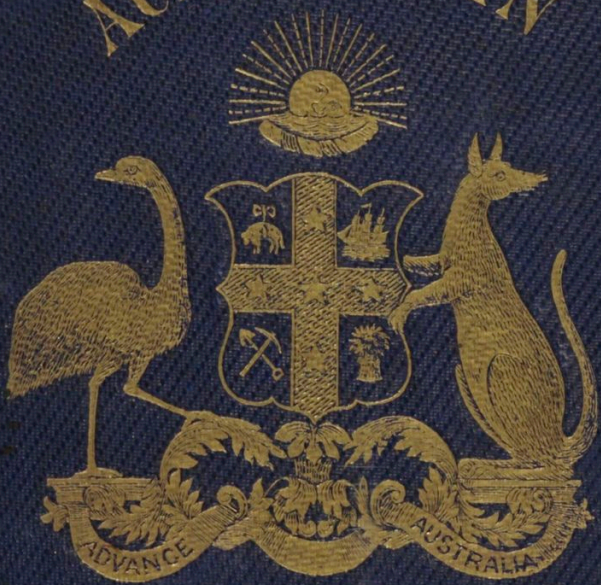
AUSTRALIAN



ESSAYS.

O. Mitchell

From the Author to
The Honble
Jas Mitchell

AUSTRALIAN ESSAYS.

AUSTRALIAN ESSAYS

ON

SUBJECTS

Political, Moral, and Religious.

BY

JAMES NORTON, Esq., Senr.

OF ELSWICK, IN THE COUNTY OF CUMBERLAND, NEW SOUTH WALES, MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES.

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PREFACE.

BEFORE the invention of the art of printing, men of the highest order of intellect only were able to make such advances in literature and science as entitled them to the homage of mankind. By this art the almost divine honours paid to individual genius were transferred to the library, which, by placing within the reach of persons of the humblest intellectual capacity the experience of the intelligent and reflecting, put all men in a great measure upon a level.

The mighty accumulation of letters is daily increased by the contributions of those whose unaided efforts could not have procured for them the slightest distinction.

But while this universal diffusion of knowledge is unquestionably beneficial to men of ordinary and slender powers,

the greatness of the mass of literary productions has a tendency to overload and oppress true genius, and is apt to substitute for the ardour of its inspirations, a cold and mechanical habit of thinking.

It has already become not less difficult to know what to read than what to avoid, and the experiment can hardly be tried without that frightful sacrifice of time which, before the art of printing, was required for the production of the manuscript copy. Dr. Johnson said of the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' that it was too short. Such a judgment can hardly be pronounced upon any book in these days, and would be practically condemned by the dimensions of a modern catalogue. The best books contain so much that no one can afford time to wade through, that the reading of mankind must fast tend to the perusal of reviews and epitomes, books that, if well executed, would afford to men of ordinary talent and education the information necessary for their guidance, and enable them to avoid the load by which they might otherwise be overwhelmed.

Reviews and epitomes, however, are not perfect, and may be the work of incompetent or prejudiced parties.

The only cure must be looked for in that condensation of thought and language that tends to the aphoristic style, a mode

of

of writing which, while it conveys information, calls upon the reader to exercise his judgment and his taste, and induces a habit of thinking that the literature of the age too often fails to awaken.

In these observations will be found the author's apology for presenting to the public a series of papers originally addressed to the greatly-mixed and ever-varying population of the Australian Colonies.

Many of these papers are written on subjects that cannot fail to interest all enlightened and thinking men; and while they lead to the consideration of the great principles which affect our well-being in the various relations that arise out of our condition in this life, may induce their readers to reflect upon the inconceivably more important objects for which this life was intended.

It may be thought that some of them unnecessarily tend to awaken inquiries difficult to answer, and hardly consistent with the discipline of the Churches to which their readers may belong; but as a tendency to rational inquiry constitutes one of the properties impressed by the Creator on the human mind, investigation will assuredly take place; and it is certainly better that the consideration of important truths, the exposition of vulgar errors, should not be left to the infidel and the scoffer.

Increasing knowledge of the works of the Creator and of his dealings with the human race, have not been found inconsistent with Divine revelation. Such knowledge, indeed, is calculated to correct fallacious views of the figurative language by which the will of the Creator has been communicated to mankind; views which might otherwise lead to scepticism and unbelief, and possibly unsettle our reliance on the wisdom and justice of Divine providence.

SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, 1856.

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FIRST PART.

ESSAY I.

ENGLAND AND HER COLONIES.

NO feeling is more deeply seated in the human breast than the love of country. Awaking with the dawn of early consciousness, it borrows strength from every element of beauty and grandeur in the objects around us, from all that tends to expand the intellect and from all that appeals to our finer and more ennobling sympathies, either in passing events or in the memorials of ancient greatness and virtue.

This passion, common to the humblest child of nature, so uniformly and so strikingly distinguishes men of the noblest endowments, that great intellect and true patriotism may almost be considered as correlatives.

From the pressure of numerous causes it becomes imperative on man to explore new scenes, to find a home in distant lands, and to exchange the refined enjoyments of civilized life for the privations of the wilderness;—and it is evident, that the toils and hardships to which he is there subjected, leave him but little leisure for the cultivation of the higher faculties and feelings of his nature.

Bands of colonists have from the remotest ages gone forth

from scenes which have been the haunts of their childhood, the glory of their prime, with the view of providing for the increasing demands of their posterity ; and in the harsh and unceasing conflict they have to wage with the difficulties of their position, how powerful this sacred passion to keep alive their higher aspirations ! what so well calculated to induce them to secure, if possible, to the rising generation the intellectual advantages they themselves enjoyed in their early home ? And we find that, no sooner are the more urgent wants of nature provided for, than these wanderers look with intense and deepening interest to the land they have left, as the source from which they are to receive the means of expanding and refining the minds of their children.

While this passion, operating on the colonist, tends to an object so worthy and important, what can more happily sustain his connection with the land of his nativity ? What scope, too, does it afford the parent land for extending not only her natural boundary but her religion, her arts, and her noble institutions ! What opportunities of relieving the increasing wants of her people, of providing for them a home which, associated in their minds with the institutions and government of their native country, deprives expatriation of half its terrors !

The duty of the monarch towards the colony is that of a father towards his child. Instead of restraining he should encourage her efforts to achieve an honourable independence ;—he should watch over her rising greatness, her increasing means, with the pride of a founder ever anxious to promote, never to retard her advancement :—and what would be the result of such treatment ? A profound veneration that nothing could shake, a more than British feeling in a foreign land, an attachment so firm that the child would be ever ready to assist the parent.

Who

Who can contemplate without emotion, the effect of such a connection on the taste of the colony? Looking to the parent land as the model for her imitation, she would be anxious that her children should receive their education—their moral tone —from the best, the most highly gifted in that land; and how deeply interesting the spectacle of those children storing their minds with learning in the British Universities, and there laying the foundation of that character which has made Britain the scourge of her enemies and the admiration of the world!

While in the remote parts of Britain thousands of her people are destitute of the means of education, the colonists, reaping advantages that are rarely to be found in long-settled countries, would be able to gratify the laudable desire of affording to their offspring the highest mental culture,—would not rest contented with anything not British—would, like the Romans, think no Greek pure but that of Athens.

England, instead of pouring her abandoned criminals into her colonies, would be proud to find in them a home for the families of her nobility and gentry, who would, in their turn, exert themselves to sustain her national character in her widely-extended domain; and, if it be in human things to resist the fatal decay which seems to pursue kingdoms as well as men, the mighty result would be the perpetuity of the British Empire.

The love of country retained so strong a hold upon the minds of the American colonists, that it was not until aggression had been added to aggression, insult to insult, and that endurance was felt to be inconsistent with the high character which had descended to them from their ancestors, that a stand was made against the corrupt system which England, on the foundation of her earliest colonies, provided for their government, and which she still persists in upholding. Even then so long as a vestige

remained of the people of the Old Land, British misrule could not wholly destroy the lingering affection of the colonists for the home of their infancy. Time, however, completed what injustice could not accomplish; and England lost the noble, the enviable power of extending her Empire over the continent of America.

The language, the courage of their British ancestors remained to the Americans, but oh, how fallen! The frank and manly bearing of their kinsmen was exchanged for that vindictive spirit which does not hesitate to revenge a quarrel by the bowie knife or the application of Lynch law;—the fine language of England was corrupted by the introduction of low and vulgar words, while its rich accent and full tones were lost in the nasal twang of the United States. And of these evils England was the Author!

Of all the charges that are made against the colonists, none is so utterly unfounded as that of disloyalty. Removed from the disturbing scenes that affect the people of England, they ever regard their native country with pride and reverence,—feelings so identified with early remembrances and associations, as even to survive the natural effects of tyranny and misrule.

If ten thousand acres of land were reclaimed from the sea, on any one of the coasts of Great Britain, and were to become the busy scene of the labours and the skill of Englishmen, how would a proposal that the laws and government of this accession of territory should be wholly placed under the control of the office-bearers and ministers of the Sovereign, be received by the British nation? What would be thought of any attempt to shut out the inhabitants of this new soil from the privilege of being represented in the British Parliament? and, if they were permitted to make laws for the administration of their internal polity,

polity, what would be the general impression if they were to be deprived of all power over the funds which had resulted from their combined exertions? If added to this enormous grievance the office of their chief magistrate were to be filled by a nominee of the Ministry, destitute of every qualification for his position, perhaps wanting in moral character, what would be the indignant feeling of the people of England? what the opinion of every friend of liberty?—and if this recovered territory were divided from the main land by those waves which have for so many ages owned the sway of the British sceptre, would it on that account cease to be regarded as one of the "Homes of England?" Should such a circumstance deprive the enterprising spirits, who added the possession to the British dominions, of any advantage which belongs to Englishmen? Should it not rather endear them to every British Patriot, in whose mind the foundation of the settlement must ever be associated with the greatness of his country?

The tyranny of the home Government rent America from the Empire, and inflicted a deep and lasting injury on mankind by preventing the extension over the western world of the genius and the taste of Englishmen. That tyranny will also deprive her of Australia, of Canada, and of all those possessions that would have more than repaid to her the cost of their foundation —that would have relieved from destitution her unemployed children, and transmitted her name to the latest ages.

ESSAY II.

PORT JACKSON AND THE CITY OF SYDNEY.

ON the eastern shores of the continent of Australia, towards the close of the eighteenth century, a small settlement was founded by Great Britain for the discipline and employment of her convicted felons. Far from the haunts of civilization, this remote possession was hardly known to the people of England, and inspired only feelings of contempt and horror.

Many, however, who visited the harbour of Port Jackson, and examined the inexhaustible coal-fields of the colony, were early impressed with the belief that Sydney would become the emporium of the Southern Hemisphere, and that the despised penal settlement would grow into a mighty empire.

Surrounded by a savage wilderness, and destitute of resources that could give it value in the mercantile world, it was nevertheless destined, within the first century of its existence, to become the home of gentlemen, and to attract the enterprising spirit of the merchant princes of London.

When steam navigation enhanced the value of the Australian coal-fields, and the discovery of an unbounded supply of the richest

richest copper ore enabled the colonists to rival the smelters of England, they felt that it was time to shake off the penal character of their country, and to induce men of education and science to visit its shores.

It has been the fate of the Australian colonies, from the time of their foundation, to be the sport of British imbecility and misrule. But for this, they might now have been in a high state of civilization and refinement, and their condition and government in every respect on a level with those of the nation which founded them.

With a history of colonies, British and foreign, before our eyes, extending over two centuries, it is hardly conceivable that the settlement and early management of Australia should have been left to the discretion of low-minded and unprincipled persons. Varying in soil, in climate and productions, all extensive and remote settlements demand of their founders the exercise of intelligence and the application of science—the Australian colonies not less so than India or Canada; above all, they require the appropriation of the soil to its proper use—the construction of roads, canals, and reservoirs of water; the erection of public buildings, and the laying out of cities and towns. These works, so unmanageable in old countries, are, in new settlements, objects not less of taste than of public utility, and should never be interfered with by the granting of rights and privileges to private parties.

No greater mistake can be made than that of supposing that the formation and planting of colonies can be safely intrusted to common or unthinking men. The effects of their wilfulness or of their ignorance and incapacity may not be corrected by the wealth and talents of centuries.

There is not, perhaps, in the world, a nobler harbour than Port

Port Jackson, nor one that affords such perfect shelter for the largest number of ships. This harbour it was impossible to destroy, but all that mental obliquity could devise has been effected; all that could mark the supineness of the Government is painfully impressed upon the minds of those who require the reparation of the ships by which it is visited. As an illustration, sixty years passed away from the foundation of the colony without any attempt to construct a dock; and putrid mud, to an enormous extent, has been allowed to deposit itself in the waters that surround the city.

It would, however, be unjust to allow the magnificent dock on Cockatoo, a small island lying about a mile to the west of the city, now far advanced towards completion, to remain unnoticed. This dock, which is of gigantic dimensions, was designed by Mr. Gother Kerr Mann, a gentleman to whom its construction has been intrusted, and whose engineering skill and high qualifications for the office are displayed in every part of the work, and in placing and adjusting the machinery the use of the dock will call into operation. Removed from all interference with the city, and approached by water only, a finer site for a dock could not be found even in the harbour of Port Jackson.

The entrance of Sydney Cove, one of the numerous bays that constitute the harbour, was lately adorned by a small but singularly picturesque island, not exceeding one hundred and fifty yards in circumference. On its summit, at an elevation of forty feet above the surrounding water, it was, during the administration of Sir Richard Bourke, proposed to erect a small building, after the model of the Temple of the Winds, to be appropriated to the police. And the Surveyor-General, Sir Thomas Mitchell, recommended that a marine barometer, to be kept in the building, should be carefully inspected by the persons in charge

charge; and that when it indicated a change of weather dangerous to sailing boats, a black flag should be hoisted, to prevent, by timely notice, the possibility of such fatal accidents as have frequently occurred in the harbour. Surrounded by shipping, nature could not have provided a happier site for so important and interesting an object.

This elegant design has been frustrated and the island levelled to the surface of the water, and that for the purpose of constructing a fortification against foreign aggression! The site of the island is surrounded by houses within point-blank range of guns, and is about five miles from the entrance of the harbour. The idea of placing a fortification on such a spot called forth the derision of every commander of a war-ship who visited the port; and, as one gentleman observed in foreign accents, must have been intended by the citizens to give the ladies some idea of the operations of war.

The fortification, however, was not constructed, the loose matter when brought to the water's edge being converted into a shaking bog incapable of sustaining the weight of cannon. It has now become a dangerous shoal.

The defences of the harbour are, indeed, almost provided by nature, and require only a very moderate application of skill to make them impregnable; but official obliquity has ever prevailed, and a large sum of money was lately expended in constructing a fort on Bradley's Head. This bold promontory, situated three miles from the entrance of the harbour, rises out of water so deep, that riflemen from the yard-arms of a frigate could, without an effort, exterminate the largest garrison that might be placed upon it. Many points could be found in the harbour on which forts might be constructed, which, protected by long shoals from the approach of hostile vessels, could be brought

brought to bear upon them, without the possibility of being reached by their small arms. But the proper mode of fortifying Port Jackson is by masked batteries at the entrance of the harbour.

The fort on Bradley's Head has been abandoned by the gentlemen who designed it; but the rulers of Australia still want the information which the history of Gibraltar could not fail to afford. The fortification of the Sow-and-Pigs was at one time contemplated; but the garrison by which it would be manned would be so obviously exposed to the broadsides of a hostile fleet, that the idea appears justly to have been given up. It must indeed be evident to every thinking person, that fortifications within the harbour could not be so effective as those placed at the Heads. *They* would at all times be exposed to the fire of the invading party, and might, notwithstanding the most determined resistance, be silenced or passed. The campaign in the Crimea points out the proper mode of fortifying Port Jackson. The armament of the Allies landed out of the reach of the forts of Sebastopol, and attacked the garrison from the land side. This would be the operation of an army invading Port Jackson. It would land at Watson's Bay and attack the city in the rear; and although New South Wales may now be of too little importance for such an enterprise, it would be unpardonable in those who are charged with the construction of the national defences not to contemplate the possibility at a future period of such an occurrence. With masked batteries at the north entrance of the harbour, aided, if necessary, by a heavy chain, no ship could pass the Sow-and-Pigs.

The site of Sydney is the finest that can be conceived for a large mercantile city. Almost surrounded by navigable water, a considerable part of the city stands on a promontory formed by

by Sydney Cove and Darling Harbour, presenting a front to water of sufficient depth for ships of large burthen, and extensive enough for the commerce of the Southern Hemisphere.

Had this promontory, which is connected with every part of the city and with the great thoroughfares that lead into the country, been surrounded by a public wharf, stores, counting-houses, and dwellings for the persons engaged in the shipping business of the city, might have been built, not in streets, but in terraces on its sides; and on the top of the promontory might have been laid out the finest street in the world, overlooking the harbour and trade of the city, and fanned by constant sea and land breezes.

But the promontory, like every other part of the city, has been damaged in every conceivable manner. Out of upwards of ten thousand houses to be found in Sydney, hardly one has been constructed with a regard to the common rules of architecture, while the streets are narrow, crooked, and irregular, and totally undrained. Even at this period, parties are allowed to open narrow lanes, crowded with buildings squalid and unventilated, laying up magazines of disease that may one day sweep away the whole population.

In building a city in such a climate as New South Wales, nothing was so important as the construction of drains and an abundant and never-failing supply of water; and here again nature had half executed the work.

Drains might easily have been formed for the conveyance of the impurities of the city into deep water, or, what would be better, into low adjacent lands, on which all solid matter might be deposited for manure, and from which the water might be raised by engines for the purpose of irrigating and enriching the poorer soil, or conducted into the sea. And to secure an unfailing

failing supply of the purest water, the River Hawkesbury, with its branch the South Creek, might have been conducted through thirty miles of country to the city, forming the noblest reservoirs ever appropriated to such a purpose, and converting this hot and dusty town into a city of fountains. After watering the streets and public ways, an abundant supply might have been poured into every sewer and drain. Public baths, so necessary in the climate of New South Wales, might also have been constructed; and what sites so admirably adapted for baths and fountains as the corners occasioned by intersecting streets now almost exclusively occupied by public-houses?

When the colony was still young and the lands unappropriated, the Hawkesbury River might have been brought into Sydney in a manner most beneficial to the country, not by the conveyance of the water through a long line of pipes or expensive canals, but by slightly raising by a dam the level of that part of the river not required for navigation, and by cutting through such parts of the country as impeded the progress of the water towards the city. While these basins would have secured an inexhaustible supply of water, they would have added to the charms of the scenery, and, presenting their tempering surfaces to the winds, would materially have mitigated the droughts by which the country is occasionally so terribly visited.

But Sydney, totally undrained, remains with an inadequate and precarious supply of water. In many parts of the town, pestilential effluvia warn you of the mischief that is insidiously undermining the health of the inhabitants, and diffusing a pallor over their faces that obviously proclaims the disease that lurks within.

Even without the aid of fresh water, the public drains might

might be cleansed by sea water raised by steam engines into heads at various points. But, why should this be attempted where all is ignorance and neglect? The very Macadamizing the streets is performed by labour at 10*s.* a day, a cost that, it is said, will require 30,000*l.* for a single street. The metal used is whinstone, found on the Parramatta River. This is broken by the hand into pieces, not of the size recommended by Macadam, but into irregular pieces, often exceeding the size of a man's fist, and, after being carefully freed from any mixture that could possibly bind it together, it is laid on the streets. As a necessary consequence, after destroying the carriages and the horses compelled to use the roads, it settles into irregularities that again require breaking-up—an operation which the large stones themselves generally perform in the course of a few months.

For 7000*l.* a steam crushing-machine could be put up at the quarry—a tramway constructed to the water, and a punt provided for the carriage of the stone to Sydney, by which labour, so costly and so much required for other purposes, would be saved, and the material itself reduced to the proper size, at a tenth part of the present expense. If the splinters, or fine parts of the stone, were used for binding, and a roller passed over the work, the most permanent and the most even surface would be given to a whole street in a few days.

A very large sum of money is now in the course of expenditure for the purpose of constructing public slaughterhouses on a small island lying to the north-west of the city. To this site there are many objections: the animals must be brought within a very short distance of the city, and the constant discharge of filth into the harbour will greatly tend to corrupt the water and fill it with sharks. The proper site for such an establishment

ment is Botany Bay, which could be approached from the great western road, from a point at the distance of many miles from the city, while the abundant supply of water might be made to discharge the offal into the Bay, and greatly benefit the fishery which has for several years been carried on in that capacious basin.

By a short and easily-conducted tramway, the supply, both of meat and fish, could be brought into the city in twenty minutes.

The barbarous policy of early Governors has prevented the execution of many of these important works; and it will, perhaps, be asked how any of them could have been performed in the earlier days of the colony? I answer, that nothing was better suited for convict discipline.

It surely was not the object of the British Government to punish without reforming the offender; and what could be better adapted to the work of reformation than the execution of such works? Instead of pouring the corrupted mass into private families, or coercing the convict by the lash, he should have been fairly and fully paid for his work—he should ever have an interest in his amendment—should, even at the latest period, have the means afforded of supporting himself by useful labour.

If he were employed in the execution of public undertakings, and his work accurately measured and properly paid for, he would have the greatest inducement to acquire habits of industry.

Suppose every man's labour were carried to his credit (a rateable deduction being first made for general medical attendance, and the support of the sick), that he were then charged for his clothing and maintenance, and the balance held at his credit

credit until free; and that he were then allowed to return to his country, or settle in the colony. With habits of industry acquired during his probation, and generally possessing the means of entering upon some beneficial employment, he would have the greatest inducement to become a useful and reformed member of society. What better discipline could be provided for the road-gangs, or the drunkards who now idle away their time in gaols?

All intended settlements should be visited and explored by men of education and science: no permanent step should be taken until its consequences on the future condition of the country had been fully considered; and no land should be disposed of until it had been clearly ascertained that the public interest would be best served by making it private property. That men possessing the necessary qualifications for the discharge of so important a duty should make a distant colony their permanent residence, is hardly to be expected; but there can be no doubt many might be found for a short period to direct its public measures and to lay down plans for its future government.

The first step towards the reformation of such evils as are capable of being removed or mitigated, is to investigate the actual state of the public works of the colony. For that purpose, the Surveyor-General should be called upon to make a report upon all such as have been placed under his control or superintendence; and his report, with any suggestions he might think proper to make, should be published for the information of all whose duty or interest might prompt them to propose measures, or afford information on the subject.

1854.

ESSAY III.

THE GENIUS OF AUSTRALIA.

WHILE the parent land is a glorious inheritance which has descended from our common ancestors, with all its enduring monuments of their industry and their skill, to her Colonies alone belongs the future.

Unreclaimed from her primeval forests, and with a climate, to which the adventurous settler has to adapt himself, Australia may yet become the principal retreat of the redundant population of England, and diffuse over the Southern Hemisphere the laws, the liberties, and the glorious constitution of the empire by which she was founded.

If, from our immediate descendants nature has withheld the iron constitution, the powers of endurance which she has conferred on the Saxon of the North,—their sound understanding,—their delicate perception, have peculiarly fitted the rising generation for scientific inquiries and for the exercise of mechanical genius.

That a climate so fickle as that of Australia, must prevent her from ever attaining a high position as a pastoral or an agricultural

tural country, the warmest advocates for the raising of raw produce for exportation have too often witnessed the destruction of their herds by the lingering operations of famine, to venture to deny. But even if the climate were the most genial, what could be the ultimate destiny of a people who, principally occupied in herding cattle and raising grain, were to neglect the cultivation of those arts by which alone national independence can be secured?

A state so circumscribed and subordinate was not intended to be the future of this Empire of the South. No country more certainly requires the application of science, the exercise of intelligence—none presents more ample materials on which to operate. With inexhaustible mines of coal, lime, iron, and copper, gold has now been found in deposits of unprecedented richness;—and from the geological formation and appearance of the country, it is not improbable that other precious metals may be stored up in her secret recesses, while sand of the purest quality and the finest porcelain clay, with other articles extensively used in manufactories, are lavishly strewn over her surface.

Her widely-extended coasts and unrivalled harbours place within her reach the treasures of the Southern Ocean and the commerce of the East; while a hundred fairy ports, now known to the admirer of sylvan scenery, would afford shelter to the adventurous fisherman, and the vessels used for the transport of her various products by means of her ocean boundary. The soft wools of her sheep demand of her a better fate than to be exported as raw material. From a thousand hills the vine pours forth a tribute that promises at no distant period to rival the vintages of the old world; while the waters that fall in torrents upon her surface, if pent into the lengthened canal, the graceful

mere, would at once fertilize her soil and correct the aridity of her atmosphere.

These are the subjects that imperiously challenge the attention, and may justly exercise the energy and genius of her sons.

ESSAY IV.

THE PRESS OF AUSTRALIA.

WE are so much accustomed to the innumerable benefits which the Press confers, that it is difficult for us to appreciate its influence on society, without withdrawing from the immediate scenes in which we are engaged, and contemplating the state of those countries in which it is made the organ of cruelty and despotism.

While to this mighty engine we must concede the power of forming, it not less surely indicates the sentiments and opinions of the people; and of it we may truly affirm that like poetry and the fine arts, it either belongs to the present condition of a country, or reflects the image of that which has recently passed away.

With the dimmest perception only of our future destiny, to the Press we must look for that stimulus to noble exertion, which can alone prompt the people of this Southern Land to develop its resources and to found an empire not unworthy of the stock from which they sprang.

Hardly freed from the badge of shame that a corrupt adminis-

tration has used all its efforts to perpetuate, and without the leisure or fortune to cultivate the elegancies and refinements of life, we feel that the Press, like the oriental wind that bears the perfumes of Arabia to the distant mariner, must introduce amongst us the just reasoning,—the profound research,—the elegant taste of older and more enlightened lands.

What is the main feature of the Press in these colonies where all is young—all is new? It has industriously laboured to create in us an interest in the wants, the condition, and the tastes of more advanced civilization, and is evidently making rapid strides towards the establishment of national character—the exercise of independent thought.

That there is much room for improvement—much to be achieved, cannot be questioned; and every friend of the Press must regret that its pages have occasionally been sullied by ribaldry and slander. But is the Press behind those institutions that are essential to the existence of the colony? Is it less advanced than the courts of law—the general administration of Justice? The Press does not seek, but it can afford a comparison. It was recently observed by one of our Judges, that what with new trials, arguments, and motions for rehearings, no cases were more thoroughly sifted than those which were disposed of in the colony. But is there no drawback to this mode of arriving at the truth? Did it never occur to the learned Judge, that this apprenticeship in the administration of justice was served at the expense of the suitor?

Has the Church made more progress in diffusing the light of Christianity?—in substituting for the mysteries and bigotry of the dark ages and the sectarian strife of the present, that charity which hopeth all things?—in rescuing from destruction the children of poverty and of crime?

The

The base and the cowardly have ever a disposition to fetter the liberty of the Press,—are ever more vigilant to mark its slightest error than to acknowledge the debt of gratitude that is due to it, for its exposure of falsehood and of fraud,—and would prefer the degradation of their country to the slightest injury from the only instrument that can raise its character.

Untrammelled in its operations by cowardice or tyranny, the progress of the Press is like that of a noble river, which gradually disengages itself from the wreck and gravel that are borne down from the mountain in which it takes its rise, but which, if impeded, stagnates into the morass that forms a receptacle for the sickly deposit of a rank vegetation, and fills the atmosphere with pestilential miasma.

Go on, then, great and noble power,—fearlessly advance in the good cause you have undertaken! Let the honour of your country be the object of your existence; and by enlightening the minds of her children, may you make them conscious of her importance in the scale of nations, and obtain for yourself the reward that is due to the benefactors of mankind!

ESSAY V.

THE NEW CONSTITUTION.

IT would not be less unreasonable to apply to a young colony all the measures which have been found expedient for the representation and government of the parent land, than to fit out the boats of a ship with the paraphernalia necessary for the navigation of the vessel they belong to. And it is impossible to look at the various plans proposed for a constitution for the colony, and the efforts made to provide materials for an aristocratic chamber, without a painful sense of the ludicrous.

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that pattern, and not expediency, has governed the minds of the gentlemen who would at once project the councils of the colony into a counterpart of the great national assemblies of England. Indeed, perusal of the schemes that have been laid before the public leaves us much in the condition of the schoolboy, who, having wearied through the whole alphabet, was quite at a loss to conceive the value or importance of the task.

Surely

Surely it cannot be necessary to provide for a dependent colony all the order and forms that may be required for its government when its state of dependency shall have ceased.

None can doubt that the colony should be governed by laws made by a Council composed of colonists, who are or ought to be acquainted with its peculiar interests. But why should these laws be submitted to the misconstruction of a stolid and irresponsible Upper House—a House probably composed of individuals with no preponderating interest in the prosperity of the country, and perhaps without that talent which commands the respect of a people?

What is the condition of the councils of England? The Commons propose and discuss a law; this law undergoes the consideration of the Peers,—another body of the British people interested in all that affects the government of the country. The law is then submitted to the Sovereign and her advisers.

In the colony, the Council originates a measure, that measure is submitted to the Governor, who may fairly stand in the relation to the colony which the House of Lords does to the people of England, and the proposed law is then laid before the Sovereign.

It is unreasonable and most mischievous that the Legislative Assembly should be in any degree composed of Crown nominees,—a body of persons, who in a deliberative assembly dare not deliberate. Nothing is gained by placing nominees in the House as safeguards against hasty legislation. *That* may be effectually prevented by the Governor, who, with the assistance of the Executive, ought to possess a power of approving or rejecting the measures of the legislature—a power the exercise of which would place him in his proper relative position in the colony, and without casting upon him an undue share of responsibility,

sibility, greatly tend to give him additional importance. The ultimate control of the Sovereign would interpose an effectual guard against all legislation likely to interfere with the general principles it concerns the British nation to maintain in her colonies. It can hardly be conceived, that either the Governor or the Sovereign would unnecessarily oppose measures which the good sense of the Council might introduce for the local Government.

The Governor would communicate to the House of Assembly the financial wants of the colony, and there is no reason to anticipate in the members of that House, such a blindness to the interests committed to their care as would induce them to object to reasonable demands.

Removed from the collisions that inevitably take place in a body composed of the representatives of the people and the officers and nominees of the Crown, the Council would be anxious to sustain its character of a popular Assembly, and would feel a heavy, because a *sole* responsibility for its measures.

1852.

ESSAY VI.

THE CONSTITUTION QUESTION.

FEW things are at the present moment of deeper importance to the Australian colonies than the measures which are to confer upon them a constitution that, however short-lived and bearing within itself the seeds of dissolution, may nevertheless present obstacles to their future good government, impossible to overcome.

It may be safely asserted that not one hundred persons in New South Wales are capable of affording any aid in the settlement of this difficult question, much less the congregated masses who are ever ready to vociferate for "a counterpart of the glorious constitution of England," or to lay the foundation of a democracy more tyrannical than that of America, or the transitory political fabric constructed out of the French Revolution of 1848.

A moment's reflection will satisfy any thinking man, that such a democracy would probably be the result of the unrestrained

strained choice by the populace of the members of both houses of Parliament. And one can hardly contemplate the deference for the people, manifested by at least one speaker at the meeting lately held at the Victoria Theatre, without feeling that even a Senator must be restrained from looking for preferment through a channel so unworthy as that of the passions or fancies of a mob, no matter for what purpose congregated. There is, however, an element, in the most inconsiderate mob, that may be made the instrument of controlling a tyranny not less frightful—the despotic tyranny of irresponsible government; and the great question now under consideration, is the means by which that element may be brought into useful operation.

That the plan proposed for the nomination of an Upper House, is one that would check the progress of genuine liberty and of free inquiry into the rights and interests of all classes of the community, is so evident, that on its authors may be justly charged much of the intemperate character of the recent attacks they complain of. It is impossible to contemplate the creation of hereditary qualification for the senatorial office, without the strongest feeling of disapprobation. If the object be to secure for the colony, as far as possible, a counterpart of the constitution of England, it is necessary to inform ourselves of the ground on which that constitution rests—to trace to their proper sources any evils that may be justly chargeable upon it. Is there not a possibility of introducing into this colony those evils without advantages, which have so much more than counterbalanced them, that perturbations are lost in the great movement of the whole?

It is not true, as has been asserted, that the Peers of England were ever elected by the people to check the demands of the Sovereign: but, satellites of a great luminary to which they owed

owed their existence, they originally purchased their political position by the service of their swords; and Sovereign and Nobility have each alternately defended the people against the exactions of the other.

The English Peers have not only the share of talent and patriotism that falls to gentlemen enjoying the advantages of a liberal education, but their enormous landed possessions make them always ready to sustain a form of constitution which affords the sole security for their position: and the jealousy with which they guard the transmission to a single representative of their estates, as well as their titles, has, by perpetuating in its integrity a wealthy and powerful class, continued to the country the social security which that conservative element, wealth, has been almost invariably found to afford.

What patrician qualification could senators of New South Wales transmit to their posterity? Have they wealth to enable them to secure to a single representative the mediocre fortune of an ordinary English commoner, nay, a bare sufficiency to support him without the toils of business? Does this colonial settlement of yesterday, afford any security that even he who has most successfully plied the labouring oar, can, in the incessant struggle which belongs to a rising country, be maintained for a season of repose, however brief?

But even could every requisite be secured, is a Senate likely to be benefited by the deliberations of conceited heirs-at-law who have just attained their majority, a Senate which will have to deal with the ever-varying phases which present themselves in a land, the climate, the soil, and the products of which daily present problems for the wonder and reflection of the world?

It is our duty, however, not to add to the unthinking abuse of

of the ignorant on either side of the question, but to grapple honestly with the difficult subject under consideration. We should, if possible, point out a course that may at once secure a body of senators with as much wisdom as the colony can afford, free from the corrupting influence of the Crown; undaunted by the vulgar abuse of a mob, of age at least to have learnt the importance of calm deliberation—who shall not transmit to a blockhead heir the office without the endowments that are too often found to descend with the man of genius into his grave. It has been said that, but for the federal principle, America, losing her centripetal force, would fly into the regions of anarchy. May not the two forces, the one impelling the planet on its onward course, the other restraining it to its orbit, be united in forming a constitution for New South Wales?

The plan I would propose—at least for a trial—is, that the representative of the Sovereign select one hundred persons, in the colony, whom he believes qualified for the office of Senator, (from time to time filling up vacancies)—gentlemen who shall not be less than thirty years of age, and who shall retain the office for life, or for a term of at least ten years. Out of that number the Lower House, which should be elected by the people exclusively, should appoint and from time to time keep up a Senate to consist of twenty-one persons. The members of the Lower House should be capable, at all times, if included in the list of individuals selected by the Crown, of accepting the appointment,—the vacancies occasioned by their retirement from the Lower House being filled up as in all other cases.

It has been thought so utterly impracticable to constitute an Upper House, that suggestions have been made for intrusting the legislation of the colony to one House only. But who can observe the crude, precipitate, and in some cases thoughtless legislation

legislation of the present session of Council, and not feel that without the check afforded by a second Chamber, the rights, the interests, and even the liberties of the people, may too often be overlooked in the pursuit of some supposed object of expediency.

That this vitally-important question should be determined by the violent speeches of the partisans of either side—that an inflamed populace should be induced to demand a counterpart of the constitution of that "land of liberty and equality" in which individual citizens indemnify themselves for the sacrifice they make to the multitude, by indulging in exclusiveness of the most tyrannical and degrading character,—a constitution under which one portion of the community has been raised to an undue eminence by blasting the bodies and souls of three millions of human beings, and those the producers of a large portion of the exports of the state, I trust that no Australian, certainly no Christian, will desire.

August, 1853.

ESSAY VII.

RAILWAYS AND TELEGRAPHIC DESPATCH.

A STRANGER on arriving in Australia cannot fail to be struck with astonishment at our insensibility to the importance of inventions, which are of hourly and indispensable use in the ordinary business of social life, even in countries not more advanced in civilization than our own. People in England would now be as little inclined to dispense with the advantages of railway transit and of the electric telegraph, as their fathers would have been to exchange the fast travelling mail-coach of *their* time, for the courier, who, in the reign of the Stuarts, was charged with the conveyance of the most important despatches at the rate of twenty-five miles a day.

What would be thought by the people of Europe and America, who found the mail-coach and the steam-ship inadequate to the increasing demands of the age without the aid of the steam-carriage, of the transport of the produce of this colony by bullock-drays, which require several months to perform

perform a journey of four hundred miles,—a journey which not unfrequently involves a loss of more than one team, and too commonly a serious deterioration of property?

That the unenlightened among the native-born should, like their coloured brethren of the soil, see in this nothing but a consequence of residing at a distance of four hundred miles from the capital, may be conceived. But that a member of the Legislative Council, a gentleman representing the county in which the capital of Australia is situated,—a gentleman who is not supposed to be behind others in English and continental experience, should express an opinion in Council, that the time occupied in the conveyance of colonial produce from the interior to the capital, might be regarded as a matter of little importance, must excite the indignant surprise of every thinking man,—of all who take an interest in the diffusion of intelligence and in the education of the rising generation. Few, in selecting this land for the home of their families, could have supposed that while America vies with the Old World, Australia would be satisfied with a condition little better than that of the interior of Britain at the period of the Roman conquest.

Energy in a people can do much to advance, and the want of it almost everything to retard, the progress of their country. But the latter can scarcely annihilate the advantages of the unrivalled harbour of Port Jackson, nor the former convert the mud-banks of Port Phillip into a safe or commodious haven. A chart of the Southern Seas will at once show that Port Jackson is as well adapted by its situation as its extent, to become the great outport of this hemisphere.

The first object of a people who aspire to a high mercantile character, should be to facilitate every approach to their metropolis: and the ports in which their cargoes are shipped and

and discharged, should present the most ample maritime accommodation.

The coast of the Australian continent, and especially that portion to the south of Port Jackson, is most dangerous. The capital swept away by the loss of small vessels during the last year, would have gone far towards the expense of constructing a railway to Melbourne,—a road that would, on its completion, make Sydney the port for receiving and shipping the produce of Victoria—a road of which Van Diemen's Land would avail herself, by conveying her exports across the Straits to the Port Phillip terminus, instead of sending small coasters on a perilous voyage to Sydney. The Australian seas would then be navigated solely by steam and other vessels, of sufficient size to avoid the dangers of a lee-shore.

The foundation of so important a work cannot be laid too early, and measures should at once be taken to prevent all interference with the due progress of the undertaking.

What could more happily tend to raise the character of the colony—to attract intelligent strangers to her shores—than the determination of the local legislature to apply all the means at its disposal to the opening of her vast resources, by the execution of great public works? What so highly calculated to enlarge and improve the minds of the native-born?

A description of the electric telegraph which connects England with France, or of works now associated in Europe even with journeys of pleasure, would a century ago have been looked upon as the fantasies of an insane mind or the marvels of a fairy tale.

Telegraphic despatch may unquestionably be conducted across the main ocean as well as across a channel, and with greater safety; for, removed from the disturbing causes to be overcome

overcome in shallow waters, the apparatus would find its level far below the rage of storms or the drift of wrecks, and beyond the attacks of fishes, and would, through profound darkness and silence, convey, with inconceivable velocity, the thoughts, the sentiments, and the wishes of those engaged in the business of the upper world.

The execution of such gigantic works not only tends to raise the mind from the grovelling pursuits with which it is too much occupied, but to invigorate and fit it to contemplate the infinite wisdom displayed in the Creation.

1853.

ESSAY VIII.

RAIL COMMUNICATION IN AUSTRALIA.

THE author of a paper on Railways, which appeared in the first number of the *Sydney University Magazine*, has treated the subject much after the manner of a retail dealer who contemplates the purchase and sale of a chest of tea; and, were no higher consideration involved in the question, he might be allowed to have succeeded in showing, that the introduction of railways into the colony is not warranted in the present state of its means and population. But, referring to the source from which this paper emanated, we may justly feel disappointed that the question has not been considered under aspects that involve a higher principle than that which governs a contract for the removal of sand drift, or the distribution of hot rolls through the city.

In the discussion of every question which affects the public interest, it would be unreasonable to look for a treatise on the responsibility of Governments, or the social and political circumstances

stances of man during his journey through life. But, in a colony, in which the moral tone is manifestly so weak, in which even the physical condition of the people may well challenge the consideration of the most intelligent and reflecting, we might expect that the author of a work addressed to us from the fountain of literature and science, would, in a paper on railways, aim at higher things than the pecuniary profit likely to result from the capital employed in their construction.

The subject of railways, indeed, of all means of communication between the capital and the remote parts of an unreclaimed country, between the sources of religious and political light, and the inhabitants of districts cut off from all ordinary communication with the rest of mankind, is at all times entitled to earnest consideration. But in a colony, the future condition of which must greatly depend on the foundation now laid for its moral and political character, a colony that has so strenuously exerted itself to secure for the rising generation the higher branches of education, no attempt should be made to dispose of the subject without the fullest consideration of its general bearing and operation on the social condition of the people.

The author has rather strangely said, at page 34, "The number of cattle and horses is too small to be worth considering." The supply of horned cattle for Sydney alone amounts to upwards of thirty-three thousand per annum; and from the remoteness of the pastures from which the animals are driven, particularly in times of drought, all the fat—commonly a great part of the flesh—is lost during the journey; added to which, jobbers and dealers, availing themselves of the irregularity of the supply, demand what price they think proper, and, at the expense of the public, amass wealth that is seldom productive of any advantage to the colony. Brought by rail from their pastures, the animals would not only

arrive in the best condition, but the supply might be regulated in a way to avoid the worst description of combination. One pound a head, a sum that would certainly be saved both by the grazier and the consumer, would contribute 33,000*l.* per annum to the earnings of the railway. The omission by the author of this item, whether from ignorance of the facts, or from hasty and careless writing, is inexcusable in a paper calculated to operate on the minds of parties who have no means of making inquiry into the subject, and who might be led into the most unwarrantable conclusions. The same observations apply to the demand and supply of grain, added to which, the most fertile parts of the country, now far beyond the reach of a market, might, as the necessary consequence of railway communication, be cultivated in preference to the poor and worn-out lands at this time under tillage. It must also be borne in mind, that Australia, like Palestine, is visited by frequent and, although partial, extensive droughts. At such times it is often impossible to bring supplies to market, and the colony is, to a great extent, dependent on the importation of foreign grain. By the cultivation of parts of the country very differently situated, the terrible effects of drought might, in a great measure, be guarded against. The frequent importation of grain, which this country has, owing to the present limited cultivation, to provide for, may swallow up capital quite sufficient for the execution of all the works which the most sanguine advocates for railways propose.

Another important item, left out of the author's calculation, is the construction and repair of public roads. He has told us that the Macadamizing of George-street cost 15,000*l.* a mile. It is singular that in stating this fact the author should have omitted to take into account the enormous sum now expended in the repair of public roads, which would be annually saved by the construction

construction of leading lines of railway—lines which when once formed are kept in repair at inconceivably less expense than the most ordinary parish roads. It is true that certain roads would still be required, but the heavy and most damaging work would be conducted by rail. In the climate of New South Wales it is probable that the cost annually incurred in the reparation of a much-used public road would amount to ten times that of a railway.

The cost of constructing railways, to connect the cities of Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide, would be borne by the three colonies, which would then be relieved, not only from the expense of the present mode of communication, but also, to a great extent, from that of coast navigation.

Locomotives may, however, except in certain parts of the colony, give place to horse power; and it is painful to contemplate the accidents which, amongst an ignorant and drunken population, must result from steam propulsion.

With far steeper gradients, and at much less expense, communication, at the rate of eight or nine miles an hour, could be kept up by horses working night and day on tramways; a vast improvement upon the present conveyance of goods at the rate of ten or fifteen miles a day. But, whatever mode may be adopted for propelling carriages, effectual communication with the remote parts of the country can never be kept up without rails. To insure this important object, if the capital employed in the construction of railways were entirely sunk, if the utmost that could be effected were the payment of the current expenses of management, it might be a question for writers who have more deeply considered the moral and political consequences of rail communication than the author of the paper under consideration appears to have done, whether the interests of the colony might not be best served by the construction of railways.

The

The writer appears to think that no expenditure of money can be proper that is not capable of a full and perfect return. This is the argument, not of the political economist, but of the shopkeeper. Is the Sydney University an institution that will yield to the colony any interest for the money expended in upholding it? Of the cost of all public works a large percentage is annually swept away. Even in old countries, how much diminished is the value of those which are transmitted to the succeeding generation! In so young a country as New South Wales, our descendants must forgive us if we call upon them to cancel our obligation to account for the capital we have expended in the construction of works of public utility. They should be content even to submit to the expense of preserving and keeping them for public use, a weight they might bear with less difficulty than we the cost of their construction.

It is a sad reflection that, while the arts and sciences have made such gigantic strides in the world, the great mass of mankind is but little advanced in religious and moral character from the condition in which our ancestors lived many centuries ago, that even in civilized England, hundreds of thousands of persons are incapable of reading and writing.

In the remote and scattered population of a poor colony, a large portion of the inhabitants is destitute of all instruction and moral training; far beyond the reach of the heroic exertions, the untiring zeal, the tenderness displayed by ladies in Sunday-schools, they grow up, amongst the animals they tend, with their passions only for their guide. Did it never occur to the writer of the paper under consideration, that any invention that annihilates space is, in such a country, of the deepest importance in a moral point of view; that the glorious lights of the Gospel fly with the panting engine into the remotest wilderness; that

that the good government, nay, the very existence of the colony, in a great measure, depends on such means of communication?

But it may be the object of this paper to show that the intelligence of the country yields no gold coin to the realm, that no treasury in this world is open for the deposit of moral character; that *that* contributes nothing to the wealth of the State. Has the author even succeeded in supporting this view? Again we must turn to the savage wilderness for a reply. We must look at the general condition of Australia: extending to bounds that constitute a world by itself, it is intersected by vast regions of desert, incapable of supporting the animals by which they are traversed, while the mineral and other riches of the colony must inevitably lead to large concentrations of its inhabitants. The city of Sydney with its suburbs has probably a population of seventy thousand persons, and those of other of the Australian colonies are fast approaching to the same number. These dense masses of people are, in many respects, connected with each other, and are all dependent on remote grazing and agricultural establishments.

Let us hope that, when the government of the country shall be in hands capable of developing its resources, and when the administration of those resources shall be directed by skilful and scientific men, it will be found that the construction of railways is not an undertaking so formidable as might be inferred from the paper under consideration. That, as increasing light is thrown upon the condition of the colony, the energy and character of those who have made it their home will be found equal to the objects to be accomplished; and that the colony will then be capable of supporting a moral and intelligent population. If not, it cannot be too soon abandoned to the savage condition in which it was discovered by Captain Cook.—1855.

ESSAY IX.

PROSPECTS OF IRELAND.

A LAW of unceasing change presides as imperiously over nations as over the humblest individuals. The immediate operation, however, of this subtle tendency is, owing to the longer duration and the more extensive and complicated relations of the former, less perceptible in them than in the latter.

Yet such are the inevitable results of this law of change, that we can discern scarcely any point of resemblance between aspects assumed by the same country at different periods of its history. The contrast which presents itself between the architecture of a baronial fortress and that of a modern mansion, is not more striking than that between our habits and sentiments and those of our ancestors.

Who in contemplating, in their first results, the successive conquests of England by the Roman, the Saxon, the Dane, and the Norman, could have conceived that the noble race now dominant

dominant in that country, would be indebted, for their great moral and physical qualities, to the wars that brought desolation to the hearths of their ancestors, sweeping away both rulers and institutions—that on the children of those who bent beneath the scourge, should be conferred the mental capacity and the energy of the conqueror? Who could have conjectured that unvanquished Scotland should have been led on to civilization and refinement by the people, that a few centuries before she viewed from her mountain fastnesses with suspicion and contempt?

Few observers of the prostrate condition of Ireland expect to find in her misery and degradation the elements of her future greatness. Yet unexampled prosperity may be predicted as the effect of mighty convulsions which have apparently shattered her energies and her hopes.

How little was it suspected, that the temporary failure of the potato, which, from its easy cultivation, Mr. Cobbett maintained would perpetuate the degradation of Ireland, might lead to a remedy for evils which existed in that country before the introduction of the plant itself from America! How little was it suspected that the continent from which the potato had been imported, might eventually afford an asylum for the famishing multitudes of Ireland! How little, that the advancement of Ireland to the highest moral character and dignity, was likely to result from a calamity that had swept hundreds of thousands of her children into a common grave! Yet what is more probable than that the emigration of a large portion of her remaining inhabitants, and the sequestration and transfer of her lands to British owners, may prove the means of effecting in Ireland that change which followed the invasions and conquests of England? What so likely to regenerate Ireland as the

the influx of British settlers, who with their capital will take with them their sound judgment and their practical character?

It has long been an enigma to all reflecting minds that a country, on which nature has conferred unbounded fertility, and a climate so congenial to the natives of the British Isles, should have been utterly prostrated. Perhaps the solution of that enigma is at hand.

That the fault is not wholly with the people, is evident from their success as immigrants both in America and Australia, and the distinguished character of many of their descendants in all parts of the world. May not the infusion of foreign blood have tended to promote in those descendants, the favourable result derived by the English from their conquerors? The peculiarities of the Irish people indicate the necessity of such a change. With wit and eloquence the most brilliant, with courage that has earned the highest honours in a hundred battle-fields, and with the most generous and kindly nature, they are deficient in those sturdier characteristics and that consistent firmness of purpose, which constitute the peculiar moral features of the people of England and Scotland.

In the North of Ireland, the introduction of Scottish emigrants has produced a mixed race, in which the high characteristics of both the Irish and Scottish nations have blended themselves.

May it not be safely predicted, that when the neglected soil of Ireland shall be cultivated with scientific skill,—when the vast natural resources of an island that has been justly styled the Garden of the World shall be called forth,—when the rapid modes of modern travelling shall have brought within the reach of genius and taste her grand and affecting scenery,—when her remaining population shall be amalgamated with British emi-

grants,

grants—the union of Ireland with Great Britain will be one of feeling and not of force, and the melancholy political contests of centuries will be exchanged for a generous rivalry in exertions for the common good of a mighty empire?

1852.

ESSAY X.

THE MEMORY.

THAT the brain constitutes the material organ which is immediately subjected to the operation of the mind, will hardly be questioned. The consideration, therefore, of the nature of this organ cannot fail deeply to interest every one who is desirous of ascertaining the mysterious purposes of the Creator in such of his works as we are permitted to investigate.

The human brain consists of a congeries of matter so extensive that its actual surface has been computed to be equal to that of the whole body; while the arrangement of its parts is so evidently the result of design, that we are naturally led to inquire for what objects this extraordinary structure was intended.

Phrenologists have long assigned to each part of the brain a separate office, and have estimated the capacity of the mind by the relative quantities of the different portions of that organ on which they suppose it to act; but in what way it acts they have

have not explained. If the distribution they have made be well founded, it is obvious that a particular and distinctive part of this organ must be the immediate subject of each mental operation, and it may not be an unreasonable conjecture, that this widely-extended surface is the part acted on.

Take, for example, one of the simplest processes of the mind; the record it makes of the scenes which are presented to us. If an impression be made in early life, before the brain has been overtasked, it is always easily revived:—latent it may be for years, for many years; but so far is it from becoming extinct that some accidental occurrence, the mention of a person or incident connected with it, immediately brings up the picture of the past in all its marked outlines and with all its glowing colours.

And it does more: it brings up a hundred other pictures which have also lain in total obscurity, and which seem to have no further connection with each other than the views that are contained in the same portfolio. May we not suppose that the surface of certain organs or parts of the brain constitutes a living portfolio? The objects we look upon pass through that small but highly-finished telescope, the eye, and paint their image on the retina; the retina does not retain the picture, but transmits it to the brain. Why should not the next operation be that of engraving it on the surface of that part of the brain which is appropriated for its preservation? why should not the picture be actually indented on the brain, there to remain until the final destruction of that organ? How well does such a supposition correspond with the mental operation! A scene is viewed,—is recollected for years;—so vividly recollected, that we fancy the impression incapable of being strengthened:—the scene is again visited, how well does it correspond with the old impression,

impression, but for a time how much more vivid is the picture!—Is not this very like a retouching of the old engraving? How indelible, as we have already remarked, are the impressions which are made in early life when the brain is unoccupied! How evanescent are those which are made when every part is crowded with impressions,—when the portfolio is filled,—the drawing-paper used up, and the same ground has been occupied and reoccupied, until a confused blending takes place, and the outlines are too faint to be accurately retained, even for a short period, if they pass not away beyond the dawn of our earthly consciousness!

With mind,—abstracted from the material nature of the medium through which it acts—we are, in this imperfect and transitory state, unacquainted. In the future and eternal condition of the soul, unchained to mortal bodies, we may approach nearer to the Divine nature, and then only be capable of appreciating the infinite wisdom and perfection of the Creator.

ESSAY XI.

BEAUTY.

PLACED, during this short life, in a body under physical conditions that subject him to innumerable maladies, man is, even in his happiest circumstances, affected by wants and infirmities common to lower animals, the peculiarities of which it is impossible to contemplate without disgust. Yet, instead of receiving with humility the frame provided by his Creator for his material existence, he has offered to the poor tenement the homage of his worship, and has assigned to it a mysterious grace called Beauty—a phantom that eludes his grasp—is ever gliding into regions of deformity and shame.

Demand explanation of the worshippers of this chimera, and you are mocked by a charge of want of taste; nay, you are urged to create the thing they are in pursuit of; to model the idol they would have you worship. You are told there is no standard by which beauty can be determined, that what is by one person enthusiastically admired, excites aversion in the mind

mind of another. And so insensibly do we allow ourselves to be dictated to, in everything that relates to this undefinable quality, that we are led to surrender our judgment to the blank force of accidental caprice; to view without disgust the tailless horse and the distorted waist of woman—victims of European fashion: even to hear with indifference of the crippled foot, thought indispensable to female beauty in China.

Taste is the property the Creator has implanted in the human mind, to enable us to appreciate the finer relations, whether material or spiritual, of his works to the Divinity they proclaim. And this property, if not vitiated or misdirected, has a tendency to raise our feelings from admiration of the thing created to reverence for the Creator: to awaken sentiments which lead us from the contemplation of our condition here, to the great First Cause by which that condition was ordained. And what *is* beauty but the adaptation of means to an end? Does the attenuated calf, or the lengthened heel, indicate no weakness? Do the distorted waist, the crippled foot, in no way interfere with the functions assigned to them? Do the short neck and the flaccid limb offer no impediment to healthy action? But the face, it is urged—the shape and proportions of the face—can surely in no way affect the design of the Creator. The sunken eye of the Tartar of the desert, the broad and clear eye of the Saxon—here taste alone must surely determine the standard. Not so!—the eye of the Tartar demands our admiration for its adaptation to the arid plains to which it is exposed. Certain organs were necessary. Well packed, they are contained in that oval frame which constitutes the perfect human face. The square jaw may indicate superior strength; but beyond its due proportion that strength is useless, and therefore destructive of beauty. The nose, the lips, the ears, may be too large or too small

small—too long or too short, and, urges the objector, without detracting from their utility. Extend the organs to undue proportions, and the most depraved taste is conscious of a want of fitness.

The object of the Creator is, in all things, to give the greatest possible power, with the least possible incumbrance. The body of an animal is an apparatus constructed for the performance of certain offices, arranged with the harmony that constitutes its only claim to beauty. Give to the Venus the arm or the leg of the Hercules, unnecessary strength would be conferred without the power to use it, and at the obvious expense of symmetry.

When we assign deformity to nature, we disclose our ignorance of the design of the Creator. How uncouth, when too closely observed, the elephant, the camel, the giraffe; but view them at a distance, witness their exercise of the functions assigned to them—how charming is the adaptation of means to an end!

All nature proclaims the knowledge, the wisdom of the Creator. The mountains, rugged indeed and wild, are means by which those waters are stored that cover the plains with verdure. The undulations of the hills, every line in the contour of the country, how necessary! How beneficent the arrangement of the unnumbered flowers, that whisper with odorous breath of the wisdom and goodness of God, that treasure honey for the bee, which, in performing her appointed task, hums forth a hymn of praise!

But the expression of the face, the kindly or repulsive look, surely on taste alone depends rejection or approval there;—yet there the soul shines out—reveals its inmost thought—its subtlest feeling. Language may skilfully deceive, and, like a game well played, mark not the truth but cunning of the man.

But oh! the trace that vice, despair, and suffering leave upon the brow;—the furrowed marks of evil passions cherished long —of guilty knowledge, how they mar the fairest face that nature ever formed for love!

What is it claims our deference for beauty? It is that God's most perfect work vibrates on a chord that wakes the deepest sentiment of worship He has planted in the human heart. To bind his creatures to Himself; to win the wanderer in this wilderness of woe back to His heaven of love.

ESSAY XII.

'VESTIGES OF THE NATURAL HISTORY OF CREATION.'

THE author of this work conceives, that upon a principle of development, changes from imperfect to perfect animals ascending to man, have been in operation from the earliest stage of animal life; and that these changes have taken place, not suddenly and abruptly, but by stealthy and imperceptible elaboration during vast periods of time. He supposes that all animals, man included, which have at any time existed, grew out of each other under a law of the Divine will impressed upon matter at the creation. He contends there is no warrant for supposing that the boundless varieties of animal and vegetable life were created by several independent acts of God.

The book has been assailed on various grounds, but chiefly on account of its supposed tendency to materialism and to infidelity, a charge which the author has in late editions successfully combated, and which his theory does not involve. It is surely quite as consistent with our belief in the Divine superintendence of the world to suppose that the Creator, in His infinite wisdom,

so constituted natural operations that they should proceed from step to step until their arrival at the highest point, as that He should have devised the principle of generation by which a succession of beings is maintained. The theory of the author has also been condemned, with as little justice, on account of its supposed opposition to the Mosaic history of the creation. This change has been happily treated in the *Theologian* and *Ecclesiastic*. "False notions of Scripture science," observe the writers, "may be productive of the very worst effects. The present accepted theory of the heavens was long resisted as unscriptural. It is, however, established on arguments partaking in a great measure of mathematical rigour. What is the result? Has it engendered scepticism? No; it is received by the most implicit believers in Revelation. It has been found not to oppose, but to confirm the Scripture philosophy. The danger attendant on scientific pursuits has at all times had its origin, in a great degree, in false notions of the nature of Scripture physics. The object of the sacred writers is not kept in view. Holy Scripture may (we hope without irreverence) be compared to a map, which exhibits minutely all the details of the country which it professes to represent, but sketches in mere outline the frontier countries." The erroneous conclusion of the author is, *that* of attributing the succession of animals to their development from each other. In this conclusion, I conceive, he is not borne out by any evidence laid before his readers.

If his theory were sound, and the development proceeded in a natural order of events, that is, by a law originally impressed by the Creator upon matter, it is obvious that that law would be still in operation. And, although the author might be warranted in supposing that it would cease when its object should have been accomplished—when all animals had arrived at the highest degree

degree of perfection they were capable of—that is, when all had been consummated in the human species—yet, until that point had been attained, this law would remain in force. Now we find that this is not the case; and I think sufficient negative evidence is within reach to show that such a law never was in operation.

Upon the principle of development, great changes take place in animals as well as vegetables; in the horse and bull for instance, from the wild parents to the high-bred animals now existing; but, with all the changes that are permitted, a law appears to be in operation that says, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further."

The author endeavours to meet this difficulty by pointing at periods of such vast duration, that those over which our knowledge of the history of the world extends are by comparison reduced to a point. But the evidence we have before us is fatal to this theory.

Let us suppose, with the author, man to have been developed from one of the reptiles that were formerly masters of the earth. What must have been the process? At one period, raised upon its hind legs, then applying rudimentary hands to offices in some respect resembling those to which the human hand is now applied, and exercising the control such an animal must have been capable of, and, of course, multiplying unchecked by those which were less developed. Why have we found no remains of these transformations? The author replies, that the organic phenomena of geology are widely separated, broken and disjointed. What? We have whole races, first appearing, then increasing, then disappearing and new races gradually taking their place—the trilobite, the nautilus, the fish, the fish-like saurian, the land saurian, the pachyderm, all separated by the most

most marked distinctions. Of every species relics have been disentombed. What is true of man, is true of the horse, of the ox, of the sheep. Where are their progenitors? Is it conceivable that, while those books of stone the author has so carefully inspected have faithfully rendered account of every one of these, they should not have afforded any, the slightest, record of the transition state? Strange they should have exhibited no Almost-a-Man, no Nearly-a-Horse, no transition-organization from the sheep to the cow. What is there to justify the author's conclusions? From analogies, real or supposed—from points of resemblance, no real support for his theory is gained. The form was governed by the object, and that was to a great extent common. That exquisite instrument, the eye, was supplied alike to the trilobite and to man—adapted indeed to the circumstances in which the animal lived—but was the eye still; all were provided with glands for secretion of nourishment. Some properties closely resembling those of animals are common even to the vegetable kingdom.

But do these facts involve relationship or affinity? In like manner the hands and the feet may, in different animals, bear a resemblance; the fin of the whale, for instance, to the human hand, because they were required for the same purpose. There is a unity in all the works of the Creator. They all bear the divine impress—animals and rocks alike gravitate to the earth; but is the animal, therefore, a development of the stone?

From the extinction of races nothing can be inferred, but a failure of the condition necessary to their existence, perhaps of their food, possibly from changes of the terrestial temperature. Since the creation of man, many animals have become extinct —the dodo, the Irish elk, probably the apteryx of New Zealand.

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These were unable to contend with man—he, then, too savage to protect the animals on which he subsisted. The bison of America and the elk of Canada must follow as the wolf of England did long since. Does any one suppose that these animals have been developed into other races?

The author, with great appearance of justice and probability, argues that the several conditions of vegetable and animal life on this globe resulted, not from separate and independent acts of the Creator, but that the periods or conditions under which they came into existence were ordered by Infinite intelligence before the creation of the world. But it does not, therefore, follow that their specific existences, one *after* the other, were the result of development one *from* another. It is just as consistent with the will of the Creator (however early expressed)—with the prescience of God—that altered conditions of the globe should call new creatures into primary existence as that they should descend from each other; and the records we have of the creation accord with this view. In the disclosures these records make, one class follows another, like the first and second sets of teeth in the animal; not as *development*, which includes a principle of progression, but as novel qualities of character. Distinctions are always preserved—always marked. All the fossil remains are as fully capable of classification, are as distinguishable from each other, as the various animal species that now occupy the earth.

The author of the 'Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation' observes—that a great deal has been discovered;—too much indeed for his theory. Why has the kangaroo of Australia produced no change—developed itself into no higher character?

If it be consistent with the author's views that the like should

should produce the like, except in extraordinary instances which present themselves in the course of ages, those extraordinary instances involve *that* which it is the object of his treatise to deny. They are occurrences against the order of nature—they *must* be special acts of the Creative Power.

ESSAY XIII.

A HISTORY OF FAILURES.

WOUNDED pride, a broken heart, and the injustice of mankind, have all tended to suppress a record of exertions that have ended in the ruin or disappointment of the projector. Such a history would nevertheless confer greater benefit upon mankind, and throw more light upon the difficult problems we desire to solve, than the self-gratulations that too commonly accompany the announcement of exertions which have been crowned with success, and in which the most valuable information is not unfrequently withheld.

Who can imagine the struggles which have been made by thousands of men of genius, whose names are unrecorded, and who have left this world under a cloud that has veiled their efforts, without feeling that rewards are in this life conferred by a Power whose mysterious designs we are unable to fathom? Who can contemplate the near approach many have made to the noblest discoveries, without believing that the knowledge of their

their experience would have enabled others to continue their inquiries with complete success? Who can be insensible of the importance of a knowledge of even entire failure, and of impediments to future progress that can never be removed?

We honour and esteem the illustrious adventurers who discovered the distribution of land and water on the earth's surface; who marked and surveyed the intricacies of harbours and shoals, and who have enabled the mariner to conduct his vessel, unharmed, to the most distant portions of the globe. What is the history these benefactors of mankind have left, but one of unnumbered failures and disappointments—nay, the very names by which they occasionally distinguished the places they have visited, such as Reid's Mistake and Cape Disappointment, proclaim what they have lost as well as what they have gained. What would be thought of a mariner if he were to destroy his charts, because the port he was in search of remained undiscovered?

We trace with jealous care the rejected lines of a Shakspeare and a Gray, why not the experiments which, though they have disappointed the inquirer, may yet enable him who follows to resolve a nebula or indicate the path of a comet? If the speculations of Newton had not been prosecuted by La Place, the perturbations of the planets and the precession of the equinoxes might for ever have remained undiscovered. Even the failure of the immediate object of the inquirer may be amply compensated by some unlooked for result. Villemain, in a lecture on the Middle Ages, in allusion to what he conceived to be the object of Columbus in prosecuting his voyages, observes, that though he failed to find the four rivers of Paradise, he discovered America.

From what can we derive greater benefit in our journey through

through life than from the knowledge we gain, not by our successes, but by the failure of our schemes? Knowledge that deeply, perhaps painfully, impressed on the mind, influences all our actions, becomes a monitor to restrain and direct our course, and truly constitutes the wisdom of age.

SECOND PART.

ESSAY XIV.

THE LATE BISHOP BROUGHTON.

IT is certainly not more true that the works of good men do follow them, than that the impression their virtues have made on the minds of those they are no longer able to benefit, is apt too soon to fade away.

Bishop Broughton has for ever departed from the scene in which, for many years, he acted a prominent part; and as few seem to be capable of appreciating his character, it may not be uninteresting to those who acknowledge, nor to those who question, the justness of many of his views, to call to remembrance, before the impression be entirely effaced, peculiarities of his mind and character on which his friends love to linger, and which those who do not admire, can hardly fail to respect.

None will deny the claim of Bishop Broughton to great learning and to mental endowments of a very high order; and many who at one time hesitated to subscribe to his opinions, became painfully sensible, after his departure from the colony, that the Church was no longer directed by the vigorous hand

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of a master. They *now* feel that it is not easy to repair the loss it has sustained by his death.

While labouring for the general welfare of the Church, Bishop Broughton never omitted to give due attention, even to those things which exclusively occupy little and ordinary minds, but which, affecting the comfort of the working clergy, ought assuredly not to be disregarded. Few, indeed, of those who most differed from him failed to acknowledge the charity with which he treated the infirmities of his Clergy, nor that their wants awakened a sympathy which, if not expressed by words, led at once to measures for their relief.

It may not be generally known that Bishop Broughton largely administered to the relief of even those who had no claim on him but their sorrows and their sufferings; and that, while he was too often called upon to chide their wanderings, he never failed to relieve their pain. If his manner was sometimes cold, his charity was never of that Levitical cast that begins and ends with a gentle expression of sympathy.

In the cause of education he was untiring, and he never felt that his obligations as a Bishop could be performed without especial regard for those who, without the fostering care of the Church, might too probably grow up in total ignorance of the principles and duties of Christianity.

As a Churchman, he entertained profound veneration for those great men who have ever been looked upon as models for imitation, and safe guides in the difficult duties that especially devolve upon the head of a remote colonial Church; and, however much parties might occasionally be disposed to question the soundness of his policy, his high character and firm consistency called forth a universal feeling of deference and respect.

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As the head of the Church, he was frequently called upon to act under circumstances of great difficulty. He was surrounded by a clergy not generally capable of advising him, some of whom, though now disposed to speak lightly of the dead, would have met any inquiry for counsel and co-operation by an obsequious expression of plenary reliance on the fulness of their Bishop's wisdom.

It was the failing of Bishop Broughton, that he too frequently allowed a rigid exterior to hide his warm and kindly heart; and in the belief that *few* could assist him with their advice, to forget that *any* could do so. It is also possible, that in repelling mountebank pretensions, not unfrequently dignified by the name of sanctity, he was too much disposed to seclude himself from the world in which he was called upon to act. He retired to the fastnesses of the past, instead of adapting himself to the requirements of the age in which he lived.

But whatever may have been his failings, he laboured zealously for the benefit of the Church—was ever more anxious for its success than his own interest or aggrandizement,—and was, least of all, capable of trafficking with its sacred offices or the rights and claims of the Clergy. This is the secret of that kindly feeling, the existence of which called forth an exclamation from lips that ought to have been sealed against the expression of opinions, especially when founded on data entitled to little consideration or respect.

But the memory of Bishop Broughton rests on too many acts of a nobly Christian character to require the aid of the panegyrist—acts that, when the bustle of novelty shall have passed away, will be justly appreciated, and will, in the ecclesiastical history of our adopted land, awaken undying respect for the first Bishop of the English Church in Australia.

ESSAY XV.

CHARITY.

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that you may be the children of your Father, which is in Heaven.—MATTHEW, v. 44, 45.

IF we were not under the highest obligation that can be imposed on Christians,—the commandment delivered by our Lord from the Mount of Olives,—charitably to bear with the infirmity of our neighbours, a very little reflection ought to satisfy us that a censorious spirit is as wicked as it is unwise, and that, although we ought on no account to defer our preparation for the life to come, we should never cease to hope that Divine grace may, even at the eleventh hour, awaken from their slumbers the most erring of the human race. The most abandoned of mankind, with all his infirmities and his guilt, may repent,—may through Divine grace be pardoned; may become an heir of eternal life, a joint heir with Christ. And can we withhold our pardon? We, whose whole lives in the sight of Him who

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"inspects the heart to its inmost folds," are but a series of acts requiring forgiveness?

But he may die in his sins, may receive the judgment of eternal death; how solemn,—how terrible a subject for our contemplation!—how poor, how vain, to add to the inconceivable penalty the mite of our wrath.

"Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."—1 Cor., xiii. 3.

ESSAY XVI.

THE SHORTNESS OF HUMAN LIFE.

Our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.—
1 CHRONICLES, xxix. 15.

THIS feature in the present condition of the world is strikingly developed by everything that presents itself to the eye, by every circumstance that addresses itself to the understanding.

In the vegetable world all is active progression towards maturity and decay; not a leaf but reads a lesson to the human heart, and tells us that we have not a moment to lose. In the animal kingdom the earliest gambols of the young are fraught with the same moral; and however happy the thoughtless being may seem during its little hour, all its movements proclaim that it is hastening to an end.

And what is human life? With aspirations that eternity only can satisfy, we are the tenants of bodies subject to innumerable infirmities; we are, even in the happiest circumstances, incapable of penetrating the higher mysteries of nature, and are fast

fast tending to the termination of the scene in which we are here called upon to act—to a state in which the things of this life have no part.

Is the soul, then, immortal?—who at some period or other of his life has not asked himself this question? And who could ever deliberately answer it in the negative? The body may, like the garment,—the circumstances in which we are placed,—be changed, be laid aside, but who could ever seriously doubt that death is a mere step in the process by which the great object of our being is attained?

A conviction of the immortality of the soul is impressed alike on the scholar and the peasant, the Christian and the untaught child of nature, and unconsciously presides over every operation of the mind. Whence the anxiety so many, even of bad men feel, that their names should be handed down to posterity, but that they have an instinctive assurance that they can never cease to be? If our souls, like the matter of which the body is composed, were returned to the great laboratory whence are extracted the materials out of which all things are constructed, why cherish a hope that our former being should be kept in remembrance? why desire that an incident should be connected with a body that had been dissolved—with a name that had perished for ever?

How well is this universal dictate of nature calculated to prepare the human mind,—the immortal soul—for the truths disclosed by the Author of our existence,—for the Scriptures, which have recorded the history of our being, declared to us the Divine will, explained to us the scheme of our redemption!

ESSAY XVII.

TIME.

One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.—2 PETER, iii. 8.

SO subtle, so evanescent is the present moment, philosophically considered, that we can contemplate its existence only in the past. Before the mind can be brought to the consideration, nay, the knowledge of an event, it is with the events that occurred a thousand years ago.

If the sun were, by the fiat of the Creator, obliterated in an instant, we should behold his splendour, receive his beams, nay distinguish the spots on his surface for eight minutes, unconscious of the change; and if we could visit those inconceivably more remote bodies which science has discovered, and look down on this planet, unaffected by impediments arising from the intervening space, we should witness a procession of events now beyond the records of history. If we were to make our observations from one of the more distant stars, we should see the festivities

vities with which the completion of the Pyramids was celebrated by the monarchs of Egypt. Retreating to regions still more remote, we should behold not only the newly-created man before his expulsion from Paradise, but even this world at a period long anterior to its occupation by the human race—to the creation of the coralline limestone—to the first volcanic emergence of the land above the waters of the ocean.

"O Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

ESSAY XVIII.

ETERNITY.

Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.—PSALM, cii. 25, 26, 27.

OF eternity we can form no adequate idea. Whatever light we may derive from metaphysical definitions, founded on supposed analogies in nature, or from the refined processes of numerical combination, we feel how vain is the attempt to fathom the profound abyss. The consideration, however, of the inconceivable difference, in point of duration, between the period allotted by the Author of the Universe to each individual creature for the exercise of the functions of animal life, and that required for the revolution of the heavenly bodies, may assist the vague conceptions with which we are too apt to be satisfied on the subject.

Thoughtlessly as we behold the insect that passes through the

the various stages of its being in a single day, *its* life, when compared with *that* of the most aged patriarch, extends over a period inconceivably greater than *his*, when compared with the time occupied by a single revolution of those bodies, which, though moving with the utmost velocity, have, from being apparently confined to the same unvarying spot in the heavens, been denominated the fixed stars.

Sir William Herschel demonstrated, what had long been suspected by astronomers,—the progressive movement of the sun through space; and M. Maedler, the Russian astronomer, from an extensive series of observations, came to the conclusion that what are called the fixed stars revolve round a body which forms their common centre—that to this system as well as to ours the Newtonian law of attraction applies; and he conceived Alcyone, the brightest of the Pleiades, to be the true central sun.

It has been computed, that the mass of this star is more than one hundred million times that of our luminary,—that its light is upwards of five hundred years in travelling to us,—and that a single revolution of our Sun round that body requires a period of eighteen millions of years.

That this stupendous machinery should have been intended for the performance of a single revolution cannot be conceived: and it is extremely improbable, that the objects for which it was created should be finally attained even in a thousand of such revolutions; and yet, for the performance of a thousand revolutions, eighteen thousand millions of years would be required, a period which, vast as it now appears to us, is lost in comparison with eternity—is nothing to the duration of the soul.

How inconceivable is it, that man, who has received from his Creator the power of contemplating such tremendous symbols of infinity,

infinity,—of bringing within his vision bodies so remote, and of investigating the laws by which they are sustained and impelled—should, in the pursuit of objects alike transitory and unworthy, lay aside his hopes of eternal life!

We grasp with eagerness at the bubbles that present themselves during our short sojourn here, unmindful that we shall survive the wreck of this mighty creation, recur to it as a tale that is told,—as a point that may be confounded with the life of the ephemera.

We look with contempt upon the insect, and stand with awe before the Pyramids of Egypt, without considering that all trace of both, and even of the histories that record their existence, will, during a single revolution of the heavenly bodies, have disappeared.

On fallen man, placed in a state of probation, Divine Providence has imposed an easy yoke and a light burden—has enabled him, during his transitory life on this earth, to lay hold of that hope—to exercise that faith which, unmeritorious as they are, infinite mercy has made the sole condition of his admission to eternal happiness; but with that condition we feel a strange reluctance to comply, or like Naaman unaccountably resist.

"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"—Mark, viii. 36.

ESSAY XIX.

THE PHYSICAL SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.—ROMANS, viii. 18.

NOTHING indicates a lower conception of the character of Christ than the lamentations in which so many indulge when contemplating his physical sufferings upon the Cross.

His physical sufferings may not have been greater than those of his disciples; than those of thousands of human beings; than those which the American Indian and the disciple of Vishnou voluntarily submit to with unshrinking fortitude; than those which the thieves who were crucified with him endured upon the Cross, and who survived to have their legs broken in the evening.

The intenseness of his agony was occasioned by his knowledge that the love which had induced him to leave the glories of heaven, and to take upon himself our nature, had too commonly appealed in vain to the human heart;—that his teaching was,

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in too many instances rejected by the perishing souls it was the great object of his mission to save.

"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children," was his address to the women who bewailed and lamented his fate.

It was this deeply-seated grief that burst forth in the affecting apostrophe, at the sight of the devoted city of Judea, which is recorded by St. Matthew:—

"O Jerusalem, Jesusalem! thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee: how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your house is left unto you desolate!" And that which we find in St. Luke:—

"And when he came near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but, now, they are hid from thine eyes."

"God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—John, iv. 24.

ESSAY XX.

THE AGENCY OF THE DEVIL.

Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour.—1 PETER, v. 8.

IF we rightly understand from the Scriptures, that our Arch-enemy is permitted to use every art of temptation to turn us from the path that leads to eternal life, we ought to look for his most strenuous exertions where his influence would naturally be least suspected—to believe, that it would be his great object to poison the spring at its source,—to enlist under his banners the schoolmaster that should bring us to Christ, the teachers and professors of religion; and we find accordingly that in this direction he has ever been most actively engaged, —most unhappily successful.

In the early ages, when Christianity was only shadowed out by types and symbols, craft, idolatry, and infidelity soon began to make their appearance among the Jewish priests. The respect challenged by their rank and sacred character inflamed their pride, and gradually led to acts and demands, so plainly opposed

opposed to the principles of the Divine law, that they were compelled to have recourse to traditions, by which they, at once, overawed the ignorant and strengthened their own general influence.

These traditions had, at the time of our Lord's coming, obtained so vast an ascendency, that they not only made the commandments of none effect, but, in some instances, enabled the priesthood to justify their direct infringement.

From the natural tendencies to veneration in the human mind, the effect of these pretensions to a profound knowledge oftraditional subtleties was to draw the multitude into a blind submission to the dictates of the priests, and to open the way to idolatry. With the thinking and the well informed, scepticism was the consequence; and this was eventually carried to such an extent that a large and influential sect of the Jews openly denied the immortality of the soul, and taught that there was no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit.

When the profession of Christianity ceased to be attended by the persecutions to which its early converts were subjected—when it became the religion of States and Empires—then the worldlings flocked to its standard, and we find the same enemy actively employing, in the Christian Church, the means which had been so successful with the Jewish priesthood.

Inflated with pride, and not unmixed with the superstitions of the heathen nations, the Church, even in the time of the Apostles, afforded the most redundant evidence that all who went out from us were not of us.

The throne of Rome was filled by one who claimed to be the successor of St. Peter; the Scriptures were closed; the signs and lying wonders foretold by our Lord were prepared to entrap the unwary, and, if it were possible, to deceive the very elect. The traditions

traditions of the Fathers were substituted for the word of God, and a blind obedience was again imposed on the people.

But there were ever found knees that had not bowed to Baal; and when the idolatry of Rome had arrived at the height that God permitted, then came the Reformation. The traditions were rejected—the lying wonders discarded; the gospel was preached to the poor. The Sermon, delivered by our Lord from the Mount of Olives, was made the rule of our faith, and all classes were allowed, like the Bereans, to search the Scriptures whether those things were so.

But the Church to be healthy must also be militant; and no sooner does she settle down into peace, than the Arch-enemy is again actively employed in the work of evil. Rome, on the one hand, holds out to her followers the fascinating reward of an indemnity against the consequences of their neglects and transgressions; while, on the other hand, the Protestant Church has begun to insist more emphatically on the Apostolical succession than the Apostolical practice, and to perplex her children with fasts and bowings, candles and crosses; calling upon them to surrender to their Creator everything but that mysterious combination of amiable weaknesses and evil affections—the human heart.

Pride and vanity and ambition can have no place in the struggle of poor humanity to enter in at the strait gate which leadeth unto life.

"Pure religion and undefiled is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."—JAMES, i. 27.

ESSAY XXI.

THE DEFINITION OF MYSTERIES.

Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?—JOB, xi. 7.

NOTHING can be more inconsistent with the finite powers of man than his assumption of a right to dogmatize on the mysterious character and designs of the Creator; nothing less creditable to our self-knowledge than to pronounce judgment upon others, whose conclusions, on these high subjects, do not correspond with our own; but that the Scriptures, in which we read that even Michael the Archangel, when contending with the devil, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, should have been used as a warrant for enforcing religious opinions by persecution, nothing short of actual observation, or the most authentic testimony, could induce an enlightened mind to believe.

The greatest mystery that man is permitted to contemplate is, his redemption from the consequences of his fall—his restoration to the favour of his Maker. Of the future and eternal condition

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of the soul we are assured by Scripture; but of the power—the being of the Creator, we are utterly incapable of forming an estimate—Omnipotent!—Omnipresent!—"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me."

Yet, to this ever-present—this infinitely powerful Being, vain man has ventured to assign a nature—to confound Him with substance and with person—to divide—to unite—to describe!

If the definition of these mysteries had been essential to the salvation of our souls, how certainly would our Redeemer have supplied the want! but behold his doctrine—observe his injunctions: "No man hath seen God at any time. Judge not, that ye be not judged. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." And "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

If, after his resurrection, it became necessary to explain more fully subjects so remote from human apprehension, who so competent to perform the task as our Saviour's immediate followers—his inspired disciples? But they did not venture to expound mysteries which our limited powers are incapable of grasping. Their earnest injunction was, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Who less fitted to act as our interpreters than those who were brought up amidst the wrangling disputations which existed at the time of Athanasius?

The faith of the Christian is not evidenced by his skill in defining mysteries, but by his practical character, by that wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy—by love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance.

What are the fruits of the dogmas which have emanated from those who are denominated the Fathers of the Church? controversies in which the most angry passions of our nature have been awakened—in which the signs of faith pointed out by our Lord have been lost sight of;—in which gentleness and long-suffering have been offered up at the shrine of pride, ambition, and vanity; and in which damnation has been impiously hurled upon the heads of many, endeavouring, by the light of the Gospel, to find the narrow way, and that, for the alleged misunderstanding of mysteries which the Creator of the universe—the Redeemer of mankind, has not seen proper to unroll.

It is so congenial to the feelings of our human nature to be able to substitute, for our own responsibility, the authoritative declarations of the Church, that to this fatal source may be traced many of our most serious delusions.

Like Christian, on his journey to the Celestial City, we fancy that, with the roll in our bosom, we may venture to take a nap by the way. But the duty of the Christian is progress; he is ever to press forward on his journey — never relying on anything that he has gained—never forgetting the task he has to perform, but running like St. Paul to the close, lest that by any means he himself should be a castaway.

"Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein."—LUKE, xviii. 17.

ESSAY XXII.

BAPTISM.

And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid him not; for he that is not against us is for us.—LUKE, ix. 49, 50.

WHO that has heard the facts disclosed by Mr. Gorham's case, could persuade himself that the reverend prelate who refused to institute a preacher of the Gospel to a benefice, to which he had been presented, ever read these words? And who, without being deeply versed in the deceitfulness of the human heart, could have conceived that the concluding text should in an age, in which even the dark chambers of the Inquisition are closed, be applicable to professors of Christianity—to dignitaries of the Church? But so it is, that the wisdom and learning of this world, while they have shed a bland influence over man as a social being, have done nothing towards eradicating that evil spirit which prompted the disciples of our Lord to entreat his permission to command fire to come down from heaven and

consume the Samaritans. Nor can any dispassionate person deny that the rebuke of our Lord is as justly due to the professors of Christianity in this age, as it was to his immediate followers, nor hesitate to conclude that we, like them, know not what manner of spirit we are of; that we are still unmindful that the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them, and that he wase specially tender in pronouncing judgment upon those who were ignorant of his intentions.

Without entering upon the question between Mr. Gorham and the Bishop of Exeter, a Christian can hardly believe that it is consistent with the mercy and goodness of God,—with the declarations of our Lord—that our salvation should depend upon a rite, the performance of which involves no exercise of consciousness on the part of the object to be benefited,—the performance of which may, owing to the carelessness of those who are intrusted with the infant, be long neglected, perhaps wholly omitted. The opposite conclusion would at all events ~~scarcely~~ seem to be supported by the dealings of God with the early converts to Christianity, on whom the Holy Spirit descended without the previous observance of this ceremony.

But if the rite of baptism were essential to our salvation, how was it that the most zealous of the Apostles,—he who was made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some; he who especially devoted himself to the conversion of the Gentiles, and who must frequently have been their sole visitor, allowed the fear of being charged with having substituted his own name for our Lord's to interfere with its performance?—Nay, that he thanked God that he had baptized none save Crispus and Gaius and the household of Stephanus?

No doubt it was of the highest importance that Paul should be always understood to preach that in which he gloried, the Cross

Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world was crucified unto him, and he unto the world; but if the most perfect knowledge of the object of our Lord's mission, the fullest compliance with his injunctions, could not save the Christian converts without the rite of baptism, would the Apostle have allowed the possibility of misapprehension in their minds to interfere with its performance?

What is the rite of baptism? The Church Catechism describes it to be a ceremony, in which the sponsors promise that the infant shall renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of the world, and the lusts of the flesh; that he shall believe the Articles of the Christian Faith, and keep God's holy will and commandments; and it proceeds to say, that these promises the infant is bound to perform. Now, is it the performance of the rite by the minister, or of the promises by the infant, that is so necessary to salvation? Surely a doubt, on a subject of so much importance, ought not to rest upon the mind of a believer in the divine mission of the Redeemer of the world.

"What think ye?" (asked our Lord of the chief priests and elders) "a certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterwards he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father?" And, that there should be no possible ground for misapprehension, he added, "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." That is, that those who never even professed obedience to the will of God, but, like the elder son, openly rebelled against him when, like him, they repented, should be received into the kingdom of God, before

before the formal and professing chief priests and elders of the Jewish Church.

The question of circumcision and the keeping of the law of Moses was afterwards determined by the Apostles and Elders of the Church at Jerusalem, to whom it was referred, apparently on the same ground. With the Jewish rites we have no concern; but the determination of the question by the Apostles was founded upon the acknowledgment that "God, which knoweth the heart, bare them" (the converts from the Gentiles) "witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us" (the Jewish converts); "and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith,"—they believing that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ they should be saved.

It was not with any neglect in the performance of the rite of baptism that Mr. Gorham was charged, but merely with entertaining incorrect views of its operation upon the soul of the infant,—and for such an error, real or supposed, he was, by hundreds of professing Christians and preachers of the Gospel, thought to be unworthy to call sinners to repentance—to go into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in,—to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and to call unto their rest all that labour and are heavy laden!

"God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are."—Luke, xviii. 11.

ESSAY XXIII.

THE BURIAL SERVICE.

As concerning, therefore, the eating of those things, that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.—1 COR., viii. 4.

Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake.—1 COR., x. 25.

NOTHING is more striking in the teaching of our Lord and of his disciples and Apostles, than the earnestness with which the one thing needful is insisted upon, and the indifference with which the rites and ceremonies, on which the self-righteous have in all ages laid so much stress, are invariably treated.

Never, perhaps, had idolatry acquired such general influence over the mind, as at the time of our Lord's advent; and superficial observers might have expected that he would make it the subject of a direct attack, and guard his disciples against it by formal rules and prohibitions. This, however, would have been inconsistent with the comprehensive spirit of his doctrines which

which formed a strong contrast, though a beautifully-connected sequel, to the minute provisions of the mosaic law. It was not the worship of idols that our Saviour thought worthy of particular notice, but a more deeply-seated and subtle delusion, the worship of self, and those tendencies to self-righteousness, which, like the tares sown by the enemy amongst the wheat, had found a fertile soil in the depravity of the human heart. We find, therefore, that the eating of meat, which had actually been offered or dedicated to idols was prohibited only when it became a stumbling-block to those Christians who were so weak and so ill-informed in the religion they professed, as to confound things so unimportant with those that affected their eternal interest.

If, when Christianity was so partially understood, so artfully misrepresented, as it was at the time when the Apostles preached, the early converts were sufficiently informed of its grand principles to entitle them to be treated, not as babes in knowledge, but as men—what a fearful responsibility must attach to us, who live in an age and belong to a community in which the inspired writings are open to all, if we remain satisfied with less enlarged views of our spiritual and practical duties; and if our ignorance of that true light which has come into the world, be attributable to those who are especially appointed to watch over our eternal interests, how assuredly shall we rise up in judgment against them!

These reflections were occasioned by the printed address of a clergyman to his parishioners, the object of which was to justify himself for refusing to read the Burial Service over a child, whose father was desirous of having it deposited in his own vault, a vault which already contained another member of the same family.

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The reverend gentleman, in his letter, refers to the minutes of a conference held at Sydney by the six Bishops of the province, and directs the attention of his parishioners to the following resolutions :—

"4. Church Membership.—We acknowledge, as members of the Church of England, all persons who, having been duly baptized with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are conformable to the doctrine, government, rites, and ceremonies contained in the Book of Prayer; it being understood that they are entitled to claim, at the hands of its Ministers, the rites and ceremonies of our Church, so long only as they shall continue conformable to the extent above required."

"7. Ministering to Dissenters.—We are of opinion that the general principle of colonial legislation, by which the equality of all religious denominations is recognised, releases the clergy of the Church of England in these colonies from the obligation to perform religious services for persons who are not members of our own Church."

He then proceeds to explain that the Church, being authorized "to loose and to bind," does not fulfil her mission when she fails to exercise a godly discipline over her members by rejecting the disobedient from her communion. "Nothing," adds the reverend gentleman, "can be more incongruous than admitting those who disclaim their faith in the Church, to the participation of those privileges of which she is the divinely-constituted dispenser."

But who, it will be asked, was the apostate who had so utterly blasted his child, that its body was not allowed to moulder in his own vault beside that of its deceased sister? What odious offence had he committed, that disentitled him to the

the sympathy of the priest, and left him to the mercy of the Samaritan? He was a duly-baptized member of the Church of England, a large contributor to its temporal means, and in that Church had duly baptized his child; but, disapproving of the introduction into its services of forms and ceremonies which he had never conceived to be sanctioned by the Protestant Church, and which, he feared, might in the minds of his children be confounded with the superstitious rites of the Church of Rome, he had determined, for a time, to attend the chapel of an evangelical Scotch minister: and for this offence the reverend gentleman refused the privilege his Church was divinely constituted to dispense, of allowing what had been the temple of the Holy Ghost to be placed in the tomb which had been provided for its reception!

If this had been a solitary instance of the refusal by a clergyman to perform the service, appointed to be read over a body which had been brought to the church for interment, an impression might have been entertained, that, amongst the servants of the Church, one at least was found, who had not on the wedding-garment; but as the case is not without something like a parallel, and as the reverend gentleman has attempted to vindicate his conduct by deferring to the judgment of the Bishops in conference assembled, it may not be out of place to make a few reflections on the subject.

The ceremony which the Church has directed to be used, on committing a body to the earth, may be divided into three parts.

First.—Reflections on the shortness of human life, and the certainty of death.

Secondly.—The committing of the body to the earth.

Thirdly.—The expression of a hope that the departed soul is amongst the redeemed.

Is a clergyman who thinks that a defect in orthodoxy on the part of the deceased, or of the relatives of the deceased, a sufficient justification for refusing to perform this ceremony over one who, withdrawn from the scenes of this life, awaits the judgment of Him in whose eye there is no beam, guilty of no inconsistency, when he performs it over an abandoned profligate? one who for years may have neglected public and apparently all other worship, and who was perhaps hurried from scenes of debauchery to the presence of an offended Judge,—nay, professes a hope that *such* deceased brother may, at the general resurrection, be found acceptable in the sight of God? Professes a hope which charity itself can hardly entertain, but would shrink from the responsibility of pronouncing the same words over the body of Dr. Doddridge or of Dr. Isaac Watts!

It is, therefore, impossible that the unwillingness to perform the ceremony can arise from a doubt, whether it should be used on the interment of one who has left this world without the full assurance of the remission of his sins; and we can hardly attribute to the bigots of the darkest age a desire, by the omission of the ceremony, to exclude from all hope of pardon the soul, even of the most erring.

To those who, like St. Paul, desire to be instant in season and out of season, what better opportunity can a clergyman have of addressing his hearers with effect, than that afforded by the solemn scene, in which they may possibly part for ever from the being whom they would, perhaps, have laid down their lives to save? What more favourable opportunity of bringing back the wanderer to his fold,—an occasion, when even the thoughtless and the profane have, at least for a moment, had torn from their eyes the veil that has shut out the scenes that lie beyond the grave,—a time when the most stubborn, softened by

by sorrow, is anxious to believe that the object of his affections is not for ever removed from his sight,—a time at which he is compelled to feel that he too is mortal, and that within a very short period a group will assemble round his grave,—will hear the sound of his kindred earth falling upon his own body, and will there leave him to await the judgment of his Maker on a life of folly and of crime?

It is surely important that the last relics of our mortality should be solemnly consigned to that earth to which they have already returned; and what is so likely to impress the deeply-interested spectators of such a scene as the expression of a hope that the immortal principle which so lately animated the body has been redeemed by the Saviour of the World, and by him led back to the bosom of its Father and its God.

Surely, the desire cannot be wanting, that the departed soul may be numbered with the redeemed! If an infant, however it may have been nurtured, if of maturer age, however unsound the doctrines of the Church he frequented may be thought!

If indeed a minister of the Gospel has no such desire, he may find, too late, that his own claim for admission into the kingdom of our heavenly Father may be met by the awful words with which these observations are closed:—

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."—MATT., XXV. 41.

ESSAY XXIV.

APOSTOLICAL SUCCESSION.

Now I say that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you?—1 COR., i. 12, 13.

ON looking into the records the Apostles have left of the life and doctrines of our Lord, and of their own conduct in executing the commission given them to preach the kingdom of God, we become deeply conscious that the light that hath shined in our hearts, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," is indeed a treasure contained "in earthen vessels,"—that "the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us;" and when we observe that the Apostles have in their writings unreservedly recorded their own errors and infirmities, we are made painfully sensible of the contrast between *their* humility and the arrogance of those who style themselves their Successors, and are led to inquire on what ground the claim of those who appropriate to themselves

themselves this title, rests. We are induced to ask whether its validity is to be determined by the Scriptures or the Church, by the Gospel of our Lord and the writings of his disciples, or by the decrees of ecclesiastical councils?

It may, however, be proper, first to inquire what those who claim the title, contend they have succeeded to.

Why were the Apostles selected? What were their qualifications? They were not perfect, but they were humble and they were holy, at least with the exception of *one*, of whom none claims to be the successor.

That the priests of our time have inherited the miraculous powers which our Lord conferred upon his Apostles, no member of a Protestant Church will, we think, contend. They certainly have not succeeded to the virtues that pre-eminently fitted the Apostles to preach to all people the glad tidings of salvation.

If the model they have set up for imitation be the Fathers, they should have concealed from us, before demanding acknowledgment of their pretensions, the history of the squabbles and wranglings of the early leaders of the Christian Church; they should have exhibited the relics rather than the histories of their Saints, and have amused the fancy rather than exercised the understanding and the judgment. Unhappily, the lives of the Fathers disclose contentions fatal to their claim to light up the narrow way pointed out by our Lord for the guidance of his true disciples. Not only do we read in ecclesiastical history of differences of opinion among the early rulers of the Church on the most vital matters, but, alas! we find those same rulers invoking Divine wrath upon each other, and condemning each other's teaching as false and damnable.

The Protestant clergy, conscious of the sins and errors of that Church

Church which burnt the Bible and excavated the dungeons of the Inquisition, which substituted for the teaching of Christ the dogmas of a corrupt priesthood, for the test of truth the concealment of the prison, profess to have regulated their faith and opinions by the alleged agreement of the Fathers during the first two or three centuries of the Christian era, and before the Church was corrupted by the practices that too early sprang up amongst those who professed the religion of Jesus. But, alas! we find it recorded by St. John that even in *his* time, five of the Seven Churches of Asia had fallen from the faith; and the other two afforded fatal evidence of the melancholy shortness of their Christian career.

Why should Christians trouble themselves about the Fathers, men who are entitled to respect only when they agree with the infallible rules that Christ has laid down for our guidance? Why endeavour to augment that light which requires no addition, to add to that grace which is sufficient for all? Why neglect the warning we have received against false teachers, who privily should bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and whose pernicious ways we are assured that many should follow?

Were the Fathers better than the immediate followers of our Lord? Were they less affected by human infirmities—more perfectly devoted to the office they had undertaken—more holy and blameless in their lives? Yet even of the Apostles, we find recorded that on the solemn occasion of our Lord's communicating to them his approaching death, "There was strife amongst them which should be the greatest;" and how soon afterwards was Peter guilty of his memorable denial of his Lord and Master, and again at Antioch of desertion of the Gentiles, from whom a fear of the Jews induced him to withdraw, and which

which drew down from St. Paul severe and merited reproof! Even of Paul there is recorded an unseemly contention with Barnabas.

If in the natures, but partially subdued, of even these noble-minded Christians, there lingered so much of human infirmity, what could be expected of their converts?

Surely, true successors of the Apostles would have laboured to maintain the primitive simplicity of faith and the earnest zeal of the disciples of our Lord. They would not have incumbered those it was their duty to guide in the path of their Divine Master with dogmas and barren subtleties, nor made them parties in the quarrels and disputations that too early convulsed Christian society.

If the Holy Scriptures were found sufficient for all purposes of doctrine and discipline by the early Christians,—those who had actually listened to the preaching of our Lord and His Apostles, or those whose conversion to Christianity had taken place before the earnest appeals of the friends and companions of Christ's disciples had been forgotten, and their doctrines confounded with the fanciful theories and the corrupt practices of the Jewish Doctors, or the philosophy of the Heathen, how vigilantly should *we* guard against the delusions which took their rise amongst the controversialists of a later and a darker age,—how jealously should *we* look at the dogmas of men, framed often with a view to the suppression of some temporary heretical opinion of their day! How guardedly should we listen to arguments, which having no application to the general faith and condition of the Christian world, may, at a period when even the name of the heresy or the hallucination they were intended to combat has passed away, lead the mind to conclusions the controversialist never contemplated! Compare that declaration

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of faith, which from its antiquity is called the Apostles' Creed, with the Athanasian and Nicene symbols. How wide apart are the too frequently captious restrictions in the two latter, from the simplicity, breadth, and true Catholicity of the earlier declaration of faith. It has been said that the latter creeds are but the extension of the Apostles' Creed; but where in the Apostles' Creed is it alleged that Christ was begotten of the Father before all worlds? Where that he was of one substance with the Father,— that he was not made nor created, but begotten? Where that a union of God and man are one Christ? If the Scriptures are plain and explicit on these mysterious subjects, why dogmatize? If the creeds are not supported by the Scriptures, they are the inventions of men and not the word of God. At best they result from a presumptuous desire to define mysteries that the human mind is incapable of comprehending, and like all such unhallowed attempts, have thrown a stumbling-block in the way of those who might otherwise have humbly followed the course enjoined by the Redeemer of the world. They have rent the Church—have split Christian society into a thousand sects and factions, and have delivered the government of God's worshippers to parties who prefer the recondite definition of mysteries to the simple preaching of Christian grace.

Unwarrantable and mistaken views of mysteries that are placed beyond our comprehension have led to more strife about unimportant things, more disunion amongst Christians, more unhappy divisions into sects, than all that the armies of infidelity have achieved.

As might naturally be expected, in proportion to the remoteness of the time of Our Lord's advent upon earth from the periods at which the creeds were framed, the more widely the authors of them have departed from that declaration of faith

at once simple and comprehensive, the adoption of which, in the earliest ages of the Church, distinguished the believer in the doctrines of Christianity from the infidel and the idolater.

In composing creeds or symbols of doctrine, the object should have been not irreverently to ascend into heaven, and there pronounce categorically the degrees of relationship which subsist between Divine and incorporeal beings, but humbly to express, for the practical use of the Christian, those essential articles of faith which our Lord taught to the humble auditors that ever surrounded him. This is clearly and amply effected in the Apostles' Creed. What is a creed but a declaration of belief? *Belief* is not *knowledge:* it involves a *doubt.* "Believing and doubting," observes a modern writer, "are correlative terms;" yet the compilers of the Athanasian Creed have ventured to exclude from salvation all who do not faithfully hold the dogmas they themselves held—all who do not *believe* to be true, that which the authors of the Creed themselves could only express as matters of *belief.*

"The Fathers as a body," says Mr. De Quincey, "are chargeable with antichristian practices of a twofold order; sometimes, as supporting their great cause in a spirit alien to its own, retorting in a tone not less uncharitable than that of their opponents; sometimes, again, as adopting arguments that are unchristian in their ultimate grounds: resting upon errors the refutation of errors: upon superstitions the overthrow of superstitions; and drawing upon the armouries of darkness for weapons, that to be durable ought to have been of celestial temper. Alternately, in short, the Fathers trespass against those affections which furnish to Christianity its moving powers, and against those truths which furnish to Christianity its guiding lights."

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In Christ's teaching we find that the principles He inculcated, instead of being involved in mystery, were simplified and systematically brought down to the level of the meanest capacities,—ever led to the justest sense of human infirmities, and were illustrated by examples which the humblest and most unlettered disciple could fully comprehend. The Prodigal Son, the Dying Beggar, the Unjust Steward, the Good Samaritan, and finally that Universal Prayer he bequeathed his followers, all—without doctrinal subtlety or metaphysical reasoning—appeal directly to the universal heart and the universal understanding.

Let us then adopt the earnest advice of St. Paul to Timothy, not to "give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith," and beware lest we be found with those who "turn aside into vain jangling, desiring to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm."

"Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."—Matt., iii. 8, 9.

ESSAY XXV.

REPENTANCE OF NECESSITY PROGRESSIVE.

And one of the malefactors which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.—LUKE, xxiii. 39, 40, 41, 42, & 43.

FEW passages in Holy Writ have been the subject of greater misapprehension, or led to more fatal delusion, than those which stand at the head of this paper.

By the worldly-minded, who are unable to exclude from their thoughts the apprehension of a future judgment, but who are too much devoted to the pursuits they are engaged in, to conform to the rules laid down in the Scriptures for our guidance, they have always been thought to afford the assurance that the full repentance which secures forgiveness may be accomplished in a moment. It has been imagined that there is a tendency in the example

example given on so solemn an occasion as that on which our Lord finished his mission on earth, to show that the devotion of a whole life to the hopes that lie beyond this world cannot be expected of frail humanity, and is perhaps even unnecessary.

This view of the sudden reformation of the thief is one too commonly entertained by sincere Christians, and they tremble only lest the moment of repentance should be cut off. But, surely, neither the worldling nor the Christian is warranted in arriving at such a conclusion, nor entitled to slumber on the belief that a transition from enmity against God to Christian holiness can be so suddenly effected.

To the Christian the error, if it be one, is of more moment in a theoretical than in a moral point of view. To the man of the world, it is one of infinite concern. He may find, too late, the slender ground on which he rests his hope of pardon slip from under him, and the support springing from these words altogether imaginary.

On what ground is the suddenness of the repentance of the thief assumed? What is the evidence of the wickedness of his life? His condemnation by a legal tribunal? With the example of that of our Lord before us, we need hardly stop to consider the careless manner in which justice was administered by the rulers of Judea, nor to recollect the indifference to human suffering which prevailed throughout the whole world at that time. The manner indeed in which criminal law was within the last century administered in Christian England, ought to warn us against too much reliance on the judgment even of a British tribunal. But the thief, it will be urged, acknowledged his guilt. What did he acknowledge—an offence that involved entire moral obliquity? Certainly not. He acknowledged what he might have conceived to be a just judgment on a life he, if indeed a penitent, felt

felt to be stained with crime and rebellion against his God. But suppose he had really been convicted of a crime of such turpitude as to justify the penalty of death: suppose that crime to have been murder—what then? Had he no under current of feeling that might have brought him to the throne of Grace? Was there no circumstance that might tend to mitigate the horror and indignation of righteous Christians at the deed? Who that knows the depravity of his own heart—that mysterious compound of good and evil, can venture to pronounce that such was not the case? Let us imagine that this crucified offender was an obscure, humble, and uncrowned David—will erring human judgment dare affirm that the forgiveness our Lord pronounced might not as certainly have been accorded to his whole life as that pardon which was conveyed to the Jewish monarch through the prophet Nathan?

It is our crimes that pronounce upon us the fatal judgment; and we can conceive of no restoration to the favour of a holy and just God, without deep and earnest and abiding repentance of our guilt.

The conversion of St. Paul may be thought to support the view that is generally taken of the sudden penitence and forgiveness of the thief; but there is no analogy between the circumstances which attended the misdirected devotion of that holy man and the supposed vicious career of the latter, to warrant such a conclusion. That Paul was grievously mistaken and fearfully misled, none can doubt, still less his sincerity in the cause he believed it his duty to support. "I verily thought with myself," said that earnest man, "that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." His conversion was but the direction of a holy zeal into its proper channel.

If the history of the Penitent Thief presents only another example

example of the frailty of those who in a life comparatively blameless, are found to deny their Lord—who are carried by impulses into the commission of crime—farewell to the soothing hopes which the vicious and the careless entertain of a late but effectual repentance; farewell to a pardon only to be secured when vice shall have lost her charms, when the self-deluded victim shall be no longer interested in the world he is about to leave, when his day of probation shall have closed! What, when awakened to a sense of his awful condition, shall he have to fall back upon? Not on years of devotion in the service of his Maker, chequered indeed by the infirmities of his whole life, but like the rich man who enlarged his barns—like him who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day—the remembrance only of a life spent in the gratification of his appetites.

"Whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."—2 Peter, ii. 3.

ESSAY XXVI.

IDLE WORDS.

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.—MATT., xii. 36.

WE turn from this startling declaration with the hope, if not the belief, that a record will not be kept by the Almighty of the inconceivable number of "idle words" spoken from the earliest age by the whole human race.

But a very slight examination of the works of the Creator will effectually correct this delusion, and convince us that we have nothing to hope from the failure of that Eye which is never closed, of that Arm which alike sustains the heavenly bodies in their noiseless but mighty revolutions, and provides for the wants of creatures so minute as, without the aid of a microscope, to be invisible to the human eye.

If the works of the Almighty which surround us fail to awaken a sense of the Divine Infinity—if their ten thousand voices have been addressed to us in vain, an inquiry into that bygone

bygone condition of the earth which the researches of the geologists have disclosed will afford too conclusive evidence of the control exercised by Omnipotent Intelligence over things apparently unimportant to leave any lingering hope that a thought, however idle, however transitory, can fail to bear its record to the "Judge of all the earth."

Even the contemplation of the powers of memory with which God has endowed us ought to impress us with a more exalted sense of His unceasing vigilance—powers which for years have not only preserved the evidence of thousands of occurrences we have witnessed, but have enabled us to recall a look—a gesture—a tone, with a mysterious accuracy that no pencil, no music can rival.

Professor Ehrenberg ascertained that the polishing slate of Bilin in Bohemia, which is of great extent, and forms strata fourteen feet thick, consists almost entirely of an aggregation of the siliceous shells of the *Gaillonella distans*. The size of these animalcules $\frac{1}{288}$ of line, is but equal to $\frac{1}{6}$ of the thickness of a human hair. Twenty-three millions are contained in a cubic line, or forty-one thousand millions in a cubic inch.

Remote as the period must be at which this accumulation commenced, the preservation, nay, the identity of these minute creatures is perfect. Evidence, if possible more extraordinary and equally indisputable, is extant of the habits of animals that for millions of years have ceased to exist. Imbedded in the solid rock, innumerable bodies of animals have been discovered that could not exist in the present condition of the earth, and on some occasions, with the stomach containing half-masticated bones, the remains of prey.

But the memorials of Divine Power do not end here. Rocks, on being separated, have disclosed the footmarks of birds and of animals

animals now unknown, and, what is still more marvellous, the impression made upon sand by drops of rain; nay more, the direction of the currents of air that prevailed at the time those drops were falling—for impelled in a slanting direction the sides of the impression are unequally raised.

The same slab has, in some instances, exhibited footprints made before, and others after the rain had ceased (the former indicated by the partially-obliterated impression of the animal's feet, the latter, by a clear uninterrupted track). Even the delicate impressions received from the body and ethereal wings of the mayfly have been found, preserving through countless ages, in tablets of stone, evidence of the existence of an insect, the whole life of which was comprised in a single day.

If it has been the will of the Creator to engrave on His works so lasting a history of things of such minor importance, surely those words which, flowing from the abundance of the heart, evidence our inmost thoughts, will not, cannot be unrecorded. If five sparrows are sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God, how shall words be disregarded that shall affect our state when even this stupendous creation shall have passed away.

"Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered."—Luke, xii. 7.

ESSAY XXVII.

PRISONERS OF HOPE.

Turn ye to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope.—ZECHARIAH, ix. 12.

IF the weaknesses of our nature are such that we know not how often we offend; if the utmost we can accomplish, even with the assistance of Divine Love, is to lay hold of the hope that is set before us, how truly is our condition in this body that of prisoners; and if we believe we are making progress in that narrow way which leads through the strait gate to eternal life, then are we indeed prisoners of hope!

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul."—HEBREWS, vi. 19.

ESSAY XXVIII.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.—2 COR., v. 1.

THAT the material world and all it contains consist of various combinations of a gaseous matter capable of extension into nebulæ, so diffused as to be detected at enormous distances only, and of being so condensed as to constitute the almost imperishable diamond, — combinations that are perpetually changing and are daily presented to us in a thousand shapes, is now less a subject of inquiry than of admiration. And it has long been understood that the human body, composed of the same elements, is altered by every act of inspiration, and is totally changed many times during an ordinary life.

That a thing so constituted should accompany into an eternal state the immortal principle of which it is under the physical conditions of this life the tenement—that it should find a place in that kingdom, which Saint Paul assures us, flesh and blood cannot

cannot inherit, is opposed to all probability. Yet such a belief is, nevertheless, so earnestly insisted on by well-meaning Christians, that we are led to look for a solution of the mystery to our only infallible source of information, the Holy Scriptures. *There*, notwithstanding the metaphorical language with which, as is frequently the case, an abstract doctrine is clothed, evidence will be found sufficient to dispel every doubt of the untenableness of the opinion, that the Soul, in its future and eternal condition, will be reunited to the matter which at present constitutes the body.

Great want of genuine Christianity is frequently exhibited in construing the language of Scripture, and nothing is more dangerous than to allow our apprehension of the *idea* sought to be conveyed, to be wholly governed by the *figure* with which it is invested. Too many have industriously laboured to confound a doctrine with a metaphor merely intended as a vehicle of expression, and from a possible want of aptness in the image made use of, instead of advancing the cause of truth, created mysteries calculated to keep the human mind in darkness. They would prevent the exercise of the understanding in those grand modern discoveries of science, which have made us more intimately acquainted with the vastness of the works of the Creator, and have enabled us to contemplate His infinite wisdom and power in the records He has left of the Creation.

So figurative is even modern language, that expressions which the advanced state of our knowledge alone prevents from misleading us, are in daily use. We have only to turn over a few pages of history, to find that Galileo, for demonstrating the now universally acknowledged truth, that the motion of the earth and not that of the sun causes the phenomena we daily witness, was exposed to the horrors of the Inquisition. This was justified

fied on the ground that his views were opposed to statements contained in the Holy Scriptures.

Too many in this age, not less narrow-minded than the persecutors of Galileo, anxiously cling to the letter when it assumes the mystical—reject it when it appeals directly to the reason. They insist on the resurrection of the identical human body, rejecting the assurance of St. Paul that it is not *this* body but a spiritual body—that is, a Spirit, that shall be raised from the dead. Not unfrequently do they confound the rational inquiries of the believer in the great doctrines of Christianity, with the infidelity of the Sadducee, who questioned not the resurrection of the body but the existence of a future state.

It would have been difficult for the Apostles to convey an idea of the great general judgment, involved in the Christian doctrine of a retributive future state, to a people eminently sensuous and altogether unprepared to receive abstract spiritual doctrine, without the use of language somewhat calculated to strengthen a belief in the actual resurrection of the body. Conscious of the tendency of the figurative language he unavoidably used, Saint Paul endeavoured, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, to point out the difference between a corporeal and a spiritual state.

It is too evident, however, that he was unable to correct the popular notion that the material person should become the denizen of a perfect and eternal state—a belief that has unaccountably resisted inquiries that ought, at least in our time, to have led to more rational conclusions.

We are frequently told from the pulpit, that the body will be collected from the ocean and the mountain, and that the soul, or spiritual principle, will be mysteriously reincorporated with the identical matter which in this life constituted the material

material person. This implied rejection of our Lord's assurance that a Spirit hath not flesh and blood, forcibly recalls the anecdote of that besotted victim of Hindu superstition who, believing the destruction of animal life unwarranted, on being presented with a microscope too obviously revealing to him, that with every herb he ate he exterminated millions of creatures, instead of altering his belief, dashed the instrument to the ground.

For what end present to its Creator, the spirit clothed in one of the ten thousand combinations of gas which had in this life constituted the body,—does Infinite Wisdom, in the economy of another existence, require evidence of identity? What purpose would be served by the physical apparatus for receiving nourishment or the canine teeth;—why the peculiarities that distinguish the sexes, that constitute the difference between a Hercules and a Venus in a state in which "they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels of God?" What need of legs to a spirit traversing all space in an instant? How unlike all the acts of the Creator we are acquainted with!

But if the soul were again to tenant the body, where would that body be found? Small is the frame of the new-born infant, and it is when beholding it that the ephemeral character of mere physical organization most forcibly strikes the mind. How rapid is the change that takes place!—every hour alters its appearance and enlarges it. At a later period this change is less striking—in old age hardly perceptible – the *principle* of change is exhausted, and the body dies. At the resurrection, which of the displaced and worn-out apparatuses of a material existence, is it contemplated, should be reunited to the soul? Surely not that which it left at the time the connexion between

body

body and soul ceased, the worst of all the combinations of matter that had been used even in this life; and where is this used-up matter to be found?

The Creator, in his infinite wisdom, allows nothing to be lost, —nothing to remain unemployed; and matter for a moment appropriated to the human body when discharged by respiration or otherwise, is immediately subjected to fresh processes— is now the man—the horse—the tree, by unceasing novelty of combination producing endless variety of form. Where then is the identity? From the same matter a thousand bodies have been framed—matter which, like the atmosphere we breathe, is used but not retained. The human body is to the casual eye, as the waters of a river to one who gazes on their placid surface, unconscious of a current that produces unceasing change.

The body, in fact, constitutes as much a part of the material system of things in the world we inhabit, as the land, the ocean, or the atmosphere. Is it possible that in our future— our eternal condition, in the Heaven of Heavens—a part of this perishing world should find a place?

Whatever may be the condition of man in his future state, it is quite certain that it will be spiritual and not corporeal—that his person will not be composed of flesh and blood— will not be made up of machinery for receiving matter for the sustenance of animal life and the continuation of the species. In short, that such an identity as some Christians have pertinaciously contended for, is utterly unfitted to a condition in which no change can take place.

Happily for him who runs that he may obtain a heavenly crown, the state of our future being, for all purposes of practical religion, requires no definition—can affect no Christian duty, and

and will assuredly be provided for by the infinite wisdom and goodness of God.

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."—MATT., xxii. 29, 30.

ESSAY XXIX.

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS ON THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

" Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers:
Whilst Error wounded, writhes in pain,
And dies amidst his worshippers."—BRYANT.

IN the Scriptural statements that the body will enter the kingdom of Heaven, figurative language was used, I conceive, with no other object than that of conveying to the minds of the people to whom Christ and his Apostles preached, the only idea of an after-state of existence they were capable of receiving.

It is difficult to reconcile any other view of the language of Scripture with the condition of the Penitent Thief, who received from Christ assurance that he should be " this day with him in paradise," and whose *body* no one supposes to have been included in this promise, or with that of Moses and Elias, who appeared to Jesus during his Transfiguration.

The

The whole tendency of Scripture is opposed to the doctrine of a material resurrection. We find in Matthew, xxii. 31, 32, these words: "But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken to you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: God is not the God of the dead but of the living." What meaning, consistent with a preservation of the body, can we assign to these words?—"Think not," said Christ to the Jews, "to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." The obvious intention of this declaration was to correct, in the minds of his hearers, the idea they entertained of the absolute importance of their relationship to the head and founder of their nation, and to assure them that God could at any time, without the instrumentality of the body, raise up or create beings as spiritually worthy in his sight as Abraham or his descendants.

We are too apt to forget the frailty of our present condition, and appear to be unaware that our senses are but instruments the Creator has provided for our use in this world, and were never intended to circumscribe our higher powers in a future and perfect state of existence. How short is the distance to which the most perfect of these instruments, the eye, can carry us. Aided by the telescope, we discover a vast creation of which we had previously no idea; but even with this assistance, the eye falls far short of the point which is reached by the thought—by the mind. The eye requires eight minutes to travel to the sun, but in how much less time the mind reaches the remotest conceivable bounds of the creation!

In a future and perfect condition, why should our powers of enjoying the works of the Creator be limited by instruments so

imperfect? Why, in traversing the eternal spaces, should we be circumscribed by material bodies? What in this life thinks —what enjoys, but the Soul, the powers of which, here below, are only too limited by its prison house, the body!

Nature, even in the humblest of her works, effects changes the least to be imagined. What idea can the grub, moving with difficulty and seeing but the object immediately in contact with it, have of its future condition as a butterfly—of its glorious wings, its unrestrained powers of motion, its capacity for enjoying the beauty of a thousand flowers? What, the insect which passes the first stages of its existence in a muddy pool, of the joyous flights of its after condition? If a change so glorious is worked for the after stage of existence of an insect, whose life is but that of a day, how reasonable to believe that the Creator will endow beings to whom he has promised eternal life and happiness, and a dwelling in his own celestial tabernacles, with powers suited to their future condition!

Many who maintain the necessity of the resurrection of the body, urge the sacred character of what has been the tenement of the immortal principle—of the soul. Others insist on the necessity of identity, as it were for purposes of recognition, between those who are brought together in the after-life. Too much is involved in either supposition. If the body has acquired a sacred character *merely* as having been the tenement of the soul, that character must attach to every particle that at any time composed it. He, therefore, who shall in this life have attained great age, must appear in a body enlarged to gigantic dimensions. He must, as a necessary consequence, take with him, into the heavenly and eternal state, all the physical diseases with which he had in this life been afflicted,—the tumour, the wen, the elephantiasis, which certainly constituted part of his

body

body, so sanctified by the mere fact of having encased the immortal soul.

If, on the other hand, the identity of the body be contended for, it is obvious that our human body must be presented in every stage of its earthly career, and become a multitude instead of a person. How, otherwise, could recognition take place? How could a child who died at the age of six years, recognize, in the attenuated crone of eighty, the bloom and freshness of the young mother it parted from in this world? Who could trace, in the decrepit old man, the sturdy ruffian who at the age of thirty had assassinated him?

It is said we shall not all sleep, but that "in the twinkling of an eye we shall all be changed." If the object were to present the spirit to its Maker in the body it occupied in this life, why a change? If it be admitted that so great a change will take place as to alter the entire construction of the body, in order to fit it for an eternal condition, where then is the identity? In truth, the word "resurrection" was intended only to express the change which takes place on the dissolution of the body.

All language is as essentially figurative as it is imperfect,—that of Scripture strikingly so, and most of all those parts of it in which anything connected with our future condition is described or alluded to. Who can literally understand that the dead shall be judged out of those things which are "written in the books according to their works?" Who supposes that God, who knoweth the inmost thoughts of the heart, has need of material archives or written records? His sentence on the guilty is indelibly recorded on their own consciences, and they themselves bear it with them beyond the grave.

We are unwilling to surrender the delusions which have accompanied us through life; and we cling most pertinaciously

to

to those prejudices which spring from early training. But as our capabilities of appreciating Infinite Wisdom and Power are enlarged, we daily correct some error, and become more conscious of the narrow-mindedness of those who perplex and entangle the great Christian assurances so full of cheerful certainty, with doctrines it is impossible to reconcile with the reason conferred by the Creator.

"Progress! 'tis the life that rages
Through the world's predestined ages,
Never resting,
Ever breasting,
The unrefluent waves of Time,
At the Almighty word sublime—
God's great *one* word,
Silent never, pealing ever
'Onward! Onward!'" *

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER TO JAMES NORTON, ESQ.,
AUTHOR OF AN ESSAY ON THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

"(1) IT occurred to me, as I read your remarks on the evanescent character of the body, may not the same be said, in a certain high sense, of the*s oul?* Is not *it* also 'altered by every inspiration?' Are not our ideas being altered, modified, rearranged, *daily*, *hourly?* Is there a soul on earth, of which it can be affirmed, that its 'stand-point,' its position *in respect to the universe*, has been the same in any two successive *hours* of its existence, to say nothing of years and decades? I suppose not; and yet, no man dreams that this proteous and shifting

* Charles Harpur.

experience

experience of the soul subverts the doctrine of (2) 'personal identity.' Now may there not be amid all the changes affecting the body, some (3) *hidden stratum* that does not waste away—some essential *characteristic* portion of A which can never be appropriated by B or C?

"It seems to you preposterous to imagine that the soul will be accompanied in its eternal pilgrimage of being by any kind of body, and you cite the words, 'Flesh and blood shall not inherit, &c. In regard to this point, I would say, that I have a strong impression of having seen, in the works of our most able and Platonic thinkers, the sentiment, 'that the Supreme alone is a pure absolute, spirit,'—(4) and that it is probable that *all* finite minds, whether human or angelic, must have a certain *material vehicle* as the necessary medium of their communion with the great and beautiful creations of Divine power. I cannot specify names; for this kind of reading has not been common with me of late years. My 'impression' is, however, I believe correct; at any rate, certain it is, that as far as matters have hitherto gone, we have no reason to regard this, 'torpid ass,' the body, with contempt. (5) The senses have evidently been the great inlets of the sublimest ideas of such men as Bacon, Milton, &c.,—*or* of the rough materials out of which such ideas have been manufactured. Can we then spare —I will not say *the present* body, but *a* body of some kind? Is not some *organization*, however attenuated — however nearly approaching the nature of spirit, absolutely necessary, judging from analogy, to the immortal advancement which we hope for?

"I quite agree with you in denouncing the folly that would silence or in any way ignore the utterances of 'modern science.' Still *let us not outrun* the light it supplies to the thoughtful rational man in (6) Biblical interpretation. There is darkness and

and peril *ahead* of the scientific procession as well as in its *rear*.

"The passage in your Essay that most startles me is the fifth paragraph, in which, with apparent gravity, (7) you say that the 'spiritual body' mentioned by the Apostle, and which is to be raised at the 'sound of the trumpet'—'is a spirit!' Had you forgotten, when you penned these words, that the New Testament teaches that (8) pious souls are not in the *grave*, but with *God?* Had you forgotten the words of Jesus in his all-admirable refutation of the Pharisees? '*God*,' saith he, 'is not the God of the *dead* but of the *living*.' These words seem to me fatal to your theory. Then there are Paul's words (9), '*Absent* from the body, *present* with the Lord.' Surely the phrase, 'with the Lord,' is somewhat more luminous and consolatory than the phrase 'in the grave.' Again, he says, 'I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.' Mark the prodigious force of the original here, a force defying translation;—now it would not have been *better* but immensely *worse* to lie in the grave as compared with his active and useful life in the Church on earth.

"(10) May I refer you to 2 Pet. i. 14, 15? Mark the beautiful allusion running through the whole to *a tent* and its *occupant*. I would especially refer you to the word rendered '*decease*.' It is the same word as is employed by the Septuagint to denote the 'outgoing' of the Israelites from Egypt. It is the same word as is used in the narrative of the Transfiguration, for, says Luke, 'They spake of his "*decease*" which he was to accomplish,' &c., see ch. ix. 31; and accordingly when the event took place, it is said, 'he gave up the *ghost* (11),' or 'dismissed his *spirit*,' see Doddridge and others. Jesus' body was laid in a tomb, his *spirit* he had *dismissed*—'commended

to

to the hands of God.' Now these and similar passages seem to me wholly inconsistent with your idea (12) of a spirit's being raised from the grave.

"I do not quite understand your remark about the 'eminently sensuous people,' and the associated suggestion that this sensuousness made it necessary for the Apostles to give 'body' to their idea of future existence. I believe the most abstract and incomprehensible of all ideas is the absolute spirituality of the Divine nature. After *that*, the separate existence of a *created* mind is a trifle,—that is as an intelligible and manageable object of conception. But the spirituality of God is one of the most fundamental and 'unclothed' of the New Testament. The 'sensuous people' (13) were expected to understand it, and I suppose they did.—John, iv. 24, Paul's Speech on Mars' Hill, &c.

"'For what purpose,' say you, 'should we have a body?'—and you allude to Hercules, Venus, teeth, &c. Here, you seem to me to do what so many have done before you, but you have not the excuse of slender intellect and scanty furniture or avowed hostility, that may be pleaded for them—that is, you draw a doctrine of Scripture out of its sublime and impressive *generality*, and so make the venerable ludicrous. (14) You have rudely struck the elegant and polished vase, and have shivered it into a shapeless mass of fragments,—an experiment which the feeblest could repeat *ad libitum*. But the question is neither so absurd nor so unanswerable as it seems—'What good arise from a body?' Consider!—Bacon in *sixty-two years became what he was*. Suppose, now, that I had a body, not of the Hercules, the brute-force order—not of the Venus, of the seducingly-charming order—but a body 'made like the Saviour's glorious body;' and through that body, suppose I could be looking at the works of God as they will be exhibited in the world

to

to come. If I could double the acquisitions of my earthly life in the same space of time, my soul increasing in *strength, elevation, and possession;* and suppose I could go on at *that rate* through 'ages to come,' would that be 'nothing?' (15).

"(16) Your allusion to the state of the body when dead is not—may I say so?—in your usual good taste. True, a dead body soon becomes an odious mass. So before the birth of a child, there are states, perhaps, not very pleasant to look upon, but that shapeless nondescript may in a few years become a model of beauty and a museum of Divine contrivance; and is there no power, no Divine chemistry that can evoke from the loathsome tomb forms of angelic loveliness—no possibility of the 'vile' body being made 'a glorious body,' as the Apostle so ardently anticipated?

"I would add, with respect, that *I* think, all philosophic refinements, *apart* or *included*, that the Redemption of Christ is the redemption of *humanity*. I think Christ is the brother, the *bonâ fide* representative of *man* at the right hand of God—that he has carried humanity 'within the veil,' that it is my duty, in imitation of the holy Apostle, to 'look for him who shall' not *destroy*, *annihilate*, or *disperse*, (17) but 'change this vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body by the mighty power,' &c. &c. &c. See Philippians, iii. 20, 21."

The foregoing strictures on my paper on the Resurrection of the Body, from the pen of an accomplished clergyman, were put into my hands, with a message from the writer informing me, that if there were no other ground for *his* belief in the resurrection of the material body than that of the reappearance of Christ after the Crucifixion, that alone would prevent his belief being shaken

shaken by arguments, however learned or ingenious. He also remarked that the assurance that our "vile bodies" shall be fashioned like unto "Christ's glorious body," placed, in his opinion, an actual corporeal resurrection beyond question.

A similar view of the subject was also communicated to me by another clergyman, who expressed his conviction that it admitted of no refutation. Indeed, I believe the opinion expressed by these gentlemen is one that very generally obtains. But surely the conclusions from the reappearance of Christ in the body, upon which it seems to rest, have been too hastily drawn.

It is admitted that Christ's body, in likeness to which ours is to be fashioned, is a "glorious body," and that to effect this object some change must be undergone by our vile bodies—some adaptation must take place. In this adaptation, those organs which are intended for the uses of a condition of earthly life only, will be changed to suit an eternal state. Now that such was not the condition of our Lord's body before the Crucifixion, we gather from the whole of the Gospels, and we are especially informed that Christ was subject to hunger and privations, and that he suffered intense agony, that "he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham," and that being "found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death." Up to his decease, therefore, it is evident that his body was not "the glorious body" which we desire ours to resemble, but a mere human body. And it is equally evident that such was the condition of that body which reappeared to his disciples after his Crucifixion, as it not only retained the marks the nails had made on his hands, but even the wound inflicted by the spear of the Roman soldier: and we find, probably to convince his disciples of his identity, that he ate a piece of broiled fish and a honeycomb.. Certain, therefore,

therefore, it is, that the body of Christ must at that time have had all those corporeal organs, my allusion to which called forth from my reverend friend somewhat not unlike an expression of indignation.

If, as I understand, he thinks with me that such a body could not without very great change be fitted for a future state, the condition of Christ's glorious body remains unsettled, and all arguments for the resurrection of the human and material body founded on his reappearance must fail.

Christ ascended into heaven to continue the office that brought him to the world; but that he took with him the physical apparatus he used on this earth even after his resurrection, will hardly be contended for, even by those who are far less distinguished for piety and reflection than the gentleman whose strictures are under consideration.

That we should slowly and reluctantly surrender a belief that has so long gained ascendency over the carnal mind, as that of the resurrection of the material person, that we should not without a struggle give up hopes and ideas and expectations, tenderly associated with the personal appearances of those we loved, might naturally be expected. But delusion is not less delusion because bound up with affections, with dear hopes and pious feelings. It is our duty to reject error, in all things approving ourselves "by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true."

My reverend friend explains that the New Testament teaches that pious souls are not in the grave, but with God. This belief appears to me to be irreconcileable with the doctrine of the resurrection of the body at some final day of general judgment. That event, should the words in which it is stated have a literal instead of a figurative meaning, must be so remote from the

period

period at which Abraham and the Patriarchs, and the still earlier inhabitants of the earth died, that if the reunion of the soul with the body were part of the Divine scheme, it is hardly conceivable that that reunion should be so long postponed, nor is it easy to imagine that such a reincorporation could add to the happiness of those who are "present with the Lord."

To avoid any misstatement of the arguments and objections put forth by my friendly critic, I have numbered such parts of his paper as appear to call for a reply, and I have noticed them in the order in which they are made.

(1) The body, like a river, every moment discharges the matter it has used. The soul retains all it receives. If the first cease to acquire, it dies; if the soul, it nevertheless retains what it had acquired, and ceases only to increase.

(2, 3) I have endeavoured to show that personal identity is quite inconsistent with the reappearance of the body in a future state.

(4) Although I do not see the necessity of furnishing the spirit with a material vehicle, *that* is not involved in the doctrine of the non-resurrection of the body. That "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" may, for anything I have contended for, be a "material vehicle."

(5) "Man," says Emerson, "is endogenous; a name applied to a class of plants that increase from within." In Bacon and Milton, the senses were not the inlets of the ideas, but *their* minds enabled them to use their senses.

(6) The peril of the inquiry should not check the inquiry. God has given us faculties to be used, not "to be buried in a napkin."

(7) The gravity is not less real than apparent. "I cannot conceive," says Coleridge, "a better definition of body than 'spirit appearing,' or of a flesh-and-blood man than a rational spirit apparent."

(8, 9)

(8, 9) I have no idea that the soul accompanies or remains with the body for a moment after death. I think Paul's expression, "that when absent from the body he should be present with the Lord," fatal to a belief in the resurrection of the material body. What more could he desire than to be present with the Lord?

(10) 2 Pet. i. 14, 15. Peter speaks of the putting off the tabernacle of the body, as though all connection should for ever cease. Surely in applying this expression to the exodus of the Israelites, it will not be contended that any *future* connection with Egypt was contemplated?

(11) Jesus did not commend his body but his "spirit" only to God.

(12) See answer to 8.

(13) It is one thing to believe that God is a spirit, a very different one to conceive that the creatures of earth shall become such, and it must not be forgotten that the Jews always looked to the Messiah to establish their *earthly* kingdom. They were quite unprepared for that kingdom which Christ preached.

(14) God forbid that I should attempt to strike at any one scriptural doctrine. If it be conceded that no part of the body that is unsuited to a heavenly condition can accompany the spirit into the life to come, I have succeeded in overcoming long-standing prejudices beyond my utmost expectation. What part of the body is not "of the earth earthy?" What part is not so organized as to show the necessity of constant change—constant renewal? Leaving out of consideration the less important corporeal parts, let us come at once to the brain. Is that fit for an eternal condition—is that anything more than the tabernacle that the Apostle Peter spoke of "putting off?"

(15) Bacon and Newton were, while in the body, in the condition

dition that St. Paul tells us it were "better to be absent from." The Saviour's "glorious body" may, in the sense in which we at present use the words, be not a body at all. It is certainly not the body in which he appeared to his disciples after his resurrection. If it be contended that he still retains that body unchanged, in what way did I incur the charge of irreverence by asking to what use could be applied those parts of our material persons to which offices in this life only were assigned?

(16) I must have been misunderstood. I deny the existence of the body after death. It has, in fact, returned to its elements. The river when it reaches the sea is a river no longer.

(17) My inquiries did not extend to the ultimate fate of the matter of which the body is composed; on the other hand, I expressed my belief that, like everything that God has created, it never becomes useless.

Note.—Amongst other arguments that have been urged against the views I have taken of the corporeal resurrection, is one springing from words that occur in the Book of Job, which are translated as follows in the received version of the Bible:—"And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." (Job xix. 26.) I think it is as erroneous to take the highly-imaginative language here used by Job, in its literal sense, as that describing interviews between God and the Devil, which occurs in an earlier portion of the book. But even if a literal sense were intended, no believer in the doctrines of Christianity could allow the opinions of the Chaldean poet to outweigh the assurance of St. Paul, that the body to be raised is a spiritual body. However widely different views Christians may entertain of the nature of that body, all agree that flesh will form no part of it.

ESSAY XXX.

THE REDEMPTION: A VISION.

God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.
—2 PETER, ii. 4.

WITH what darker chains than the lusts of the flesh—the infirmities of our human nature—could the angels that kept not their first estate have been bound? And for what were they reserved? If for judgment, how were they to be disposed of until the day of judgment should arrive?

Lost in the contemplation of this mysterious subject, I fell into some such state as that which has been described by persons who have recovered from drowning, during which all the circumstances of their lives appeared to be simultaneously presented to the mind just about to be disengaged from the body.

Time had ceased to be. I gazed upon the Panorama of Eternity

Eternity. All stood still. The first thoughts of my infancy, the last scene in which I had moved, my long-forgotten errors, my ill-performed duties, the weaknesses, the follies, of my whole life, all were portrayed.

From the contemplation of this picture I turned to that of events that had preceded my existence—of those which were to follow ; and I beheld the things angels desire to look into.

I saw Satan and an innumerable company of his deluded followers fall as lightning from heaven. I beheld the Lamb of God, not then within the shades of time and passion. I heard his intercession for the fallen—his prayer that they should have probation still. Then, at the fiat of the Almighty Judge, I saw this earth and suns and worlds unnumbered burst into new existence.

I saw the fallen clothed in our nature, human and infirm.

I saw a ray of light from heaven guiding the hapless wanderers from the fold, and shedding peace on earth, still lead them to the truth that they had lost ; and I beheld the Lamb of God veiled in our nature, and on earth proclaim pardon for sins, remission for our guilt.

I heard the angelic host praise God on high, and sing of peace on earth, and of good will towards men.

I saw the Sun of Righteousness expire, his mission end upon the Cross—the chains of our dark nature broken—gone.

I saw the Son of God ascend to heaven, and thither lead the myriads He had saved.

Again, I heard the angels sing, "Lift up your heads ye gates."—Then, opened wide, I saw the everlasting doors that never more should close, and from the Mediator shine a light upon that narrow way that through the labyrinths of this world leads up to pardon and eternal peace.

I heard the judgment on the fallen—the lost, that would not hear.

"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men."—Psalm, lxviii. 18.

ESSAY XXXI.

THE AFTER-STATE OF THE WICKED: A VISION.

Cast him into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.—MATTHEW, xxii. 13.

FALLING into a state of dreamy abstraction I conceived that my probation in this world was at an end. I dreamt that I had for ever closed my eyes upon the objects with which I had been too fatally engrossed during a long life of prosperity and selfish gratification. For a moment I felt utterly bewildered, but I suddenly became conscious that I was accompanied by a being, under whose control I was borne onward with inconceivable velocity.

It was very long before I recovered the power of articulation, but when at length I had sufficient strength and courage to inquire where I was, and whither we were speeding, the only answer I received from my awful companion was an indication by his finger of the mysterious distance which lay before us. How long we proceeded in this manner I was incapable of apprehending,

apprehending, but I observed more than one star increase to intense brilliancy—recede, and become invisible; and I could not suppress a terrible foreboding that the stupendous creation of the heavens was gradually disappearing from my view. The vast array of suns and worlds was at length reduced to a single star—even that grew dim; and now it was that my companion for the first time stayed our flight and broke the silence by thus addressing me:—

"Fallen from your first estate, the Creator of the universe granted you a place of probation in the world you have left, endowed you with sentiments and feelings capable of a pure and holy direction, enlightened you with the knowledge of His will, and pointed out to you the means by which you might be restored to the happiness you had forfeited. You despised His mercy, and employed the time allotted to you in the gratification of your lusts and passions. Surrounded by objects of suffering and of crime, your life was spent in adding to the number; while your desire was bounded only by your power to violate the laws of God and man—to trample upon all obligation human and Divine.

"This is the punishment annexed to your guilt. The self you have worshipped shall to all eternity be your sole companion. You have been borne hitherward with the velocity assigned by the Creator to the progress of light; you see the last of His created suns, and you are henceforth to proceed with unabated velocity through all eternity, into the infinitude of space. This is the Outer Darkness."

While these words still sounded in my ears, my guide disappeared, and I again felt myself urged on with the same terrific rapidity. For a time I was overwhelmed; but a glimpse I obtained of the last and fast-receding star recalled me to the consciousness

consciousness of my unutterable misery, and I fixed my eyes upon this object as I would have fixed them on the face of a friend in that illimitable solitude. So intense was my gaze, that as the twinkle of this star became uncertain, my eyes were strained in their sockets. I would have given worlds to retain the slightest glimpse of the only object that was left; that twinkle disappeared, and with a burst of agony I started from my dream.

ESSAY XXXII.

THE JOY OF THE RIGHTEOUS: A VISION.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.—1 CORINTHIANS, ii. 9.

MUSING on these words, I became unconscious of surrounding objects, and imagined that I had passed into that eternal state, for which this life of probation is intended to prepare us.

I had belonged to a very large class of human beings, the poor and the friendless, and might have sunk under the temptations to which I was exposed, if the sufferings of my parents and the necessity of providing for their support had not given constant exercise to the better part of my nature, and, when I was at length deprived of them, impressed upon my mind so deep a conviction of the vanity of all worldly objects, that I sometimes felt what might be almost called a longing for that place, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.

A delightful

A delightful sense of harmony and repose stole over me, the dimness that had overspread my faculties seemed gradually to pass away, and I was struck with wonder and admiration at the things I beheld.

Rich and varied scenery burst upon my view, thousands of flowers diffused the most exquisite perfume, and birds of ethereal lightness, arrayed in delicate and gorgeous plumage, filled the air with music.

While in this state of rapture, I was joined by companions of angelic beauty, one of whom took my hand, and I immediately became conscious that I had indeed put on immortality—that I was to dwell for ever in the presence of my Creator. With a voice of harmonious sweetness that thrilled through my whole being, he explained to me that I was now amongst the number of those whose garments had been washed in the blood of the Lamb!—that my sufferings had been the means appointed by Divine love, for purifying me from the stains of selfishness and sin, and that my light affliction, which had been but for a moment, had worked for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

My companion pointed out to me the vast creation of suns and worlds, of which I had descried only a very inconsiderable part, but which I was now enabled to contemplate with an intuitive power of comprehending their beauty in its ennobling relations to the infinite wisdom that was displayed in their arrangement; then emphatically, the morning stars sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy.

He explained to me, that the objects I beheld were all instinct with life, and that even the trees and flowers were conscious of their glory, that many of the beautiful birds which flitted around us were the spiritual forms of those untaught children of nature who

who had made the best use of the imperfect light which had been shed upon their path, and that, without partaking the exalted character of the angelic host, they felt the privilege of Divine mercy, and added their tribute to the chorus of angelic adoration. While my heavenly companion continued to speak, my whole soul became concentrated and absorbed in an overpowering sense of love.

It is impossible for the human understanding to comprehend the scenes and objects that engaged my attention,—the deaf have not less idea of the sweetness or the power of sounds—the blind of the beauty of colours—nor would the contemplation of the bark, or even the leaf of the tree, convey a less perfect idea of its blossoms or its fruit.

But come, said my heavenly companion, and join the Angelic Host in offering up praises to the Lamb—the Redeemer of the world—to that God who is love. Upon these words, delightful harmony burst upon my ears—the whole atmosphere became one brilliant heaven of light and love, and with a thrill of extacy I awoke.

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