

the scientific inquirer that there is any such thing as moral truth—any such thing as absolute right and wrong at all.”<sup>1</sup> Above all, we ask that the biologist and the physicist alike may not so narrow their investigations of natural phenomena and their relations as to exclude from view the positive and stupendous evidence in nature, in history, and in revelation, of an intelligent Force, external and superior to the natural forces, constituting, guiding, and himself the Final Cause of all.

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### ARTICLE III.

#### WHAT IS TRUTH ?<sup>2</sup>

BY J. C. MURPHY, LL.D., T.C.D., PROFESSOR OF HEBREW, BELFAST, IRELAND.

A BRIEF answer to this comprehensive question may not be unseasonable at the present time, even though it may be expected to partake in some measure of the idiosyncrasy of the respondent. We misunderstand one another very often, simply because we do not speak out, frankly and plainly, what we think. Let us divest the question of the technicalities of the schools, treat it as a matter of vital interest to every child of man, and endeavor to find at least the first principles of a direct, explicit, and veritable reply. The question came, at first, from a strange quarter, whence we should least of all have expected any reference to things so high. But we bear in mind that Pilate had the rare advantage of coming into contact with a perfect mind—the mind of him who had come down from heaven to solve this very problem, to give a new turn to the philosophy of man, and to open up to the mind of humanity a new, practical, and hopeful view of the relation of God to man. Pilate said to this wonderful visitor of our nether sphere: “Art thou the

<sup>1</sup> Short Studies on Great Subjects. Times of Erasmus and Luther, Lect. iii. p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> This paper is the expansion of a thought thrown out in the Preface to a forthcoming work on Leviticus.

king of the Jews ?” His prisoner replied : “ My kingdom is not of this world.” Pilate rejoined : “ Art thou a king, then ?” The stranger then said : “ I am a King. To this end am I born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I may bear witness of *the truth*. Every one that is of *the truth* heareth my voice.” Thus we find that Pilate’s mind was raised, for the moment, to the contemplation of this great question, by being thrown into converse with the eternal Son of God, now born of a woman and come into the world for the express purpose of giving a practical answer to this very question. Pilate, the spokesman of the fourth and last world-monarchy, now stands face to face with the eternal King of that fifth monarchy which shall not be moved, whose wand of spiritual power is the truth, and in profound bewilderment of mind puts the natural question :  
WHAT IS TRUTH ?

2. It is manifest that we must arrive at some one general governing principle, if we are to shape an adequate answer in any brief compass to this momentous question. Every fact, every art or science, every chapter of history, is part of the complex answer to this inquiry in its most unlimited range. But all the arts and sciences of the physical world form only a subordinate part of the great system of things. The history of man and the phases of the human mind yield the materials of that metaphysical science which is the sublimest theme that can engage the attention of man. Mind surpasses matter. But even in the study of the mind there is a lower and a higher stage. The philosophy of the intellectual and potential is secondary in importance to the philosophy of the ethical faculty in man. And in the realm of ethics the relation of man to God infinitely transcends his moral relation to his fellow-men. Thus we have reached our governing principle. What is the moral relation of man to God in the present condition of things ? This is the theme to which we are to bend our minds, when we propose to make a brief fundamental reply to the all-embracing question, What is truth ? All other existing relations are

merely the accessory circumstances that afford scope and verge for the working out of this primary relation. The answer to this question will diverge into two very distinguishable branches: I. What reason may gather from intuition and experience, without revelation. II. What more reason may learn from revelation, beyond what intuition and experience disclose. The former is the answer of philosophy; the two combined are the answer of theology to this fundamental question. Theology is that higher philosophy which entertains the facts of revelation, as well as those of observation, and by the principles of intuition combines them into a systematic unity.

3. I. Reason may gather from intuition and experience, without revelation, the following three facts: I am guilty; God is holy; and therefore I am doomed to die. These three propositions we may reduce to a unity by putting them into the form of a syllogism: I am guilty; the guilty are doomed by the God of holiness to die; and therefore I am doomed to die. It is here asserted that reason may go thus far, to intimate, on the one hand, that these steps are possible, and, on the other, that no more are possible for unaided human reason. Many, no doubt, fall short of these three conclusions, from want of thought or want of will; but all who have a sound mind are capable of arriving at these elementary principles of truth. Many will be disposed to demur against both sides of this intimation — some holding that it is not possible for reason to go so far, and others insisting that it can proceed further, than the limit here proposed. This divergence of opinion, however, is a presumption in favor of the limit so fixed, as it holds the position of a mean between two extremes. The further examination of these propositions will tend more and more to turn this presumption into a demonstration.

4. The minor premise is, I am guilty. It implies that I am a moral being. This follows both from experience and intuition. I find myself thinking, willing, acting, as a moral being. I apprehend and acknowledge moral obligation. I

detect and make account of moral motives in myself and others. I am familiar with the ideas of merit and demerit, of right and duty. Such is my experience. Moreover, I am a rational being. Reason, by its very nature, judges of the morality of actions, and assents to the fundamental principles of ethics. The axioms of ethics are as obvious to reason as those of mathematics. They are self-evident, because they receive the assent of the mind without any process of argumentation. They may need explanation, so as to make them patent to the understanding. But as soon as they are understood, they are accepted. So the axioms of mathematics may demand elucidation; but as soon as the mind clearly understands their meaning, they are admitted to be true. There is, indeed, an accidental difference in the way in which men may view mathematical and ethical axioms. The former are contemplated by the mind always in a state of cool indifference, unaffected by the bias of self-interest; and hence they meet with a prompt acquiescence. The latter are sometimes presented at a moment when they are felt to interfere with the aims of personal gratification, and this begets a reluctance to acknowledge their validity. To put the axioms of ethics on an equal footing with those of mathematics, therefore, it is necessary to exclude the element of self-interest; in which case it cannot be fairly denied that they are equally self-evident to the unbiased mind. Hence I perceive that my intuition entirely accords with my experience.

5. The presupposition that I have a moral nature being settled, I advance to the solemn affirmation that I am guilty. This is a matter of fact, and therefore can only be attested by experience. The history of man goes all the way to establish this fact. It is the history of war, of might overbearing right, of a struggle between the oppressed and the oppressor, in which the accident of preponderating power invariably determines, in the long run, which is the oppressor. It brings out the evidence, with more or less distinctness, that every man under the influence of some appetite gives way to a course of action or state of feeling which his own

conscience will, when the passion is over, pronounce to be wrong. We retreat, however, from the general to the individual. I find myself to be a microcosm — a little world within, corresponding to the wide world without. I stand by, and witness myself thinking, willing, acting. I am conscious of the secret dealings of my inmost heart. There is not a thought here that can be concealed from my knowledge. I am so made by the Author of my being that next to himself I know not only the outward appearance, but the inward workings, of my own heart. And I often condemn myself. I am not conscious of having sinned in all manner of ways, or against all manner of persons; but I know that I have sinned. I stand convicted at the bar of my own conscience. I am not aware that other men have sinned in the same way as I have done; but I am assured, from experience and from testimony, that other men have transgressed a law acknowledged by their own conscience, and I have no reason to suppose that there are any real exceptions to this general rule. Such being the case, my minor premise is a matter of fact, so far as I am concerned.

6. The next proposition is that God is holy. The holiness of God presupposes his existence. The existence of God is obvious to reason from experience and inference. The primeval intercourse of God with man, and the fall by which that intercourse was hindered, were matters of human experience, and have no doubt left their indelible trace in the memory of man. They do not belong to what is properly called revelation. The latter came in after and in consequence of the fall. Hence we acknowledge that man in his aboriginal state had some direct knowledge of God by experience. But since the fall, apart from revelation, the existence of God is known to us chiefly by inference, that is, by a combination of experience and intuition, in which the steps of reasoning are sometimes so few that intuition is at a maximum and experience at a minimum. The old maxim that from nothing nothing comes, combined with the experience that I myself am, leads me up to God. For, since

something is, something must have been from all eternity. And this eternal something needs at most to be no more than a Being having power to originate all else that is, and, of consequence, myself and all other rational beings. But the Author of reason must be himself rational. And hence there must have been from all eternity a Spirit, whose attributes of power, wisdom, and goodness all nature concurs, and from the beginning has continued, to attest. This is the outline of an argument for the existence of God, which is capable of endless expansion and illustration, and in some of its aspects, when we dive into the depths of things, approaches very near the intuitive. The apostle Paul touches upon this great theme when he affirms that "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godlihood" (Rom. i. 20).

7. The holiness of God is a corollary from his reason and his power. Sin is not natural to reason. What is more, it is contrary to reason. It can have its rise only from the desire for that which one wants; and in its primary form it consists in appropriating, or having the disposition to appropriate, that which is not one's own, in defiance of the voice of conscience. Darker forms of malignity are only the habitual outgrowth of this germinating seed. But the infinite and eternal Spirit, who is not only rational, but omnipotent, cannot want anything, cannot behold anything, which is not his own, and therefore cannot be in the circumstances which constitute a temptation to sin; while, at the same time, his eternal sense of the right and the good constitutes in him the immutable essence of holiness.

8. The infinitely holy must condemn the guilty. This involves two propositions. He must disapprove of that which is wrong, and he must pronounce sentence of condemnation upon him that is guilty of sin. The former is a necessary consequence of the very nature of God. The essentially holy must abhor that which is unholy. This is a feeling common to all the holy. The latter is peculiar to God. It

involves the right and the obligation to judge. These belong, not to the creature, but intrinsically to the Creator, simply because he is the Creator, and therefore the only absolutely rightful Governor, who is bound by his very position to administer the law of equity. Having the legitimate authority, and being morally perfect, he must condemn the guilty. And, reciprocally, every moral agent is responsible to his Maker for his conduct. He has not himself the liberty, even if he had the ability, to take the law into his own hand, and enforce compensation. His only course is to appeal to him who has both the power and the right, as well as the obligation, to vindicate the law.

9. The holy God must doom the guilty to death. In the first place, it is a matter of experience that all men die. And, as this event befalls the whole animal and vegetable kingdom, as well as man, if it had not been for sin it would have had no penal significance. It would, in fact, have been, not death in the sense which we now attach to it, but a change by which unfallen man would have passed into a higher stage of being, for which his spiritual nature when duly developed would have fitted him. But when we learn from experience that man has sinned, a gloomy foreboding of inevitable evil associates itself with our thoughts of that solemn change, and we begin to ask ourselves: What is death? Man is an intelligent and susceptible agent. He lives in a body—the organ by which he begins to know, feel, and act. Death, in the literal sense, is the separation of the soul and the body, a change from which nature instinctively shrinks. It involves the cessation of that large share of his discoveries, pleasures, and activities of which the body is the medium. These are all essentially related one to another, and culminate in the activities for the sake of the susceptibilities of his nature. Sin is the abuse of these activities. As the change of man's physical nature, if he had maintained his integrity, would no doubt have been an advance in dignity and happiness, we cannot but anticipate that in the event of his fall it must be a descent into

that disgrace and suffering which is the just consequence of sin.

10. This opens the way to the next question: Is the punishment adequate? Is death neither more nor less than sin deserves? Death, in the penal sense, is not annihilation. It involves the suspension of all those exercises of volition in which the body is instrumental. The activities that are abused are withdrawn. This forfeiture is incurred by the simple fact of transgression, without regard to the degree of guilt. It is common, therefore, to all transgressors. But is this the whole of penal death? If a friend lend me an implement, by which I am enabled to accomplish an end which I could not attain without it, I am bound to return it, with thanks; and I feel myself, moreover, indebted to him in proportion to the value of the implement in effecting the desired end. If the Author of my being, to whom I am responsible for all my actions, give me a talent which is conducive to my well-being, and I employ it aright, I am indebted to him for the talent and for the good it has done me; but if I employ it in doing wrong, I am responsible to him, moreover, for the wrong I have done. By withdrawing the gift, he leaves me still indebted for the good I might have had, and accountable for the wrong I have committed; and his relation to me as Judge binds him to call me to account, and requite me for the wrong done. Hence it is plain that penal death involves not merely a negation of enjoyment, but a positive measure of suffering, in proportion to the offence. The fatal consequence of sin is twofold — one part internal, and the other external. The internal is the anguish of an accusing conscience, which will reach its full force when all delusions will have passed away, and the guilty soul stands face to face with God and with the truth of things. This will be exactly proportional to the guilt; for it will simply be the due sense of that guilt. The external is the amount of the penal suffering apportioned by the unerring judgment of God. This is the real penalty, as the internal inquietude is simply the sense of demerit, the



consciousness of deserving the precise measure of pain. We are guided to this conclusion by the simple principle of equity in the divine administration.

11. The retribution that awaits the sinner hereafter presupposes the existence of the individual after death. We learn from experience, and particularly from chemistry, that no particle of matter ceases to exist, whatever transformations it may undergo after the law of its kind. And we have no reason to doubt that the same perpetuity of existence belongs to that most subtle and potential of all essences, the organic principle of life in plants and animals. The far-reaching minds of Socrates and Plato perceived that the present question respected not merely men, but the diversified tribes of the animal and vegetable kingdoms.<sup>1</sup> The vital principle existing in the first progenitor appears to be one for the whole species, not originating an indefinite series of wholly new entities resembling the primary individual, which would be, in sooth, an act of creation, but developing itself in a whole progeny of units, shrinking again into itself as member after member dies off, and only becoming physically inoperative when the last individual perishes. What becomes of this specific principle of vitality when thrown out of the gear of nature by the death of the last specimen in which it operated — whether it bides its time to reappear in some new sphere of activity, or recedes into the general reservoir of animal or vegetable vitality, is a question beyond the range of human experience. We merely know from geological facts that innumerable species of plants and animals have ceased to exist, and that new species have taken their places under the altered conditions of the superincumbent surface. And we are unable to assign any purpose which the specific form of the vital principle can serve when the individuals of the species have all died out. We have no reason to suppose that it is kept apart for revival in a higher stage of development, when we discover a new world of analogous species occupying the old ground

<sup>1</sup> Platonis Phædo, 41.

with its successively diversified material of subsistence. This affords the shadow of a presumption that the vital principle disengaged by the extinction of a species, reverts to the general principle of vitality, whether animal or vegetable, to reappear in new forms on a differently constituted soil. And, as we have no experience, and cannot conceive the possibility of the naked principle of vitality, when detached from an organic form, constructing an organ for itself out of the raw material of things, we desecrate the necessity of the immediate intervention of the Creator, by a law which to us belongs to the miraculous, to bring the organic principle once more into connection with an organic form which will be the head of a new species.

12. There are manifest indications, however, that it is different with the rational principle in man — that the personal soul does not so merge into the special or the general element of life, but continues to have an individual existence. A person is a rational entity, a being possessed of an intellectual and moral nature. We may, therefore, sum up these indications under two heads — the intellectual and the moral. Under the head of the intellectual, we shall mention three things. 1. By an intuitive glance man penetrates the secret of creation, and discerns the Creator, dimly and afar off, it may be, as the source as well as the end of his being and his happiness. This raises him immeasurably above the plants of the field and the beasts that perish. He knows God. There is a metaphysical relationship, an intellectual intercourse, between him and his Maker, which does not hold for the inferior animals — a peculiar bond, in which man is for the Lord and the Lord for man. 2. He can form a purpose — a purpose which may reach beyond his animal wants and his present stage of existence — a purpose which would require many times the age of Methuselah to work out, and may therefore penetrate into the indefinite range of eternity. The natural philosopher forms plans of investigation which he is morally certain would demand ages to prosecute to their final issues. Now, though thousands of

human projects end in disappointment, yet it would be unphilosophical to suppose that the purposing faculty was given in vain. It plainly forebodes a perpetuity of existence for the individual soul. 3. The human soul is capable of progressive development, and has never arrived at a point of improvement beyond which it cannot go. It is not so with the inferior animals. It has been often remarked that the young bird builds its nest at the first attempt as perfectly as the parent, and that it never improves upon its first achievement. No real houyhnhnm has ever advanced beyond the instinct of the species. A few animals, domesticated and trained by man, have acquired some habits that were not common to the species; but they have never outstept a certain limit; they have never reached more than an instinctive reflection of human reason. On the contrary, when man arrives at his full stature of body, his mind continues to grow, not only in the appliances of art, but also in the generalizations of science. This progressive faculty argues a perpetuity of individual existence. When these three points of the intellectual character of the soul are weighed together, they vastly enhance the argumentative force of each, and form an undeniable indication of its individual perpetuity.

13. The moral nature of the soul presents a new and independent argument for the continuance of its individual existence. It is manifest that when the great change of death takes place, the moral account of the man has yet to be settled. This life has been but his probation. He has been permitted to run his course of free-will without any arrest, though not without due warning of the consequence of disobedience. The long-suffering Father has made the sun to shine and sent the rain upon him in the present life, without reference to his moral conduct. Yet in the kingdom of heaven the principles of justice are paramount in their authority and immutable in their force. The righteous Governor of the universe cannot fail to vindicate the law and require an account at last, and man cannot escape from

his accountability. Since these things must be so, the soul must survive the shock of dissolution, and at the close of its earthly career await its doom. To allow it to pass into annihilation would be contrary to the course both of nature and of justice. And to leave it to merge with its personal obligations into the specific principle of human life, and cease to be an individual, would defeat the ends of justice and confound the moral order of the universe. But if the soul survive this critical point of its history, there is no reason why it should at any after period of duration lose its existence or its individuality.

14. It is to be remembered that we are not now proving the perpetuity of the human principle of life. That has been already established on the common ground that that which has a hold of existence does not cease to exist. We have now been engaged in summing up the chief indications in the personal nature of a single scion of the human race that he must be destined to a perpetual individuality. We have noticed four of these indications, which appear decisive of this question — three of the intellectual, and one moral. The individual man is capable of making acquaintance with his Maker, of forming a purpose transcending the period of this earthly life, of making progress in knowledge and wisdom without any definable limit, and, lastly, of pursuing a course of moral conduct, the issues of which inevitably reach beyond the mortal stage of his existence. Thus the general law of the perpetuity of that which exists and the special fact of the personality of the soul combine to form an argument that cannot be set aside, for what is commonly called the immortality of the soul.

15. We have now endeavored to establish, by the aid of reason alone, the premises of this great syllogism: I am guilty; the holy God must doom the guilty to death. The conclusion, I am doomed to die, is manifestly inevitable, if the premises be conceded. We do not affirm that every man actually reaches these articulate propositions; we only hold that if he rightly use his reason in this momentous investiga-

tion, he cannot fail to arrive at the conclusion alleged. We believe, also, that in general he does not need to enter into abstruse argumentations in order to be convinced of these truths. By the instinct of right reason he will be ready to admit them as soon as they are understood. Some have been disposed to question whether reason can go so far. But the practical conclusions of the most cultivated, as well as of the most unsophisticated, nations of the earth go far to prove that man by some glimpse of intuition or rapid process of reasoning arrives at the two averments that man is guilty and that God is holy. And further meditation tends only to confirm and elucidate these statements. We may add that this is the utmost that reason at its best estate is able to demonstrate in this line of inquiry. It does not warrant us either to go beyond or aside from these premises. And hence we are compelled to conclude that the philosophy of unaided reason leaves man, when he comes to inquire into the moral relation in which he stands to his Maker, under the sentence of condemnation, and fails to whisper any word of consolation or hope. It is, at best, but a philosophy of blank despair. This is the dark answer which reason is constrained to give to the most momentous form of the question, What is truth ?

16. II. We have next to consider what reason may learn from revelation, beyond the intimations it has gathered from intuition and experience. The above dictates of reason are presupposed in revelation as the groundwork of its communications. The sum-total of revelation may be conveyed in the one word, "mercy"; just as the whole finding of reason appears to be concentrated in the one word, "judgment." It resolves itself into the three following brief propositions: the Father forgives; the Son redeems; the Holy Spirit sanctifies. Each of these may be set over against its counterpart, learned from intuition and experience: I am unholy; but the Holy Spirit makes holy. God is holy; but he is also merciful. I am doomed to die; but Jesus Christ has died for all those who trust in him. They may also be

connected in a logical series, thus: He that is born of the Spirit trusts in Jesus Christ; he that trusts in Jesus Christ is redeemed by him; he that is redeemed by Christ is accepted of the Father. From the last two of these propositions the conclusion is: He that trusts in Jesus Christ is accepted of the Father. And all the sons and daughters of Adam are invited to come to Jesus Christ, and to the Father through him. This is the gospel. We see it is the exact counterpart in every respect of the findings of reason. Reason speaks only of judgment; the Spirit speaks also of mercy. Reason says, I am unsanctified; God is holy; I am doomed to die. The Spirit says, The Holy Ghost sanctifies; God is also merciful; Jesus Christ has died for sinners. Reason leads to despair; the Spirit awakens hope. Here righteousness and peace have kissed each other. It remains only to make a few reflections on this signal display of divine wisdom and grace.

17. A sharp line is here drawn between observation and revelation. Imagination may conceive, and a vague opinion may prevail, that mercy may in some way be held out to the guilty. But it is obvious that this affords no firm ground to rest upon. Unless it could be shown that the Governor of the universe is under some moral obligation to show mercy to the offender, we want the foundation on which to build any assurance that he will do so. But reason evinces quite the contrary. The Judge of all the earth is not bound by any moral law to forgive the sinner; if he were, forgiveness would be a matter of justice, not of grace. On the other hand, he is bound to right the oppressed and vindicate the law; and this raises a seemingly insuperable barrier in the way of pardon. Hence there cannot be the shadow of evidence on the part of reason for the forgiveness of sins. Unless the Lord himself, therefore, speak forth from his own breast the word of invitation, there is no possible authority for a gospel of reconciliation. Hence the necessity and importance of revelation. It is a distinct and definite communication to the reason of man from the God of heaven and earth, shedding the light of hope on the desponding heart.

18. We learn from this sum of saving knowledge that all our salvation comes from the Father. His mercy prompts him to forgive on certain indispensable conditions. And hence it moves him to send his Son to make propitiation for sin, and his Spirit to create the new heart that will accept the invitation of the gospel and the Saviour it proclaims. As the Father thus makes over himself, his beloved Son, and his Holy Spirit to us to procure for us the full blessings of an everlasting salvation, so we are bound in the justice of gratitude to dedicate ourselves without reserve to him.

19. As soon as it is revealed that there is forgiveness of sins with God, two apparently insurmountable obstacles stand before us in the way of salvation. The one is on the part of God. How can he exercise mercy, and yet vindicate justice? This is removed by his Son Jesus Christ coming forward and satisfying justice by his obedience unto death in the stead of the sinner. The other obstacle is on the part of the sinner. How can the carnal mind, that is enmity against God, be turned to penitence and faith? This is removed by the Holy Ghost opening the heart of the sinner to receive the gospel.

20. Each of these three parts is essential to salvation. The sovereign mercy of the Father is essential. Though the Son were to redeem, and the Spirit were to sanctify, so that the sinner should willingly accept the good offices of the Substitute, yet the Father is not bound to accept the obedience of the Substitute. It is still of his free-will to forgive the sinner. The sanctifying work of the Spirit is equally essential. Though the Son have made propitiation, and the Father be ready to forgive, yet the sinner will not return until the Spirit make him willing. The atonement of the Son is no less essential. Though the Spirit were to sanctify, and the Father were prepared to forgive, yet the sinner cannot escape his doom unless the great High-Priest have satisfied the demands of justice.

21. It is consonant with reason that mercy can only take effect when the claims of equity are satisfied. Some, who

are ready enough to object that too great a scope has already been given to reason's unaided powers, are yet no less firmly assured that reason must indicate mercy as the most essential and attractive attribute in the sublime character of God. It is necessary to be explicit in regard to this somewhat general statement. It is to be observed that God is a Spirit, and therefore has the three great primary attributes of power, wisdom, and goodness. In the attribute of goodness are included holiness, on the one hand, and benevolence, on the other. That benevolence will disclose itself in deeds of compassion towards those who may suffer from want or pain, there cannot be the smallest doubt. But the question here is about forgiveness of sin. There is an essential difference here. The innocent sufferer may cry to the God of truth and love for deliverance, and will not cry in vain. For he is the Judge, and therefore bound by his authority, as well as his justice, to redress wrong. But the sinner, conscious of his guilt, is dumb before the God of holiness. He feels that all that is good in God is arrayed against him. The infinite holiness of God abhors his iniquity, and the infinite benevolence of the same God expends itself on behalf of the wrong-sufferer against the wrong-doer. Conscience is, in this case certainly, an unexceptionable witness; and what is conscience but reason in the soul of man pronouncing on the moral question? And until it be found to be the feeling of mankind that sympathy in the Supreme Governor should be extended to the offender, rather than to the party offended, it must be admitted that, apart from revelation, there is no reason to hope for the forgiveness of sin, and every reason to expect that the sinner will be adequately punished, and the sufferer from his sin duly compensated. The very provisions of salvation come in as corroborative witnesses of this indefeasible averment of reason. The propitiation for sin by an all-sufficient Redeemer is indispensable, simply because eternal justice must have its full vindication. The sanctification of the soul by the omnipotent Spirit is essential to salvation, because the rebel heart cannot bask in the sun-



shine of reconciliation. These conditions are the intuitive intimations of reason, whenever the case of disobedience to a moral law is placed before it. And, accordingly, whenever the purpose of mercy is announced, they have to be satisfied by the provisions devised by infinite wisdom and accomplished by infinite power.

22. The notion of redemption, propitiation, or vicarious satisfaction to the law, as it is variously called, is also agreeable to reason. When a wrong is done to a private individual, he has a right to redress; and if he receive it, no matter from what source it comes, it is manifest that the ends of justice are secured, so far as he is concerned. In point of fact, the compensation comes to him most frequently, not from the wrong-doer, but from the supreme magistrate, who asserts his right over the culprit, and by the strong arm of power compels restitution. But a third party, who has the means freely at his disposal, may tender restitution on behalf of the culprit, the acceptance of which on the part of the plaintiff satisfies his claim. Again, it cannot be denied that the wrong-sufferer, so far as he is personally concerned, may forgive the wrong-doer. These two personal rights belong to the magistrate, as well as to the private subject. He too has a right to redress, and yet may forgive. But, besides personal rights, the magistrate has judicial obligations. He is bound to secure all the ends of justice. These respect the party wronged, the mediator, and the wrong-doer. First, compensation must be made to the party wronged. Secondly, the mediator must make the amends out of means entirely at his own disposal, on the one hand, and, on the other, in such a way as not to diminish permanently or essentially his personal dignity or welfare. It would be manifestly unjust that the mediator, if he were of equal rank with the sinner, should undergo the doom of perpetual death that the sinner might enjoy the award of eternal bliss; both because the mediator would be giving what was not at his own disposal, and because the ends of justice would be reversed. Hence it is evident that the Mediator must be

divine, in order to be independent, and to be able to make compensation without sacrificing forever his essential dignity or blessedness. Thirdly, the offence must cease. This ceases when the sinner comes to his right mind, reposes faith in the Mediator, and turns with repentance towards the Father. On these conditions the absolute Judge is at liberty to pardon the sinner.

23. The Spirit and the word of revelation must go together, in order to bring about the conversion of the soul. If the Spirit were to come alone, without the gospel, and lift the veil from the darkened soul, the result would be precisely what has been described in the former part of this response, a philosophy ending in self-condemnation and despair. And this goes far to obviate the objection that reason cannot penetrate as far as is there presumed. The ultimate limit to which right reason can reach may be far beyond what the dimmed, biased, unbalanced reason of the fallen nature may actually descry. But if the Holy Spirit were to take away the dimness and the bias, and restore the balance, the result would simply be that hopeless remorse of conscience which is an essential ingredient in the doom of the guilty. On the other hand, if the gospel were to come without the Spirit that unclouds the mental vision and undoes the moral bondage of the will, it would be a sealed book and a dead letter, neither "enlightening the eyes" nor "converting the soul." Hence they are astray, on the one hand, who pray for the Spirit without searching the scriptures, and who, on the other hand, like Nicodemus, hunt after the teaching of the word without seeking for the regenerating work of the Spirit.

24. The threefold division of salvation is the occasion of drawing forth out of the bosom of God the great mystery of revelation, the threefold personality of the Divine Being. The word "person" is here used in a unique sense to denote a transcendent relative in the essence of God, the meaning of which revelation alone enables us in any measure to define. The persons or subsistents in the divine nature are called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The first

two are clearly terms of relation ; and the last has, no doubt, a reference to the original meaning of spirit, and is therefore related to the others as breath is to him that breathes. It is to be remembered, however, that the word-maker, who first transferred the term " spirit " from breath to the intelligent principle, did not understand by it a transient puff of air, but the breath of life, without which a man will die. Hence it came to mean the principle of life, of intelligent voluntary activity in man. As the principle of life in the race is one, so is the uncreated principle of vitality one in the Father and the Son in that transcendent relation which subsists in the divine essence. As the spirit is to the man in the human being, so is the Holy Spirit to the Father and the Son in the Divine Being. And as in passing from the natural breath to the breath of life or vital principle, we have to leave out everything which is merely physical, so in passing from the human to the divine Father and Son and Spirit we have to abstract from our conception everything which is merely temporal and dependent, and rise to that which is compatible with the eternal and the original. It is manifest that the trinity of persons incidentally disclosed in the economy of salvation is a particular aspect of a transcendent reality essentially and eternally subsisting in the Godhead. It has, therefore, a paramount interest on philosophical grounds, apart from its special import in demonstrating the possibility of salvation for the children of the fall.

25. Second only to the revelation of the Trinity in the Godhead is the historical fact of the incarnation of the Son of God. The atonement for the sin of man must be made by man. The man who makes it must be free from personal sin, and independent in his resources. This involves seemingly incompatible conditions. The Son of God becoming the Son of Man solves the moral problem. There is a profound metaphysical interest in the incarnation of the Messiah, subordinate only to that of the trinity of persons in the unity of the divine essence. This Son of Man is in all respects a man, and yet he is at the same time, in the fullest sense of

the term, the Son of God. Thus there is a hypostatical union of the divine and human natures in the second Adam. The divine in him is the uncreated Spirit ; the human is the created spirit in its physical organ, the human body. We have made some progress in the chemistry of mineral and organic matter ; but we have not advanced very far in the analysis or synthesis of the qualities of spirit. A long period of speculative controversy on the nature and properties of matter preceded the rise of chemistry. Let us hope that the age of endless and unprofitable surmisings and disputations regarding spirit will soon give way to the dawn of a metaphysical science that will penetrate into the nature, properties, and relations of spirit.

26. Forgiveness of sins by the Father, atonement by the Son, and regeneration by the Holy Ghost, and, involved in these, the trinity of persons in the Godhead and the incarnation of the Son of God, are the five cardinal points of revelation ; as the guilt of man, the holiness of God, the doom of death, and, involved in these, the existence of God and the immortality of the soul of man, may be called the five points of the higher philosophy. Combined into one system, they constitute a brief, but adequate, answer to the sublime question proposed by the Roman governor to the King of kings. The development of these first principles in the book of scripture and the book of nature is a theme of study for all ages.

27. There are, indeed, two other themes of primary importance that have not fallen within the range of our observation. These are predestination and creation. They stand to one another in the relation of purpose and performance in man. But predestination extends to the conduct of free agents, and creation is effected without pre-existent materials. These transcendental powers belong exclusively to God. It tasks the utmost reach of the human mind to form any adequate conception of them ; yet they hold a prominent place in the field of human speculation, as well as in that of divine revelation. As, to say the least, it is ex-

tremely difficult for the finite mind to see or show the harmony of the predestination of the Creator with the free-agency of the creature, it seems more conducive to the interests of ethical and metaphysical science to consider the laws of nature and the moral relation of the free agent with God apart from the higher question of predestination, lest the one warp or perplex the mind in the discussion of the other. It seems possible to pursue each line of investigation, distinctly from the other, with a fair hope of correct and useful results. But the combination of the two in the one process of discussion has been productive of confusion and misapprehension.

28. We cannot conclude without remarking that revelation, in harmony with its character as a philosophy of hope, contains an invitation to the sinner to return to God, who will have mercy on him. Away far back in the infancy of the race, the Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering, and he indicated a similar acceptance on the same terms to the only other son of Adam then living. This is a practical invitation to all the sons of Adam of all generations. And it is constantly repeated on all suitable occasions. Nothing could exceed the pathos of the following appeal: "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel!" The Son of God, in the fulness of time, stood on earth in the form of man, to make atonement for man; and he said: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And in the parting word of the New Testament, we read: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." This expresses the spirit of the whole revelation. Coming from the God of sincerity and truth, it means all that it expresses, and warrants every child of man to put his trust in Jesus Christ, and lift the voice of repentance to the God of all grace with full assurance of being accepted.