, and turn-

ed into a mere arbitrary conceit, which is capable of being used ingeniously with as much effect one way as another?

We have been pleased to find, that Dr. Bushnell does not shrink from confessing the continuation of the power of miracles in the Church, making them to be on fit occasions both possible and actual, from the first century down to the present time. We have long felt, that the popular notion on the subject, which supposes them to have continued for about three centuries after Christ, and then to have ceased entirely, is both against reason and without any sort of proper support in history. The proof for miracles *after* the third century is altogether more full and clear, than the proof for miracles in the second and third centuries themselves. The real possibility of them, moreover, would seem to lie in the very conception of Christianity, considered as an order of supernatural powers enduringly present in the world to the end of time; so that one is at a loss to understand, what kind of faith in it *they* can have, who make a merit of mocking and scouting every miraculous pretension in its name, as being at once, and of itself, the surest evidence of gross imposture or blind superstition. With such irrational and irreligious skepticism our Hartford divine has no sympathy. He believes in the continuation of the power of miracles in the Church, down even to our own day; and more than that, he brings forward quite a number of what he considers well authenticated examples of the miraculous in modern times, which have fallen in some measure under his own observation. It is curious to read his chapter on this subject.

Here again, however, we are struck with the *unchurchly* spirit of his thinking. The old ecclesiastical miracles are not wholly to his taste; their ecclesiasticism at least seems to be counted a hindrance to their credibility, more than a help. His faith in such things appears to breathe most free, when it passes out of that order, and is allowed to expatiate at large among wonders more or less extra-ecclesiastical in their form and character. We shall not pretend, of course, to enter here into any examination of his

cases. We must say, however, that Church miracles in the proper sense—miracles, we mean, as mediated by the idea of the Church in the old Augustinian view—are vastly more respectable, in our eyes, than any such class of examples under a different and more general type. We question, indeed, if it be possible to make earnest with the belief of miracles at all, except in connection with some believing apprehension of the mystery of the Church, in the sense of the Apostles' Creed. Out of that order, the supernatural as related to the present world, would seem to carry with it always, even under its best and most reliable manifestations, a certain character of Gnostic unreality, making it to be no proper object for steady Christian faith. We have been much struck with the frank confession of Dr. Bushnell himself, after all his examples, in regard to this point. "As regards the general truth," he tells us, "that supernatural facts, such as healings, tongues, and other gifts, may as well be manifested now as at any former time, and that there never has been a formal discontinuance, I am perfectly satisfied. I know no proof to the contrary, that appears to me to have a straw's weight. And yet, when I come to the question of being in such gifts, or of receiving into easy credit those who appear to be, I acknowledge that for some reason, either because of some latent subjection to the conventionalities of philosophy, or to the worse conventionalities of sin, belief does not follow, save in a somewhat faltering and equivocal way." But so it is, he adds, with many great questions of God and immortality. "The arguments are good and clear, but, for some reason, they do not make faith, and we are still surprised to find, in our practice, that we only doubtfully believe. To believe these supernatural things, in the form of particular facts, is certainly difficult; and how conscious are we, as we set ourselves to the questions, of the weakness of our vacillations! Pardon us, Lord, that when we make so much of mere credibilities and rationalities of opinion, we are yet so slow to believe that what we have shown to be credible and rational, is actually coming to pass."

Verily, it is a great thing to have faith, even as a grain of mustard seed; to be able to own and embrace, not merely the thought of the supernatural in a natural way, but the real presence of it in its own order; to hold the proper verity of the Gospel, not in the form of doctrine only, or supposed inward experiences, but in the form of full objective, historical fact. To be able to say the Creed, in its own meaning and sense. To stand before the Man Jesus, and confess, with more than natural knowledge, as Peter did: "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" To believe that "*Christ is come in the flesh,*" with all the necessary antecedents, concomitants, and consequents of such a revelation; his birth of the Virgin, full of grace, and blessed among women; his miracles in the days of his flesh; his resurrection and ascension; his new presence in the world by the Spirit; the supernatural order of the Church, set over against the order of nature, and comprehending in itself the powers of his resurrection life to the end of time. This is the Gospel, as we find it preached everywhere in the Acts of the Apostles—as it underlies all the New Testament Epistles—as it animated the spirit of martyrs and confessors in the first Christian ages; and the power of believing it, we repeat, is indeed so great a thing, that all worldly advantages in comparison, may well seem to be both poor and mean. Such faith, from the very nature of the case, must be itself supernatural—the power of passing beyond nature, so as to lay hold of things heavenly and divine in their own higher order and sphere. It must come into the soul then in and through the constitution of grace itself, under its character of objective distinction from the constitution of man's merely natural life. There may be actings of the organ or faculty, indeed, on the outside of this; but these will be always in a more or less Gnostic and unreal way; forms of believing, we may say, filled as yet with no proper contents of faith; the virtue can come to full exercise in the bosom of the Christian mystery alone. And what now if the standing form of this mystery in the world be still the Church, as it was

held to be in the beginning? Could faith do its office, in that case, while denying, despising, ignoring, or overlooking its claims? One use of his argument for the supernatural Dr. Bushnell finds in this, that it provides a place and a plea for the "positive institutions of religion," as he calls them—meaning by these, church organization, the sacraments, the Sabbath, the Bible, the office of the ministry, &c.—which are allowed to be "falling rapidly into disrespect, as if destined finally to be quite lost or sunk in oblivion." This fact itself he ascribes to the growth and pervading influence of naturalism. But may we not reverse the order, and make the loss of belief—we will not say in the positive institutions of Christianity—but in the Christian Church itself, one large cause of the reigning decay of faith in a wider view? To restore the supernatural to its general rights, then, nothing would be needed so much, first of all, as a resuscitation of faith in the Church. Then, also, any argument for the supernatural, any plea for the Christological in its sound and right form, to be of full force and effect in the end, must be at the same time ecclesiastical also, or, in other words, an argument for the old doctrine of the Church, as it stands enshrined in the early Creeds. Is it too much to hope, that Dr. Bushnell's earnest and active mind may yet be turned to the subject, under this profoundly interesting view?

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