

ARTICLE IV.

ARE THE NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL WORLDS ONE IN LAW?

BY GEORGE F. MAGOUN, D.D., IOWA COLLEGE.

PROFESSOR HENRY DRUMMOND has started this question by his notable and brilliant book.¹ At last advices from England its issues had been thirty-four thousand. It owes its exceptional success as a literary venture to two things: its felicitous and polished style, and the preparation for it in the public mind by certain "scientific [so-called] speculations." Few intelligent readers, we apprehend, have failed to think, in some vague way at least, of likenesses between some of these speculations and certain religious truths. If a theological writer had elaborated these likenesses, he might have received little attention, or have been suspected of laboring to prop up beliefs weak in themselves. It needed only that a scientific instructor should do it attractively to secure wide applause.

The thesis of the book is: Unity of law in the two worlds, the physical and the spiritual. Between these two worlds, commonly understood to be distinct and different, he maintains a resemblance, not hitherto admitted, in this, that law—in some sense of the word "law"—runs from the one into the other. He recognizes the distinction between identity of law and analogy of laws, and also between analogy of laws and analogy of phenomena, —though he does not by any means always respect these distinctions. The book, then, must stand or fall by its success, not in exhibiting either class of analogies, but in proving the absolute identity affirmed. It is said (p. viii):

¹ *Natural Law in the Spiritual World.* By Henry Drummond, F.R.S.E., F.G.S. New York: James Pott and Co. 1884. (pp. 414.)

“There is a deeper unity between the two kingdoms than the analogy of their phenomena”; (p. ix): “Natural law, could it be traced in the spiritual world, would have an important scientific value—it would offer Religion a new credential.” His purpose is to find (p. xiii) “the basis [of the two] in a common principle—the Continuity of Law,” *i. e.*, of *Physical Law*. “The position we have been led to take up is not that the spiritual laws are analogous to the natural laws, but that *they are the same laws*. It is not a question of analogy, but of *identity*. . . . The laws of the invisible are the same laws, projections of the natural, *not* supernatural. Analogous phenomena are not the fruit of parallel laws, but of the same laws—laws which at one end, as it were, may be dealing with Matter; at the other end, with Spirit” (p. 11 of Introduction). “As the natural laws are continuous through the universe of matter and of space, so will they be continuous through the universe of spirit” (p. 41).

This language implies the universal identity of law in the two kingdoms, *i. e.*, that *all* physical laws are continuous through the spiritual kingdom, and that *all* spiritual laws are merely physical laws holding good in another realm into which they are continued. But the author retracts this twice, and substitutes for a universal thesis a partial one. He says (p. xvi): “The danger of making a new principle apply too widely inculcates here the utmost caution. One thing is certain, and I state it pointedly, the application of natural law to the spiritual world has decided and necessary limits.” And again (p. 28): “How much of the spiritual world is covered by natural law, we do not propose at present to inquire. It is certain, at least, that the whole is not covered.”

Our critical task does not require us, then, to hold him to a universal thesis, or to show, on the other side, cases not covered by it; but simply to examine the cases in which he asserts his partial thesis, and discover whether the analogous spiritual phenomena which he describes are under real physical laws.

And here, in order to prepare the way for the analysis we are about to make, and in order, also, to disencumber the discussion a little, let it be observed, that the thesis of this book is entirely unnecessary to the doctrine of law in the spiritual world. For, what is here meant by the vaguely-used and much-misunderstood word *law*? Let us take Professor Drummond's definition of it. "The fundamental conception of law is an ascertained working sequence or constant order among the phenomena of nature. . . . The laws of nature are simply statements of the orderly condition of things in nature; what is found in nature by a sufficient number of competent observers. . . . The natural laws originate nothing, sustain nothing; they are merely responsible for uniformity in sustaining what has been originated and what is being sustained" (p. 5).

Now, in this sense of "law," which is clearly distinguished from force, at least, and confined to phenomena or facts,¹ it almost goes without saying, that:

1. There can be, and must be, law in the spiritual world

¹ For a more extended discrimination between force, formula, or rationale of method, and fact, see Boston Lectures on Scepticism, 1872; Lecture I, The Adjustment between the Natural Law of Progress and the Christian Law, pp. 14, 15. "Fact, rule or method, and force are every hour mistaken for each other by men who ought to think more accurately. When we say that it is the law of a certain thing to show certain phenomena, we are thinking only of constant or prevailing facts. When we speak of the law of the thing operating to such results or phenomena, we mean far more than the facts, the force in the thing that makes the facts apparent. But when we affirm that the law is that these phenomena shall occur (or the force act) thus or so, our language points to something different from both, a method, rationale, or principle of order. . . . A molecule or an atom gives you the same distinction between fact and force as any body of matter. But a statement of the manner, proportion, or intensity in certain circumstances with which this force acts—involving relations of space, time, quantity of matter, and velocity—is a rule, rationale, or principle of order. For example, that attraction acts in direct proportion to the quantity of matter, etc. A rule is behind the facts: a force, like attraction, behind the rule or rules. A sentence from Newton will show how he recognized this distinction (third letter to Bentley): 'Gravity must be caused by an *agent* acting constantly according to certain *laws*.'"

other than physical law. Order and uniformity among spiritual phenomena must exist. Just as likely, at least, to exist as order and uniformity among physical phenomena. The presence of free-will in the former makes no difference, plainly; for, as free-will is capable of producing any possible spiritual phenomena, it can produce a great multitude of similar ones as well as of dissimilar ones. There may be an "ascertained constant order" of non-physical or spiritual facts; there may be "statements of the orderly condition of things" in the one kingdom, as well as in the other. But this is non-physical or spiritual law, by definition. Professor Drummond, indeed, implies that this cannot be,—that uniform action exists in the world of matter only. "Can it be said," he asks, "that the phenomena of the spiritual world are other than scattered? Is it not plain that the one thing thinking men are waiting for is the introduction of law among the phenomena of the spiritual world?" "Did that Hand divide the world into two,—a cosmos and a chaos, the higher being the chaos?" "What if Religion be yet brought within the sphere of Law?" "If there is any foundation for theology, if the phenomena of the spiritual world are real, in the nature of things they ought to come into the sphere of law." "In many particulars it [theology] wants but a fresh expression to make it in the most modern sense scientific." All this implies that there is no science save the physical ones, the sciences of matter; no law save those to be found holding good in matter,—which hardly needs contradiction, it is so obviously at variance with fact. The phenomena of Christian experience are perfectly capable of being known and classified by their similarities, which, again, is the very idea of law here. Else such confusion as the present use of the cant phrase "Christian consciousness" could never have arisen. Professor Drummond, indeed, fully admits the reality of religious phenomena. "The facts of the spiritual world are as real to thousands as the facts of the natural world—and more

real to hundreds." But he is thus logically estopped from denying that similarities between such facts actually and extensively exist, and that any orderly mind can collect them into uniform statements. Yet this is science — as has long been known to theologians, on this side the ocean at least; this is law, in his own sense of it. He represents Science as making Theology tremble by its reign of law! while the theologian has "no fear of facts." What is there, then, to tremble at in the mere uniformity or constant order of spiritual facts? We could show him a good many American theologians who have only delighted and exulted in it. They have always asserted a possible and an actual theological science on the very basis of this order or uniformity.

2. While the assumption that there is no law but *physical* law is inadmissible and absurd, it goes without saying, also, that it cannot possibly be injected or run into the spiritual realm. Apparently the author gave little heed to the definitions we have cited; but his readers may rightfully hold him to them and do it strictly. Perhaps he would admit that physical facts, *i. e.*, facts of matter, cannot be or become, *ipso facto*, spiritual facts. At least, they cannot become such and remain physical the while. A phenomenon of matter is not, and cannot be, in the nature of things, a phenomenon of spirit; cannot be material and non-material at the same time. The thing is not thinkable, save to the insane. This, Professor Drummond seems to admit. Then *uniformity of physical fact cannot become uniformity of spiritual fact*. There can be analogous facts of two kinds; and that is all. Applying the same general description to them, because of their analogy, is by no means to subsume them under the same law. The general description seizes on nothing more than an analogy. It cannot bring the analogous facts into the same *uniformity* of facts, unless it first makes them the same *sort* of facts in nature,— both kinds material, or else both kinds spiritual. The constant order cannot run across the

line of distinction, unless the facts themselves run across the line. To affirm physical similarity among things spiritual is simply to confound the spiritual with the physical. The continuity asserted is both impossible and unthinkable as long as the things of which it is asserted differ severally as they do.

With this falls to the ground the assertion that the great law of Continuity is "the Law of laws." The assertion is one of sufficient temerity. It assumes identity of nature in things naturally different. The principle of analogy, whether applied to laws or to phenomena, does not assume this, but the contrary. Analogy and identity cannot co-exist in the same object and in the same respect. Identity must be absent in order that analogy may exist. By analogy of phenomena, analogy of laws may be established; but to bring phenomena under the same identical law, shown to be continuous in them all, more than analogy of phenomena must be proven. They must be shown to be so alike in essentials that they clearly proceed from the same *kind* of force, or productive cause, at least. Professor Drummond says that laws have nothing to do with causes. But for his purpose they must have so much to do with them as this,—to establish, or to authorize him to assume, that the causes of physical and of psychical facts—whatever they may be—are of the selfsame kind. If not, the laws by which those causes work their results are simply analogous, not identical.

Something else, also, falls to the ground here. Early in his preface—at the outset, indeed—Professor Drummond raises the question, "Is the supernatural natural or unnatural?" And he proceeds to "exhibit nature in religion," making the spiritual a "part" of nature, vindicating "the naturalness of the supernatural" ("as the supernatural *becomes* slowly natural"), under his thesis. He does not merely attempt to state truth about the former "in terms of the rest of our knowledge"; he attempts to make us believe that "the law of continuity

puts the finishing touch to the harmony of the universe," in obliterating the distinctions between the natural and the spiritual. It is true that every thing that we can think, or that can exist, must have a nature in the sense of a constitution.¹ No one hesitates to speak of the nature of God, even, as distinguished from his character. So there is a higher nature in us, akin to his. And all that we are in constitution is natural,—the spiritual, as well as the physical, possessing a nature (notwithstanding Coleridge); a nature of its own, not under necessity, free-will being a part of this spiritual nature or constitution. If any thing else, or more than this, is meant by Professor Drummond, it must be that the spiritual is asserted to be physical, and mind to be matter. And this it can hardly be necessary to pause to refute. The psychical in man—here called the supernatural (perhaps in Coleridge's sense)—is certainly not "unnatural," in the sense of having no constitution of its own at all, nothing by which it is differentiated from the body; but it is just as certainly non-natural, if by natural is meant that which is material, as body is. Any thing else than this is monism or—it may be unconscious—materialism. And the real philosophical tendency of the thesis of this interesting book is toward materialism, while its separate discussions or essays, taken as literary work in the field of analogy

¹ We quite agree with the critic in the *British Quarterly* for July, that, "when tried by its own standard, the book is a failure," and that in it "there is not a system of religious philosophy at all." Some of the critic's remarks anticipate criticisms we intended to make. But we hardly understand *all* of the following statement: "We believe in the existence of law in the spiritual world, in exactly the same sense as in the visible world; and, in a very obvious sense, such law is natural law; the laws of any order of being constitute its nature." What meaning can be attached to the last three words? Certainly uniform phenomena, if these are meant by laws, are the result of the nature of any order of being, and cannot, therefore, be this nature itself. Neither could a rationale, or method, according to which the phenomena occur. As plainly, the force belonging to any thing is in consequence of the nature it possesses. If the critic's remark were true, physical law projected into the spiritual world would make it physical in nature!

(which the author denies them to be), tend the other way; and this often with an intellectual witchery and grace of expression deserving very high praise.¹

Passing now to these essays, it is notable that they all have a biological cast of language and thought, and are all based upon the assumption that the word "life" always bears one and the same meaning, no matter to what it is applied. This, indeed, is a necessary assumption, in order to seem, even, to make out that the laws of physical life run into another realm where there is nothing physical,—life, or any thing beside,—but all is of an entirely different nature. How material life can exist in the spiritual world we leave the monists to explain; but it must be so, or its laws (uniform facts, let it be remembered) cannot hold good in such a world. Professor Drummond's first chapter, *Biogenesis*, assumes that life in matter and in mind is one and the same thing, and his last chapter, *Classification*, rests on the same assumption. That he "regards all law as essentially spiritual" does not help the matter—if, indeed, with his definition of law, it has any meaning. We can put the words together—all constant order of material objects is a mental order; not meaning thereby, that, if the mind thinks of the former, the latter order, as a parallel mental process, results; but that the former *is* the latter, or A is non-A; vegetable life, for example, with its uniformities of fact, is non-vegetable life; animal life is vegetable; psychical life, *i. e.*, the natural vitality and power of soul to act and continue, is animal life; moral or religious life is psychical, or natural vitality of soul! Nor does it help the matter that he regards life—in this indiscriminate use of it—as something outside

¹ Throughout this criticism we prefer the word "physical" to the term "natural" (Drummond), for the sake of clearness and distinctness. There is a sense in which the spiritual is natural, as truly as the physical. God has given to each and both a nature; to each its own nature. But in order to subsume physical law and spiritual law, however analogous, as species under natural as genus, the thinking of Professor Drummond's book would have to be materially changed.

the inorganic world, an unprecedented phenomenon, originated only by previous life. When he says that the opponents of the theory that religious action and character in man can generate themselves "persistently maintain the doctrine of Biogenesis," he is using figurative language, carrying over the word "Biogenesis" from natural history to mind. He admits that, as to the phenomena, "all that is really possible is an analogy"; *e. g.*, the fact that religious activity (in distinction from mere psychical activity) can be produced only by the Spirit of God is analogous to the fact that vegetable life can proceed only from vegetable life, animal life from animal life, psychical life from psychical life. How, then, does this mere analogy between different realms, in which the word "life" has entirely different meanings, establish one continuous law, and this a physical one? From the "remarkable harmony" between the distinct though, in some sort, similar classes of fact, he leaps to the assertion, "We find one great Law guarding the thresholds of both worlds." "There are not two laws of Biogenesis, one for the natural, the other for the spiritual; one law is for both." Not proven! we say. It must first be proven that the New Birth is in its nature physical Biogenesis, a change in mere natural history. To assert that "Christ himself founds Christianity upon Biogenesis (in the modern scientific sense) stated in its most literal form," may be brilliant rhetoric; but it is very poor logic, and worse theology. There is a mere analogy of laws here, *i. e.*, of constant and constantly analogous phenomena, nothing more; *to state the analogue and the other constant which is analogous to it in the same words is very far from making the two one.* It results from the circumstance that analogies can be seen so extensively in our universe, that such a statement, *ipsis-simis verbis*, can very often be made of things that differ; but it creates no identity. No more than stating a botanical generalization in the terms of a chemical one makes these two identical. No more than setting forth a politi-

cal principle in phraseology drawn from astronomy or geology creates identity. That the arrival of any form of life in the realm of matter must be instantaneous may be used as an illustration of the truth that the new birth is, and, from its nature, must be, instantaneous; but this does not make these several truths one and the same. The term "life" is one so difficult to define, in any of its uses, that it affords special temptation to loose and delusive thinking. And it may be said, perhaps, that this alone explains the failure of Professor Drummond's book. Biogenesis is the law that *physical* life—not every thing called life—is begotten by physical life. To enlarge its meaning to include any thing different in nature is unscientific. Yet this error runs through the book. Without it one could hardly have the temerity to assert in so many words,—besides vaguely and superficially hinting at it as plausible,—that the law (or physical fact) of Biogenesis "is at once the foundation of Biology and of Spiritual Religion," which is one of the *dicta* of the closing chapter. In this chapter, on the basis of the distinction between energy and (physical) life, the latter is made the principle of a special classification—which is universally recognized, even, we believe, by those who still assert spontaneous generation. But then it is asserted that our Saviour makes this the ground of distinction between Christian and non-Christian, regenerate and unregenerate, persons! The very "keystone of Christianity" is found in the confounding of what we may call moral spirituality, or holy activity and character (figuratively called life), with what is known under that name literally in biology. "In the proposition, *That which is flesh is flesh, and that which is spirit is spirit*, Christ formulates the first law of biological religion, [!] and lays the basis for a final classification. He divides men into two classes, the living and the not-living. And Paul afterwards carries out the classification consistently; making his entire system depend upon it, and throughout arranging men, on the one hand,

as πνευματικός, *spiritual*, on the other, as ψυχικός, *carnal*, in terms of Christ's distinction." Accordingly, after showing that science recognizes but two kingdoms, the inorganic and the organic, our author proposes to enlarge the classification and add a third kingdom,—that which is characterized by spiritual rectitude, or the kingdom of heaven, the realm, not of the ψυχικός, but of the πνευματικός. The former, however, he had before included, by the confusion of thought as to the term "life" already noticed, in the organic world. Thus, on a previous page, "What is the essential difference between the Christian and the not-a-Christian? It is the distinction between the Organic and the Inorganic." Yet the ψυχικός is several times said to be dead, and the πνευματικός alone living; while the ψυχικός, as organic, is by definition the living. It goes without saying that there is a plain contradiction here; that Christian spirituality is not at one and the same time included in the organic kingdom and in a third separate and additional one; and that our Lord did not call the πνευματικός Christian because he is organic, on Professor Drummond's ground or on any ground. The contradiction arises from sometimes confounding what is (for want of any other term) called life, *viz.*, regenerate moral action, with the psychical, animal, and vegetable vitalities; and sometimes, unconsciously and perforce, recognizing the real differences between them. He falls into the logical vice of cross-division.

This thorough-going error and confusion appears again, in the suggested application—the author is not unwise enough to try to carry it out—of the four physiological tests to Christian character. These are Assimilation, Waste, Reproduction, and Spontaneous Action. The latter he would have some difficulty in making out, consistently with his belief that all regenerate action is from God, in any other sense than that in which the mind itself (ψυχικός) is a self-active being. That all these terms are of material origin, and the processes so named purely pro-

cesses of matter, in the literal sense, is obvious enough. That any thing religious in moral action to which they may be applied is figuratively, but never literally, called by these names—transferred from their original sphere to a new one—is quite as obvious. Professor Drummond erects a third kingdom on the hypothesis of evolution. He recognizes a difficulty in conceiving “a new kingdom starting off suddenly on a different plane and in direct violation of the primary principle of development.” This principle, indeed, only calls for the evolution of the natural-psychical life, as part of the mental, from the animal, and not that new moral character which appears in regeneration. He gets over the difficulty, or thinks he does, by devising an “evolution of evolution,” whatever this may be. This curious attempt of a fanciful and illogical essayist to extricate himself from difficulty is worth noting. He first notices the transition from the inorganic to the organic, as the passing a barrier seemingly impassable to evolution; and then observes that the transition from the natural-psychical to the ethical-spiritual is no more so,—not noticing that this transition is not on such a line of development at all, if on any. Then he declares that we must “frame a larger doctrine” of differentiation. One would think so! “The materialistic evolution, so to speak, is a straight line. Making all else complex, it alone remains simple—unscientifically simple. But, as evolution unfolds every thing else, it is now seen to be itself unfolding. The straight line is coming out gradually in curves. At a given point a new force appears, deflecting it; and at another given point a new force appears, deflecting that. What we are reaching, in short, is nothing less than the *evolution of evolution.*” *Mirabile dictu!* “Evolution, in harmony with its own law, that progress is from the simple to the complex, begins itself to pass toward the complex.” What can the result of all this be—the simple? by some rule of contraries? Where will this marvellous “sea-change” end itself, and where land the

human mind? In the "simplicity" of fatuity? Did the writer ask Mr. Spencer's permission to juggle so with the great principle that "progress is from the simple to the complex"? If this thing is not checked, may not evolution evolve itself into any thing else you please, and that great mess of contradictions called "The Synthetic Philosophy"—the name itself a contradiction—disappear in smoke? How it is that a mere process—and this an imaginary one, as evolution is—can change itself into the opposite of itself, or how a new deflecting force, excluded by the process, can do it, passes comprehension. It would certainly be simpler to say that, at the given point, the new force comes in without any regard to the process imagined to be universal, which is found not to work universally. Another late English writer attempts to improve on Spencer still more; and, after affirming that "matter is instinct with force, force with mind"; "atoms have a tendency to become gases, gases to become water, water to become a transparent solid, to receive life, feeling, thought"; he is very bold, and asserts that one principle, the Differentiation of Energy, unifies all sciences, and removes that vagueness which, to scientific minds, mars the explanations of our common faith."¹ We suggest that, as evolution is conceived as the *modus operandi* of energy, the *modus* may be conceived as differentiating the energy, and this, in turn, differentiating evolution. Thus any thing might easily become *any thing and every thing else, evolution included.*

It is hardly necessary to go through all Professor Drummond's fascinating chapters and show minutely what vitiates them all. As pictures of analogy they are largely most admirable; as arguments for identity, in

¹ The Mystery of the Universe our Common Faith. By J. W. Reynolds, M.A., Prebendary in St. Paul's Cathedral, London. 1884. He undertakes, by his improved notions, "to verify divine revelation, our Lord's incarnation and resurrection, the efficacy of prayer, the atonement of Christ," and we know not what beside. The verification is as good for one thing as for another.

place of analogy, or identity proven by analogy, they are *nil*.

Take the very best of them all, that on Environment. Mr. Murphy praises it, in the *British Quarterly*, as "well reasoned and eloquent." It is certainly all this. It is a fresh example of what has so long been known as analogical reasoning, in contradistinction to logical reasoning. "It is wonderful that man should ever have thought it possible to be self-sufficing." Our dependence as creatures is our only ground of hope; as Dr. N. W. Taylor used to preach of the sinner's relation to the converting Spirit. "God is our refuge and strength." But when we borrow language from the sciences of matter, and call Him our *habitat*, our environment, our surroundings, we use words figuratively, and, in the spatial sense which they bear where we take them from, they are not strictly true. Locality is not essential to their new religious meaning; not possible, indeed, not thinkable. God is a Spirit; and so is man. The moral relations of the two are not geographical or materialistic. They are, to borrow a juster figure of speech, dynamic instead. The excitation and nourishment of Christian experience are not due to contact of surfaces. There are no surfaces in the case of so-called spiritual environment; there is no contact. To conceive it so is to confound similarity with sameness; as when our author asserts that "the arrangements for the spiritual life are *the same* as for the natural life."

Take the chapter on Conformity to Type. We can classify characters, as well as beings and objects. No need to resolve the mystery of the determination of types, in either case, in order to do so. Class and type, being purely thought-creations, apply as readily to non-material "subject-objects" as to sensible things. Indeed, only through the former do they apply to the latter; *i. e.*, through individual concepts formed before class and type concepts. As a matter of analogy, then, our author may well say: "As the bird-life builds up a bird, the image of

itself, so the Christ-life builds up a Christ, the image of Himself, in the inward nature of man." He may be allowed to speak of an incarnation in each case as "parallel" to the other. But when he declares that the Christ-life "obeys the same law" with the other, he ventures upon something untrue or meaningless.¹

Of the chapters on Growth and Degeneration, like remarks may be made. We use such words as "more" and "less," "greater" and "smaller," "increase" and "diminish," as to things of the mind and soul, without thinking that their primary and only literal use must have been quantitative, as to matter. Endowed with vegetable life, matter grows, and nothing else does or can. Accretion of bulk, by virtue of that principle or any other, is simply nonsense, if predicated of spirit. How absurd, then, is the statement: "There is but one principle of growth, both for the natural and spiritual, etc. For all growth is an organic thing." As well say that there is but one proximate cause of growth for the two. As religious experience is in no sense organic, the growth of it cannot be under the same law as that of the plant, only under similar ones. So of such characteristics as "spontane-

¹ The late E. C. Larned, Esq., of Chicago, in an article published since his death (New York Evangelist, Oct. 23, 1884), points out, with great force and clearness, the denial of free-will in the essay on Conformity to Type. "Bird-life makes the bird. Christ-life makes the Christian. . . . 'The law here,' says Drummond, 'is the same biological law that exists in the natural world.' It is said in a variety of forms that 'the mental and moral substance' of the unregenerate man 'is spiritually lifeless.' Two meanings of life are here manifestly confounded, by Professor Drummond, with each other. If the soul is lifeless in the same sense that protoplasm is before 'a mysterious something has entered into' it, then it has no capacity to choose evil, which we know by consciousness, all of us, to be as untrue a proposition as can be framed. But, if the spiritual nature has life and power of choice before the new birth, then the receiving from Christ the impulse to choose holiness and the service of God is not a helpless 'conformity to type.' The phrase is simply and obviously a misnomer. We have not taken the trouble to point out the theological slips of the author, contenting ourselves with the purely logical ones; but in an English review the 'ultra-Calvinistic conclusions' of the book are noticed."

ousness" and "mysteriousness," which apply equally well to vegetable, animal, psychical, and religious phenomena, it is sufficient to say that to affirm those of all these in common is not at all to bring the phenomena under one law.¹ And they cannot be affirmed of the last in affirming them of the three first. We should be extremely sorry to take any thing from the practical impression of what is so well said of religious degeneration, the scientific statements in which will easily be perceived to be illustrations, not exemplifications; and such expressions as atrophy, reversion to type, organic deterioration, as figurative as the statements about senses of sight, sound, touch, and taste in the religious natures. Mr. Murphy says: "It is, in fact, an admirable sermon on the text of the Sluggard's Garden in Solomon's Proverbs; but its scientific value is totally destroyed by the fact that weeds, and wild types to which domestic breeds of animals revert, are not, from a biological point of view, cases of degeneracy at all."

As to Death and Mortification, Professor Drummond does not press his thesis as he does elsewhere, making analogies of fact more prominent. Both chapters are offshoots of that on Environment, and contain much that, as illustration, is suggestive. As to Eternal Life, correspondence with environment, of which so much is made, "does not constitute life," and is nothing unless life is first supplied. Moreover, in nothing properly organic does life come from the constant environment as, in the case of the Christian, what we call life, *i. e.*, spirituality, comes from

¹ Mr. Larned (New York Evangelist) points out the consciousness attending religious experience and its progress, and the lack of this in the growth of plant and animal, as sufficient to overthrow Professor Drummond's position. So the Christian graces, instead of coming to us spontaneously, are the fruit of effort. Our Lord bids us "strive to enter in at the strait gate." "Work out your own salvation," writes Paul to the Philippians. If there be increase of natural psychical quantity or energy in the course of years, experience, and education, this may be spontaneous and unconscious, but not "growth in grace."

God. So much of analogy as exists is instructive; but no scientific identity of law is created thereby, and, where the analogy ceases, worthless or injurious impressions are made by stating religious facts in terms of scientific knowledge. There is a sense, not geographical or spatial, of course, in which sinners and lost angels are environed by God forever; but all life cannot "*consist essentially in correspondence to environments,*" since *the life causes the correspondence*. Professor Drummond himself says, "To establish communication with the Eternal is not to secure eternal life." Indeed, he admits that "perfect correspondence with environment is not eternal life," herein contradicting himself. And there is no physical law running through the relation of the soul to God, and making this correspondence with even an eternal environment an eternal life.

Indeed, no such continuity of law as is here asserted, but by no means made evident, could be possible, save in the case of universal laws, properly so called. Why did not the author instance these? Manifestly, physical laws are not universal. If any one is, it is gravitation. A suspicion of the fitness of what has just been said seems, indeed, to cross our author's mind. For he gives three reasons for not instancing gravitation: *First*. There is no proof that gravitation does not hold in the spiritual world. *If* the spirit be in any sense material, it must. *Secondly*. It may hold, though it cannot be directly proved. *Thirdly*. If the spiritual be not material, it still cannot be said that gravitation ceases at that point to be continuous. It is not gravitation that ceases,—it is matter. Well-trained logicians will hardly read this without a smile. For there is no such thing as gravitation, save as a constant fact of matter; and how the constant fact could go on, or remain increasing, where matter itself ceases, the imagination even of an evolutionist would be sorely staggered to comprehend. The laws of logic and pure thought are properly universal; but they run in the physical and spiritual

realms alike, and with the same validity, because they are not, like those here discussed, generalizations of mere physical facts. If they were, they could not extend beyond their own realm.¹ On the principles of materialistic monism alone, the thesis of this book is valid; on no others with which we are acquainted. All laws, on those principles, should be universal. Intuitive truths hold good in both realms; but to trace them in religion would be hardly "a first exploration in an unsurveyed land." Of life as cause, whatever is meant by life, the same things could be said, in both realms, because the same things can be said in all realms, of cause, properly so called. The new birth, for example, is clearly a beginning, to be accounted for only by an adequate power.

The chapters on Parasitism and Semi-parasitism are so obviously purely analogical, and so utterly lacking in any evidence of identity of law in the two realms, that they call for but a word. All that is said of the weakness and misery of religious habits—whether in Romish or Protestant circles—that produce superficiality and a mere mechanical, external semblance of piety and salvation, is exceedingly true. But when the writer discusses what he calls "the inborn parasitic tendency in man in things religious," he is plainly using a figure of speech, even though he believes he is employing terms of science in their one literal meaning. When, in describing a foreign professor who had put his soul into the hands of the church, and went to mass once a year, he adds, "Though he thought it not, this is parasitism in its worst and most degrading form"; it may be replied, "If it were, one who 'knew all about parasitism,' and whose scientific work 'will live in the history of his country,' would certainly have thought of it." He did not recognize it as such because it is not such, but something outside the realm of his science, and of all sciences known to him which can

¹ In other words, they are not, in the sense of this discussion, "natural" laws.

be likened unto it. Professor Drummond himself calls it a "correlative," which has not the scientific meaning of "co-ordinate." The spiritual parasitism, so called, is to be "illustrated," not exemplified, by the natural. Who cannot see that the two propositions following belong in two distinct realms of truth and law? *viz.*, (1) "Any new set of conditions occurring to an animal which renders its food and safety very easily attained seems to lead, as a rule, to [physical] degeneration." (2) "Any principle [in religion] which secures the safety [?] of the individual without personal effort or the vital exercise of [spiritual] faculty is disastrous to moral character." When the author says, "To sustain life, physical, mental, moral, or spiritual food is essential," who does not see that here are four meanings of life and food, instead of one? When he asks, "What more natural than for the independent, free-moving, growing *Sacculina* to degenerate into the listless, unconscious, pampered parasite of the pew," what intelligent reader does not understand that this is rhetoric illustrating a point, and not logic establishing a scientific classification, or the law on which one rests?

A recent preacher of the Merchants' Lecture, London, "mentioned an omission in Professor Drummond's book, and suggested that an additional chapter, showing that salvation was not on the lines of natural law, but by grace, and that, in the administration of this system of grace, there is an analogy to this system of nature, would have removed objections which have been made to the book both by saints and scientists."¹ This very thing was done in this country forty years ago by Dr. Mark Hopkins in his Lowell Institute Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity. His (first) argument from analogy, which may be considered a supplement to Bishop Butler's, contained these points: "5. Christianity is in harmony with the works of God, because it is a system of means (Butler, pt. 2, chap. 4), implying the gradual development of a

¹ *The Nonconformist* for Dec. 18.

plan. 6. Because it is a remedial system (Butler, pt. 2, chap. 3). Nature has provided a remedial system; and, if the proper remedies are applied in time, the man may be restored. The remedial system of nature often requires the suffering of great present pain," etc. So Christianity pain of another kind. Nature does not cure at once. So Christianity. It is impartial as to persons. So Christianity. "7. Because it is a mediatorial system." That is, the means of remedy is the mediatorship of Christ. (Butler.) Dr. Hopkins here avoided the explicit statement of a vicarious atonement, as the founder of the Institute was a Unitarian; but cited from Butler the principle that one suffers for another in the course of nature. This is the basis of the analogy.

In suggesting, however, that the author of *Natural Law in the Spiritual World* should introduce or add this analogy to his work, the Merchants' Lecturer proposes that he contradict the very theorem of his book! The pertinent thing to suggest would have been to show that the analogy pointed out by Dr. Hopkins is an absolute identity of natural, *i. e.*, physical law! and no analogy at all.

Since this article was sent to the printer, a writer on political economy has published the following suggestion: "If we study civilized men, we shall find that, notwithstanding the wide diversity between the motives which actuate different men, and the conditions in which they are placed, they have this in common, that, when they want to reach an end, they adopt the easiest and shortest way to it which they can find, unless they have some special reason for preferring another way. This is as sound and comprehensive a law as that a stone will fall directly downwards unless it is turned aside by some intervening force."¹ Our author would say: This is the same identical law as that a stone will fall directly, etc.; as if falling stones "want to reach an end," in the sense of desire and will. So "a straight line is the shortest dis-

¹ Professor Simon Newcomb in the *Princeton Review* for November, 1884.

tance between two points" is one and the same proposition in physics and metaphysics!

We dismiss the book with the impression that it is a well-wrought exemplification of Pascal's saying, quoted in it, that nature is an image of grace. Those who think only or chiefly in the analogical way will be interested, stimulated, profited, by it. Those who already find themselves fully nourished on the (logical) forms of truth will find it superfluous, perhaps, or annoying. This whole idea of translating one sort of truth into the terms of another may even become deceptive. It may imply what is not at all true. Our eye falls this moment upon an account of a lecture before an art society in London, in which the study of color was treated "under the figure of a language, describing, in turn, the letters, the words, the sentence, and the song," to be found in a painter's work. Evidently the laws of language could not, in this figurative lecture, be shown to be, *ipso facto*, the laws of color, however ingenious and stimulating the parallel drawn. It is a great fault of religious literature that it abounds in slipshod and fallacious writing born of inexact thinking. It follows quite too much the fashion of sensational rhetoric, in attempting to cast every thing in the moulds of picture and similitude of something not itself. Let not Science—especially Christian Science—teach us a new variety of this fault.