

## CHAPTER I.

### ON THE ELEMENTS OF HUMAN PROGRESSION

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#### SECTION I.—REMARKS ON THE MATTERS INVOLVED IN POLITICAL SCIENCE.

A DISTINCTION must necessarily be drawn between the science of politics itself, and its application to *Man*.

The science is purely abstract and theoretic. It professes only to determine the trueness or falsity of certain propositions which are apprehended by the reason; and the reason may take into consideration this trueness or falsity, without dwelling on the fact that man is a *moral* being, who ought to *act* in accordance with such principles as are legitimately substantiated. In this sense the science of politics is as purely abstract as geometry, which determines the general relations of figures, without in the slightest degree attempting to pronounce whether there are any real material objects to which its truths can be *applied*.

But when we have admitted the fact, that man is a moral being, the theoretic dogma becomes transformed

into a practical rule of action, which lays an imperative obligation on man to act in a particular manner, and to refrain from acting in another manner. The theoretic truth determines the relations of moral beings, and consequently determines what ought to be their conditions with regard to each other; the practical rule determines what man may, or may not, do *justly*, and consequently what the political construction of civil society ought to be.

The science of politics then treats of *equity*, and of the relations of men *in* equity. And the general questions which the science has to solve are,—

1. What are those actions which men may do *equitably*?

2. What are those actions which men are by equity *bound* to do?

3. What are those actions which men cannot do *equitably*? that is, what are those actions which, though they may actually be done, are not, and never can be, *equitable*?

Political science, therefore, discourses of human *actions*; and these actions classified with regard to the agent, are divided into *duties*, *crimes*, and negative actions. But when the moral motives of the agent are left out of account, the actions themselves are investigated as to their characteristics, and they may then be treated of in their relation to the two great categories of political science, *liberty* and *property*.

Under the heads of *liberty* and *property* all questions of politics may be discussed, bearing in mind always that political science treats exclusively of the *relations* of men. The questions then assume the form of,—

1. What are the equitable relations of men in the matter of *liberty*?

2. What are the equitable relations of men in the matter of *property*?

Both of these objects, *liberty* and *property*, may be treated of under the head of human action, (the moral laws of property being nothing more than rules which prescribe or prohibit certain *modes of human action*;) but the division conveniently expresses a distinction of the *objects* upon which action may be exercised. Thus, an exposition of the laws of liberty should determine the moral rules that preside over the actions of men in the matter of mutual interference; while an exposition of the laws of property should determine the moral rules that preside over men in their possession of the earth.

But politics, taking into consideration only the relations of *men*, cannot take cognizance of any duty which would still be a duty if only one man were in existence. The duties of religion that relate to the Creator are beyond and above the sphere of politics; and so also are the duties of benevolence, which belong to another category than equity.

It is only as men may act towards each other *equitably or unequitably* that we consider their relations. An act of benevolence is not, strictly speaking, either equitable or unequitable. The recipient has no equitable claim to the bounty; and what the donor gives, he gives not to satisfy the law of equity, but a higher law, which applies to him as an individual, but which it is impossible to apply (by law and force) to a society. The relations of men in society must first be

constructed on the principle of equity, and then each individual may exercise his benevolence as occasion may require. Were there no equity, there could be no benevolence, because no man could know what was his *own*, or what he had *a right to give*.\*

Liberty, like slavery, poverty, depravity, purity, beauty, &c., is one of those concepts that men have idealized, and made into nouns-substantive, for the purpose of using them with greater facility in language. As such, it is incapable of definition, not being composed of any more simple concepts. In this sense it is an *object*, and may be reasoned with like any other noun. But it also signifies *a condition*, namely, the condition in which a man uses his powers without the interference of another man. It differs from *freedom* in the circumstance of amount. Freedom appears to signify the *absolute* condition in which interference by human *will* is altogether removed; in which case there would be a perfect equality of political rights, and the law would recognize no difference whatever between the individuals of whom a state was composed. Liberty, on the contrary, appears capable of indefinite variation, from the smallest amount that the most oppressed slave has, to the utmost and most perfect amount, which then becomes *freedom*.†

For instance, the kings of England *gave* lands (which belonged to the *crown*, that is, to the *nation*) to private individuals. The question then is, Had the incumbent monarch a right to alienate those lands in perpetuity from the nation?

† Such, at all events, would seem to be the sense usually affixed to the two terms. But, in that case, the word *freedom* would ad-

Licentiousness is compatible with liberty, but not with freedom. For instance, a slaveholder has far too much *liberty* — that is, he is at liberty to perform acts of licentiousness; but where there is freedom, there can be no surplus liberty; for the moment the equilibrium of equity is disturbed by the licentious exercise of power, that moment freedom has vanished, and liberty becomes relative. One man then comes to have *too much* liberty, and another man *too little*.

The powers of man involved in the general term liberty, are the powers of feeling, thinking, speaking, writing and publishing, and acting. The sum total of these is implicated in the fact of *life*; so that, if the life be taken away, the whole of the powers are taken away. Politically speaking, therefore, to take away life is to take away the sum total of liberty, and to destroy or obliterate a free agent.

Liberty, in its most extensive signification, involves the whole powers or conditions of men which can be affected by the agency of other men; but liberty has also a more restricted signification, which confines it to liberty of thought, speech, publication, and action. In the former sense, *life* is involved in liberty; in the latter sense, life assumes a separate standing, and becomes a category by itself. And again, the *moral* feelings may be interfered with by slander or defamation; and this gives rise to another category of politics, namely, *reputation*.

vantageously supplant *liberty* in several passages of the New Testament, such as Rom. viii. 21; 2 Cor. iii. 17; Gal. ii. 4; v. 1, 13, &c., where absolute freedom, or *emancipation*, seems to be spoken of.

*Life, liberty, property, and reputation*, are then viewed as the *possessions* of men; and the laws which should regulate men in their mutual action on each other, with regard to life, liberty, property, and reputation, have to be determined by political *science*.

With regard to *life*, we do not believe that any principle whatever can be found in *natural* knowledge that would justify the taking away of life, save in defence of self or others. For life, therefore, there can only be a negative theory of very limited extent. All that can be said on the subject must necessarily resolve itself into one or two propositions. Laws may take lives, but laws cannot create axioms of the reason; and without these there can be no principle to determine otherwise than superstitiously *when* a life ought to be taken. That the laws by which lives have been taken away have been only formal superstitions, is plainly evident from the changes which the laws have undergone. The laws have no other basis than vague opinion, directed by human passion; and the day appears to be not far distant when capital punishment will be either abolished altogether, or confined to the case of the murderer, if it be determined that Scripture commands or implies the execution of him who has taken away the life of his fellow.

The genuine essence of all liberty is *non-interference*, and to secure universal non-interference is the first and most essential end of all political association.

But interference may be from the government and law, quite as much as from the individual, and interference *by law* is incomparably more prejudicial to a

community than any amount of casual interference that would be likely to take place in a civilized country.

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SECTION II.—ON THE MODE IN WHICH MEN HAVE MADE LAWS.

LIBERTY presents itself under the form of liberty of *thought*, liberty of *speech*, liberty of *publication*, and liberty of *action*; and political liberty evolves chronologically in the order of thought, speech, publication, and action. To secure this liberty *by law*, and to make it exactly equal for all individuals in the eye of the law, is the great end of political civilization.

Thought is now (in Britain) almost emancipated from state interference, although the time was, and not so very long since, when men attempted to control each other in their thoughts. Religious superstition has ever played the most prominent part in this species of interference, and the priest of by-gone days was the licentious tyrant of the mind, who would have forced uncredited conviction by the fagot and the flame. Not only was freedom of speech controlled, and punished by the rack, the dungeon, and the lingering death of infamy, but the very thoughts were scrutinized; and unless a man *renounced* his creed, he was tortured by the ruthless arm of power, and carried to the stake as the living offering of bigotry to the demon of superstition.

Feeling is not under man's control, and therefore

they have allowed each other to escape from *profession* upon that subject, at the same time taking advantage of the nerves for the infliction of as much pain as man could reasonably devise. What is technically called torture (in the art of inflicting pain) is also abolished, and some obscure principle of retribution is now substituted, which sometimes shuts a man up in a prison, sometimes transports him to the southern hemisphere, sometimes fines him a sum of money, and sometimes allows him to escape altogether, because the legal punishment is felt to be disproportioned to the crime.\*

Speech is still, and properly enough, made a matter of superintendence. A man may *injure* another by his speech, and consequently speech does come within the limits of politics. Immense changes, however, have taken place in the laws that relate to the expression of thought, more especially on political subjects. Freedom of speech, and of public speech, and in any number of speakers or auditors, is one of the first essentials of true liberty. Wherever it is not enjoyed, liberty is a shadow and tyranny is a substance. France has yet to learn this essential lesson of liberty,

\* "In France, the average values have been from 0.477 to 0.665 for the six years previous to 1831. Thus the chances are only 477 to 1000 that the individual will be condemned when accused of crime against persons; 665 when the crime is one against property. The principal cause of this inequality appears to be, as has been frequently remarked, that we are averse to apply punishment when it has a certain degree of severity, or appears severe in proportion to the crime; this is especially the case with crimes against persons." — QUETELET'S *Treatise on Man*, Book IV. Chap. ii.



and until the French either obtain or take the freedom of speech that they have not now, and never have had, they must be in a state of political subserviency to the executive power, that should make a nation blush with shame, where so many cultivated men have turned their attention to the public affairs of the state. That France should submit to restriction on public discussion, is one of the best evidences that something more than revolution is required to make a people free.

Freedom of discussion is the great turning-point of liberty, the first great field of battle between the nation and the rulers. If the nation gain the day, its progress is onward towards freedom; but if the rulers gain the day, the nation must submit to tyranny, and must groan under the licentious hand of a self-constituted government. So soon as freedom of speech is prevented, no other resource than revolution can possibly remain, and the men who might not speak with tongues must have recourse to weapons of more powerful argument. Where there is freedom of discussion, there is always hope for the nation. The government may enforce its privileges for a time; but so certainly as freedom of discussion is preserved, so certainly must those privileges be curtailed, one after another, and freedom of action must eventually complete the evolution.

Writing and publication are as essential as speech. The censorship is an abomination altogether incompatible with freedom, and every country that tolerates it must lay its account, not for the reformation of reason, but for the revolution of violence — not for

change effected by the *intellect* of the country, but for change effected by the explosion of pent-up passions seeking to destroy rather than to reconstruct.

England has almost achieved her emancipation in the matter of thought, speech, and writing; but very considerable changes still remain to be effected before liberty of action can be said to be achieved. There are actions which are naturally *crimes*, and which never can be any thing else than crimes — robbery and murder, for instance. Such actions are criminal anterior to all legislation, and independently of any human enactment whatever. They are unjust from their nature, and we can predicate, *à priori*, that they are unjust, as well as prove, *à posteriori*, by their effects, that they are eminently prejudicial.

Such actions, and such actions *alone*, is the government of a country *competent* to prohibit, and to class as crimes. But let us observe what takes place in actual legislation. No action can be *less* criminal than the purchase of the productions of one country, and the transport of those productions to another country, for the legitimate profit of the trader and the convenience of the inhabitants. The government, however, passes a law that such transport shall not be allowed, and that the man who still persists in it shall be called a criminal, and treated as such. The government thus creates a new *crime*, and establishes an artificial standard of morality, one of the most pernicious things for a community that can possibly exist, as it leads men to conclude that acts are wrong only *because* they are forbidden, and also enlists in favor of the offender those feelings which ought ever to be retained in favor of the law.

The restriction would be a crime if it were only a restriction, and *prevented* the international exchange of produce. But what are its effects? It calls into existence a set of men who devote themselves by profession to infringe the law. The act of transport is perfectly innocent and highly beneficial; but so soon as it is prohibited by law, the man who engages in it is obliged to use the arts of deception and concealment, and from one step of small depravity to another, sinks lower and lower, until he at last employs *violence*, and does not hesitate to *murder*. The *act of transport* in which the smuggler is engaged is one of the most legitimate modes of exercising the human powers. Every kind of advantage attends it. First, it is profitable to the foreign seller. Second, it is profitable to the merchant. Third, it is profitable to the carrier. Fourth, it is profitable to the home consumer; for if the goods were not more highly esteemed by him than the money, he would not purchase them at the price. And fifth, it is injurious to no one. The first three profits are *money* profits; the fourth, the profit of convenience and gratification. But the moral effects are no less beneficial. First, the man who is engaged in lawful trading is well employed, and likely to be a peaceful and good citizen. Second, the fact of purchasing from a foreigner gives the trader an interest in that foreigner, and eminently tends to break down those national antipathies which have descended from the darker ages. The buyer and the seller are a step further from *war* every bargain they conclude in honest dealing; and the iniquitous doctrine, that a "Frenchman is the natural enemy of an Englishman,"

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must every day find its practical refutation in the substantial benefits of trade. First, then, the prohibitory law sacrifices all these benefits, and the law of restriction diminishes them to the full extent of its restriction. But what takes place? The contraband trader is created by the prospect of gain arising from the increase of price. This increase of price, instead of being a benefit to the *legal* trader, is his curse. It is neither more nor less than a premium held out to the smuggler to evade the custom and to *undersell* the legal trader, thereby tending constantly to reduce his profit, as well as to diminish his sale. But this is not all. It is a premium to the reckless to *break the law*; and the man who lives in the habitual breach of the law soon becomes a ruined character and a ruined MAN.

There are, perhaps, few courses of life that end so certainly in ruin as the smuggler's and the poacher's; and yet, barring the *law*, the acts in which they are engaged are perfectly innocent and perfectly legitimate. The man who takes to smuggling or to poaching as the means of gaining his bread, is almost as certainly beyond recovery as the drunkard or the thief. It has been our lot to see some of these characters, and to observe the influence of their pursuits, and we can say no otherwise than that we have been shocked to see men of energy and great natural endowment destroyed by the temptations which the law had so superfluously placed in their way. When once the habit of breaking the law is established, the distinction is overlooked that would not otherwise have been forgotten, namely, that there is a *right* and a *wrong*

independently of the law; and the man who commenced by shooting a hare in his cabbage-plot finishes by shooting a keeper, and expiating the offence on the gallows.

We do not mean that a man has a right to shoot every where and any where, but we mean that the act of shooting the game—the *legal* crime—is *not* a crime, and never can be such; and that the consequences are in a great measure the fruits of the *law*, and must be charged against it.\*

Let us take another case. The Creator, in his bounty, has distributed rivers over our country; and the rivers of Scotland, at a certain season, teem (or did teem till the sea nets were established) with abundance of food in the shape of salmon, which are thus brought, as it were, to the very door of the inhabitants. The uncultivated moors of the same district abound with wild birds, to an extent perhaps unequalled in the world. It might be supposed reasonable that these gifts of Providence should be of some service to the stated inhabitants who labor; and as corn land is not so plentiful in the north as in the south, Providence appears to have thrown the salmon and the grouse into the scale to furnish the necessary food for man. But what has the law done? To shoot a grouse is not merely a trespass on the occupier of the land, but a *crime*, a criminal act, a thing that must be *punished*, a deed for which the half-starved Highlander

\* Since the above was written, some partial changes have been made with regard to hares, preparatory, we hope, to the total abolition of all game laws whatever.

can be hailed to prison, and shut up as an offender against the laws of his country, when that country had reduced him to the verge of starvation. And to spear a salmon, a fish from the sea that no man may ever have seen, and cannot possibly *recognize*, is also attended with pains and penalties for killing the fish that Heaven had sent for food.

Let us consider that Providence has made some animals susceptible of domestication. A man takes the trouble of rearing a lamb or a bullock; and by every principle of equity they are his — at least he has the claim of preference, which no other man has a right to invade. Were any man to take this sheep or ox for his own use, we see at once the impropriety of the action. First, it is an interference with another man without a justifying reason; and second, were such interference allowed generally, the domestication of animals would cease, and food would become so much the less abundant.

In this case, there is a breach of equity involved, and the taking is a crime. But, on the other hand, Providence has made other animals incapable of domestication, and distributed them over the country, apparently for the very purpose of affording *food*, and this in the very districts that are not so highly favored with the cereal productions of the soil. Such, in Scotland, are the salmon and the grouse; and these, at one period, were so abundant as to afford a staple article of food, and even now are sufficiently numerous to feed a large portion of the population from August to December. And what has the law done with regard to these bountiful gifts of Providence? The law has

made it a *crime* for the poor man to touch them. The poor man now can never *legally* have either a salmon or a grouse; and in the very parishes where those animals are sufficiently numerous to feed the whole resident pauper population, the poor may take their choice between starvation and expatriation.

Now, in the case of the animals that are not capable of domestication, there is an important distinction to be observed. To shoot one of these animals is not a breach of *equity*—that is, the wild one is no man's *property*, while the domesticated one must practically be regarded as such; and therefore, as the wild animals could not be regarded as *property*—for property must be recognizable—the law has made it a *crime* for the poor man to take them for his use. And the privileged classes, not content with all the land, and nearly all the offices of the state, have usurped the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea, that never owned a master save the Lord of heaven and earth.

It may be considered that the question is of no great importance; neither perhaps is it, compared with the weightier question of the *land*; but we have taken it as an illustration (the first that happened to occur) of the principle of legislation as regards *action*. As regards action, England is not a free country, and the sooner the nation is convinced of the fact, the better for the community. And by free country, we mean a country in which every man has a legal right to do every thing that is not *naturally* a crime. Where a man can do what is a crime, freedom is no more. But the law may be the criminal as well as the nation; and injustice from the law is quite as unjust, and ten

times more detrimental, than injustice from the individual.

With regard to the *crime*, the real *criminality* of the action, measured either by reason or by Scripture, and with regard to the detriment, measured by the consequences, let us ask the following question, and let any man answer it on his conscience: Here are animals provided by nature in abundance — they cannot follow even the laws of *property* established in all analogous cases, inasmuch as they are not recognizable, and cannot be claimed as ever having been in possession. These animals are distributed widely, and spread throughout the country in a manner to afford a convenient supply to the various districts. The fish arrive from the sea in their highest condition, and afford good and wholesome food. The birds are of the poultry kind, distinguished for the quality and quantity of their flesh, and for their powers of reproduction, — characters that have always drawn a line of demarcation between them and the birds of prey, and pointed them out for *food*. These animals are distributed by nature throughout the habitable districts where cultivation must be limited, and where animal food must be required, both from the scarcity of corn and from the nature of the climate. Such, at least, is the judgment of Providence, as manifested in the works of creation, and in the harmony which is every where perceptible between the productions of a region and their suitability to man. These districts (from the monopoly of the land) are now inhabited by a race reduced to the lowest state of poverty, and in many cases to a degradation that would class them with the



savages. Let us ask, which is the *crime*? That these people should take the animals which nature has provided, or that the privileged classes of the country should pass a *law* to prevent their touching a single one of them under the pain of fine and imprisonment? And be it remarked, these animals are not *property*, even by the wording of the enactment, which does not punish for interference with property, but for interference with animals, which the privileged classes wish to monopolize for other purposes. Hundreds of tons of fish, and thousands of boxes of birds, are annually taken away *for sale* from these districts, and yet not one of the poor of the *inhabitants* may touch a feather, nor finger a scale, without being guilty of a *crime*; and from one year's end to the other, the mass of the population have not the *legal* right to take one single meal from a bird without danger of imprisonment, nor from a fish without danger of a fine. Is it a crime, or is it not, that the privileged classes should pass such a law? And is it a crime, or is it not, that the nation should allow such laws, and such privileged classes, to continue?\*

\* "We are inclined to believe that the real value of game in this country is not in general fully understood. It is usually looked upon as kept chiefly for amusement, and its commercial importance is little thought of. Yet its direct value as a marketable commodity is very considerable; and its indirect value, as enhancing landed property, is so great that it is not easy to form an estimate of it. The prices of ordinary game are pretty well known in Scotland. In England they are still higher, and there is always a ready demand. The value of a brace of grouse is, on an average, 6s. in England; pheasants, 6s.; partridges, 3s.; hares, 2s. each; woodcocks from 6s. to 10s. a pair. The average value of a Highland

Again, the manufacturers of certain articles, who are certainly not guilty of crime, or even of the shadow of offence, are not allowed to carry on the necessary operations except under the lock and key of the state officials; and the regulations are of so stringent a character, that if they were not partially relaxed by the exciseman, the business could scarcely be carried on without incurring penalties from *the law*.

The soap manufacturer is certainly engaged in the

red deer is not less than £5. So much for the direct value of game; and when we consider its importance indirectly, we are first led to think of the Highland moors which it has rendered so profitable. For the following facts on this portion of the subject, we are indebted to an able letter on the Game Laws by Lord Malmesbury. A vast number of moors are now let for £400 or £500 a year, which formerly brought nothing to the proprietor, as they are unfit even for sheep. Large tracts, which formerly let as sheep farms, are now converted into deer forests, and pay at least one third, and even one half, more than they did formerly. Five hundred deer may be kept on a space of ground that will feed twelve hundred sheep. Taking the sheep at the average price of 18s. each, these would be worth £1080; but the deer would realize nearly double that sum — namely, £2000; for the average price of stags in summer, and hinds in winter, is fully £4. From a long standing knowledge of the Highland moors, Lord Malmesbury is of opinion that they are yearly advancing in price, and becoming a more important kind of property. He saw a list last year of one hundred and six moors let for shootings, the rent of which could not be averaged at less than £300, which makes a total of £31,800. There were twice as many more let at an average of £100, and a third portion unlet, whose value may be fairly stated at £17,000; the whole making together a rental of £70,000 on the Highland shootings. He adds, that this may be looked upon as a clear gain as far as respects the grouse moors, and an increase of two fifths on deer ground called “forest.” — *Journal of Agriculture*.

production of an article that benefits the community; and even the distiller (for whom as much cannot be said) is entitled to carry on his business on the same footing as every other man. The legislators make a pretext of revenue; and revenue of course is necessary, although not to the extent to which revenue is raised in Britain. But when the necessity of revenue is granted, is it at all necessary that the man who is engaged in the lawful manufacture of an article required by the community, should be obliged to give notice to a state official that he is about to perform this, that, and the other process of his manufacture, and be esteemed a criminal worthy of punishment if that notice is forgotten or neglected? \*

All these restrictions are the remnants of the more exclusive privileges claimed and enforced by the privileged classes of other times, and the remnants of that political superstition which, next to religious superstition, every man ought to lend his aid to destroy.

The pretext that revenue is necessary, is one that would scarcely be entitled to attention, were it not accompanied by the injustice and detriment that follow in its train. Revenue, so far as necessary for the ac-

\* "The duty on paper is levied with a multiplicity of detail known only in the department of the excise. The duty is taken upon every single ream; and every single ream has to be weighed, and stamped, and cut, and made up, and labelled, and endorsed, and certified, and entered in a particular and special manner; and if there is the slightest infraction of the excise regulations, the board is immediately down upon the manufacturer for a penalty."

Tax on soap, 1848,	-	-	-	-	-	£795,981
Tax on paper,	-	-	-	-	-	578,704

tual requirements of a state, need form a very trifling portion of a nation's expenditure. The whole cost of the administration of justice, and of every other valuable service that the state really requires, is a mere trifle in comparison to the actual revenue, and *to the still greater cost occasioned by the enactments of the legislature.* But as revenue may be derived from two sources, the privileged classes have taken care that it shall be derived from that source in which they are not so immediately interested.

We have spoken of the liberty of human *action*; and one of the forms of that action is *labor*. The material objects of the creation possess a *value of exchange*; that is, people are willing to pay for them. But labor also possesses a value of exchange, and people are willing to pay for *it* as well as for the material objects that constitute the globe and its inhabitants. Let it be observed that labor is essentially private property. It has a value, and the land has no more than a value.

Let it also be observed that the land is *not* essentially private property, and that naturally one man has as much right to the land as another.

Labor on the one hand, and land on the other, are susceptible of taxation.

The privileged classes, in the earlier stages of society, had all the land and all the labor. The lord was the lord not only of the land, but of the labor of those who were engaged in the useful arts of industry. In the course of time the serfs obtained a small portion of their rights, and towns were formed where the citizens could carry on their labor with a certain degree

of advantage to themselves, and with a certain degree of emancipation from the licentious will of the lord. Taxation could consequently be on the land of the lord, or on the labor of the townsman, for all the townsman's *capital* was originally the produce of his labor.\*

If we consider the various states of Europe, from Russia to England, we shall find the lord and the laborer to occupy various stages of the political scale of evolution, by which the laborer at last succeeds in withdrawing his industry from the interference of the lord, and from the taxation of the state.

Let it be observed, that when the *land* is taxed, no *man* is taxed; for the land produces, according to the law of the Creator, *more* than the value of the labor expended on it, and on this account men are willing to pay a *rent* for land. But when the privileged classes had monopolized the land, they called it *theirs* in the same sense in which labor is supposed to belong to the laborer; and, although the absurdity of the proposition is sufficiently apparent, the laborer was glad enough to escape with even a small portion of his liberty, and to rejoice that he could call his life and his family his own.

But then the lords of the land were the rulers and the makers of the laws, and the imposers of taxation, and it was not *reasonable* to suppose that they should tax the land. The king required money, and various persons about kings in all ages require money, and of

\* Probate and legacy duties, 1843:—

Legacies, - - - - -	£1,223,342
Probates and administrations, -	922,839
Taxes on the inheritance of <i>land</i> , -	0

course the only choice in the matter of taxation is between *labor* and the *land*.

To tax labor, then, becomes a matter of the most palpable necessity, and those who have been divested of almost every single particle of earth or sea that could be of any benefit to them, must also be made to bear the burdens of the state, and to pay for the support of a government that was of little use to the community, and that only existed by the right of the strongest, or the consent of superstition.\*

The principle of taxing labor is only a remnant of the serfdom of the darker ages, and it has been continued in this country by the ingenious device of what are termed *indirect taxes*, by which labor is taxed, although the laborer is only made acquainted with the fact by the distress that periodically oppresses him.

\* *Immediately* a bad government is of no use to the community, but *mediately and prospectively* the most stringent despotism in the world is of the highest importance and of the greatest value. Man must apparently progress through *centralization*; and a bad government, provided it centralizes, is the foundation of after changes most beneficial to mankind. The good part of the Russian government is its centralization; and, notwithstanding the antipathy manifested against that government, we have little hesitation in maintaining, that on the whole it is doing good to the population under its rule. It is gradually subjecting savage tribes to the ordinary course of homogeneous law; and, though the laws are bad, and the administration worse, the *phase* is one which the nomadic tribes and the semi-barbarous population must pass through before they arrive at political freedom. In the general history of man it seems requisite that central monarchy should destroy the privileges of multiple aristocracy; and Russia is gradually effecting this great change. The sympathy manifested towards the Poles is questionable, inasmuch as the great majority of Poles were ruled by individual aristocrats instead of by *laws*.

The man who is poisoned without his knowledge does not die the less certainly for his ignorance, and the people who are taxed do not suffer the *less* because the taxes happen to be imposed in such a manner that the unthinking and the ignorant do not perceive those taxes in the price they pay for almost every article of consumption. All the *real* harm is done to a country as effectually by indirect taxation, as if every penny were paid out of the day's wages to the tax-gatherer of the state. But the rulers know full well that if the tax-gatherer were to present himself at the pay-table of the laborer, at the counter of the shopman, at the office of the merchant, and at the ship of the seafaring carrier, the doom of labor taxation would be sealed, and the country would not tolerate so glaring an injustice. And the indirect system of taxation is employed, not that it prevents the community from suffering, but that it prevents the community from dwelling on the *cause* of their suffering, and thereby retards a revolution against the privileged classes.

Such are the circumstances that led to the establishment of customs and excise; and the total and complete abolition of those two branches of interference is one of the necessary changes that must take place before this country can be free, and before this country can enjoy that commercial liberty, without which a periodical crisis must necessarily be the lot of the laborer, the merchant, and the manufacturer.\* It is

\* "Simultaneously with the relaxation of the restrictive policy of the United States, Great Britain, from whose example we derive the system, has relaxed hers. She has modified her corn laws, and reduced many other duties to moderate revenue rates. After ages

true that the total abolition of the customs appears chimerical at present; yet, if we consider the history of the changes that have already taken place, and seize their abstract form, (the only form that contains real instruction,) we have sufficient ground to hope, not only for the abolition of every species of tax upon labor, but for the recovery of each man's natural *property*. So certainly as this country continues to progress, so certainly must every restraint be removed from every action that is not a crime; and the customs' laws can no more be perpetuated, if the present liberty of discussion continues, than restraints upon discussion could be perpetuated after men had learnt to think for themselves, and to form their convictions according to the evidence before them.

of experience, the statesmen of that country have been constrained by stern necessity, and by a public opinion having its deep foundation in the sufferings and wants of impoverished millions, to abandon a system, the effect of which was to build up immense fortunes in the hands of the few, and to reduce the laboring millions to pauperism and misery. Nearly in the same ratio that labor was depressed, capital was increased and concentrated by the British protection policy.

"The evils of the system in Great Britain were at length rendered intolerable, and it has been abandoned, but not without a severe struggle on the part of the protected and favored classes to retain the unjust advantages which they have so long enjoyed. It was by the same classes in the United States, whenever an attempt was made to modify or abolish the same unjust system here. The protective policy had been in operation in the United States for a much shorter period, and its pernicious effects were therefore not so clearly perceived and felt. Enough, however, was known of these effects to induce its repeal."—*President's Message*, 1846, (*United States*.)



The great source of the evil that weighs so heavily on the unprivileged classes of society is to be found in the doctrine, "*that rulers are competent to legislate for every thing and for any thing.*"

This doctrine appears to be universally adopted in states that are just beginning to emerge from a condition of barbarism. Thoughts, words, and actions are all legislated for, without even an inquiry into the right of the ruler to promulgate a law upon the subject of his enactment. The right is *assumed*, and the ruler has the *power* to enforce the law. The multitude, who are obliged to devote their attention to the means of their livelihood, offer a passive acquiescence, and endeavor to carry on as well as they can, until they find the operation of the law so prejudicial that they can bear it no longer, and then a struggle ensues, by which liberty is advanced a step; and the multitude return to their toils. In course of time, however, it is found that the remaining laws are as prejudicial to the advanced stage of society as those which were abolished were prejudicial to its earlier stage. A new struggle ensues, and liberty is advanced another step. Knowledge increases, and trade increases, and still it is found that the laws are so prejudicial that they must be abolished. This process goes on for centuries; and law after law is repealed, because the actual conditions of the people can permit their existence no longer. In this process of evolution, we perceive laws going one after the other, in proportion as knowledge increases; but it is quite evident that such process cannot continue indefinitely; and it becomes an interesting question to inquire, how it happens that such a

process should be necessary, and what is its natural termination.

The process is necessary, because legislators had overstepped the boundaries of legislation, and interfered with matters beyond their province. Instead of confining themselves to the prohibition (or rather to the *proclamation* of the prohibition) of every action by which one man *injured another man*, they legislated for men's thoughts, and enacted laws about religion, and persecuted by law those who differed from the sect that happened to be in power.

This persecution, a few centuries since in England, and not a century since in Spain, was at its *utmost possible extreme*; that is, men inflicted all the *possible* pain that they could on their fellow-creatures of a different creed, and finished by committing them to the flames.

In course of time, however, knowledge increased, and men thought it scarcely right to proceed to the utmost *possible* extreme; and a modification of the *auto da fé* was introduced in the shape of imprisonment, fine, banishment, &c., &c.

The Protestant creed introduced a very important change in the credence of the country in this matter of religion.

The Romanists always professed to slaughter men to the glory of God; and so long as the *theological* propriety of immolation was current in the minds of men, there was little chance of their seeing the character of their actions. The Protestants, on the contrary, abandoned the high ground of sacrifice to the *Deity*, and substituted the more rational idea of sacri-

fice to the *king*. The unfortunate Covenanter, who was shot or decapitated, was not an offering to the Deity, but an offering to the king; and the difference was of immense importance to the country, although of no particular consequence to the Covenanter. So soon as persecution (legislation for men's *thoughts*) was conceived to be for *man*, and not for God, men began to inquire whether, after all, the king had really the right to legislate to such an extent. And as knowledge increased, they began to relax their principles a little, and to think that the deprivation of civil privileges would be punishment sufficient for the offence of thinking differently from the sect in power.

The modification still goes on, and measure after measure is abolished, until at last the professors of different creeds almost begin to think that they can inhabit the same country without persecuting each other on account of their religion.

Catholic emancipation was one of the insignificant measures that concluded the evolution with regard to that sect. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Act was another insignificant measure that brought up the rear of a system of persecution that had been waxing weaker and weaker for a century or two.

Both of these measures were hailed as the glorious evidences of Britain's impartiality, and certainly the measures were necessary, (if freedom be necessary;) but, after all, they were no more in comparison to the measures that had preceded them, than the nursery tales and the popular superstitions are to the gorgeous pagan credences from which they had their birth.

The last remnant of this religious superstition that

once played so prominent a part in Britain, is now to be found in the taxation of nonconformists; and the church-rates, and the official distinction between the various sects, are the last representatives of that system of legislation that lit the fires of Smithfield, and sent Claverhouse and his dragoons to murder the hill-side peasant, and to torture the differently thinking Presbyterian.

But what, after all, is the principle that has so modified the laws of Britain? Whence comes it that men should have so singularly changed their opinions in the course of a century or two?

It is perfectly evident that justice does not vary from age to age. Justice is the same from the beginning of the world to the time that man shall change his constitution. An act of justice can no more alter its character (without a revelation) than the diameter of the circle can alter its relation to the circumference. What was just yesterday is just to-day, was just a thousand years ago, and will be just a thousand years to come.

How then does it happen that so strange a modification should have come over the credence of our race, and how does it happen that men should legislate so differently?

The credence has changed with the acquisition of knowledge, and the legislation has changed with the credence.

Men have discovered that legislators have no right to legislate for credences, and thus the last remnants of such legislation are obliged to appear under another name, and to assume a false guise, that they may be allowed to continue a few years longer.

Legislation, with regard to thought, never was just, and never can be just; and the abstract form of the change is nothing more than that the legislators have so far been driven off a ground that they never had a right to occupy.

For the man animal, *food* is the first necessity; but for the man mental, credence according to evidence is the first correct law of his intellectual nature. Food is one of the conditions of *existence*; and, until it can be procured in tolerable quantity, and with some degree of certainty, a community cares little about the mind, and allows the question of free thought to remain in abeyance.

When a community begins to emerge from barbarism, and legislation assumes a definite form, *every thing* is legislated for. Food, thought, speech, action, property, and in all their various forms, are all made subjects of enactment; and men thus endeavor to improve the world that God made, by passing laws to amend the order of nature. The first necessity for the community is to have some small opportunity of procuring food, and when the necessary conditions are obtained, (which involve some degree of liberty,) men turn their attention to other subjects, according to the character of their theological belief. The religious impulses of our nature require satisfaction, perhaps, before any other portion of the mental constitution; and as men must have some kind of theological credence, right or wrong, they believe any thing rather than remain in doubt. And as, where there is no evidence, there can be no truth and no error, but mere arbitrary superstition, the state has generally estab-

lished some form of credence by law, and committed the care of the superstition to the priest. But there does happen to be a true religion as well as an indefinite number of superstitions; and, after the revival of learning, when the truth began to break on men's minds, that religion was not a matter of mere arbitrary church authority, but a real matter of truth and falsehood, in which life and death were involved, the Christianity of the Bible came into collision with the established superstitions of the papal priesthood, and a struggle was commenced, which began by the maximum of persecution, and ended, in this country at least in the maximum of liberty of thought.\*

\* "But we shall next consider the state of religion in England. From the days of Wickliffe there were many that differed from the doctrines commonly received. He wrote many books that gave great offence to the clergy, yet being powerfully supported by the duke of Lancaster, they could not have their revenge during his life; but he was, after his death, condemned, and his body was raised and burnt. The Bible, which he translated into English, with the preface which he set before it, produced the greatest effects. In it he reflected on the lives of the clergy, and condemned the worship of saints and images, and the corporeal presence of Christ in the sacraments; but the most criminal part was the exhorting all people to read the Scriptures; when the testimonies against those corruptions were such, that there was no way to deal with them but to silence them. His followers were not men of letters, but being wrought on by the easy conviction of plain sense, were by them determined in their persuasions. They did not form themselves into a body, but were contented to hold their opinions secretly, and did not spread them but to their particular confidants. The clergy sought them out every where, and did deliver them, after conviction, to the secular arm, that is, to the fire."—BURNET'S *History of the Reformation*, abridged, p. 14.

But it is not one single shade more *right* now than it was two or five hundred years since, that men should think and believe for themselves *without the interference of the legislator*. The legislator never had a particle of right to interfere in matters of faith, which right he does not possess to the full extent in the present day. And the real essence of the change is to be found, not in the alteration or improvement of the laws, but in the *total exclusion* of legislation from the province of *thought*. The legislator was altogether out of his sphere; and *every law* was necessarily unjust, whether mild, moderate, or severe. No matter what the character of the enactment happened to be, it was an injustice and a licentious invasion of the natural rights of man; and as such, the only question that could legitimately be taken into consideration respecting it was its *abolition*.

It must not be supposed, however, that a country is in the same circumstances before a law has been called into existence, and after its abolition. Before the law is enacted men are *naturally* free, but when the law has been abolished, men are *legally* free. A country, arrived at complete freedom after the various transformations of superstition and injustice, is a very different thing from a country where legislation has only commenced. The actual laws that exist in both cases might perhaps be the same; but in the one case they are the stepping stones to an indefinite series of legislative acts, and in the other case they are the permanent records of a nation's final judgment. England, *before* men legislated for thoughts, and England *after* men have legislated for thoughts, and *abolished* such

legislation, is in very different circumstances; inasmuch as it may now be reckoned a matter of *ascertained truth*, that legislation for matters of belief is preëminently *prejudicial*, as well as unjust. And the probability of new legislation on the subject can scarcely be contemplated, unless some very unexpected change take place, altogether out of the order of the scheme of progress that may naturally be anticipated.

But if legislation can be out of its sphere in the matter of thought, it can also be out of its sphere in the matters of speech, action, and property.

Next to liberty of thought comes liberty of speech, writing, and publication.

Speech and publication are very extensively legislated for, and the countries of continental Europe appear all, or nearly all, to admit the unlimited right of the legislator to interfere as much as he pleases with the natural rights of the community in the sphere of *the expression of thought*.

Where rulers govern by power, and not by the *enlightened* choice of the nation, they are a party *opposed* to the nation. On the one hand is the nation and the national interest; and on the other hand is the government and the interest of the individuals connected with it. The more power the rulers have, the less liberty the people have; and the more land and privilege the rulers have, the less wealth have the population. Now wealth and power are exactly what men are desirous of possessing; and as rulers are men, it is not to be wondered at that they dip their fingers into every man's dish, equitably or unequitably, and monopolize the best things that happen to be going. The land,



of course, either in kind or in some other form, falls to the lot of the rulers and their coadjutors—the nobles and the priests. The cultivation of the land, (the labor,) instead of also falling to the lot of the privileged classes, becomes the portion of the people.

But excessive privileges are much easier maintained against a weak people than against a strong one; and as the people can only be strong by knowledge, virtue, and combination—knowledge, virtue, and combination are in little favor with despotic governments. Political knowledge (that is, the knowledge of their rights and interests) is carefully excluded from the mass of the population; and as political knowledge grows out of discussion about social welfare, as well as out of the thoughtful toil of the author, both discussion and authorship are subjected to partial or total prohibition. The most frantic blasphemies will find a readier license for publication than a sober treatise on the public welfare; and a philosophical denial of all right and wrong whatever will be more tolerable than an inquiry into the foundations of the rulers' *privileges*. The most infamously immoral production is less likely to be scrutinized than a dissertation on political economy; and an association for murdering, torturing, and expatriating the population,\* would be more readily authorized than an association for forwarding the rights of the people.

Any thing in the shape of superstition (that is, *uninquiring* credence) is esteemed proper enough; but the moment men begin to inquire and to seek for

\* An inquisition, for instance.

reasons, that moment is the government alarmed, and that moment must means be put in operation to stop the course of knowledge.\* Governments, like those of Russia, Austria, and Italy, *can* only exist by means of superstition; and the question with them is, not as to the propriety of allowing men to obtain knowledge and to express their thoughts, but as to the propriety of *the existence of the government*; and every restrictive measure that affects the free expression of opinion, is only an act of self-defence against the nation. The government must either give up its privileges, or keep the people in slavery with regard to expression of opinion; and the stringent laws of the continental powers, relative to every kind of political meeting, are no more than measures of precaution, analogous to those practised by the pirate who scuttles his prize (with its crew) as a measure conducing to his *safety*.†

\* "Thus the universities governed by ecclesiastics persuaded the poor bigot Philip III. to pass a law prohibiting the study of any new system of medicine, and *requiring* Galen, Hippocrates, and Avicenna; they scouted the exact sciences and experimental philosophy, which said they made every medical man a Tiberius; and so they scared the timid Ferdinand VII. in 1830, by telling him that the schools of medicine created materialists, heretics, and revolutionists; thereupon the beloved monarch shut up the lecture rooms forthwith."—FORD'S *Spain*.

† The pirate is *rationaly correct*; that is, his act *does* conduce to his immediate safety, for dead men tell no tales, and sunk ships cannot appear in evidence. And despotic governors are also *rationaly correct*; that is, an ignorant and superstitious population has less power and less desire for liberty than a population that thinks for itself, and has free opportunity of expression. The remote consequences, however, are sometimes overlooked. When the truth is discovered, the pirate is hanged, and the ruler guillotined.

The *objects* of a despotic government must necessarily be distinguished from its *means*. The objects are WEALTH AND POWER; the means, TYRANNY AND SUPERSTITION. Tyranny is power without right, and superstition is credence without evidence. The means of a despotic government, therefore, are power without right, and credence without evidence. The governor of a country, in the earlier stage of legislation, is the strongest man in the country; and, by conversion, the strongest man in the country is the governor. Now, one strongest man, who has the opportunity of taking a thousand weaker men in detail, is stronger than the whole thousand *if he can prevent them from combining*. This is the concise explanation of the theory of a despotic government. A noble, a chief, even a bishop, may become a sovereign, and remain so as long as he has power or dexterity to prevent the people from combining. As soon as they combine, he is no longer the strongest, and his wealth as well as his power is in a fair way to depart. It therefore becomes a matter of serious consideration for him to discover and put in practice those means that tend to secure his power, and prevent his enemies (his subjects) from combining.

In the first place, he must have more wealth; and, as he cannot have it by his own honest industry, he must have it by the industry of others, or by the monopoly of those natural objects which other men must possess as the conditions of their existence.

Land is the great source of wealth; forests and fisheries are also tolerable; mines and minerals are capable of yielding a revenue; and, in addition to these, comes the taxation of labor.

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These sources of wealth, therefore, must be turned to account, and the governor, of course, does not neglect them. Wealth is power for the ruler, as knowledge is power for the people; and the more wealth the ruler has, the more power has he for taking advantage of his subjects. Wealth, therefore, is both a means and an end—a means of getting more wealth and of getting more power. Wealth gives birth to a standing army, and a standing army gives birth to more power, as it enables the ruler to apply his principles more extensively and with greater security.

But if a people were to combine against any standing army that is likely to exist, the ruler would no longer be a ruler, and the army would no longer be an army. It therefore becomes a matter of serious thought for the ruler to obviate the tendencies towards combination.

There are two or three kinds of combination.

1st. The combination of national antipathy. This combination may exist where there is abundance of ignorance. The Indians might combine against the whites on the continent of America, and, though the combinations were partial, they did a great deal of mischief in by-gone times. The Tyrolese might combine on the same principle, and so might the Poles, the Swiss, the Greeks, &c. It must not be supposed that these are contests for *freedom*. On the contrary, they are contests against a foreign tyranny in favor of a domestic one. Such combinations are interesting as matters of history, but of very little importance to the progress of real freedom.

2d. Religious combination. This also is a matter

of *sentiment*, and by no means advances freedom as a matter of necessity. The crusades were singular exhibitions of this kind of combination carried out on a large scale. The wars of the *Ligue* also exhibit a double combination of ruffians on both sides, who perpetrated astonishing crimes for the advancement of their religious party.\*

The Presbyterians of Scotland, and the Puritans of England, HAD HOLD OF THE TRUTH; and, though they had scarcely yet learnt to view it in its true light, they progressed immensely towards freedom. They did confound civil and religious liberty; but notwithstanding, it is to them, under God, that we owe the preservation of the cause of liberty in this country, when the continent, and especially France, either extinguished the little liberty that had begun to illuminate the people, or so impeded its progress that they have still their convulsions before them. The extinction of Protestantism in France rendered a physical force convulsion necessary before the obstacles to the prog-

\* Absurd as the crusades were in themselves, they were of the highest value to Europe; in fact, it seems that whatever the temporary evils attendant on any one part of human condition, or of human manifestation, that condition was a phase of progress, calculated to leave society in a better state than it found it. This principle is applicable also to the first French revolution. It was a fearful scene when viewed individually. But if we look to the condition of France before the revolution, and again after the revolution, we cannot deny that its effects were of the greatest value to the country. Those who attend merely to the revolution and its horrors, are like those who go to see a criminal executed without asking the reason of his execution, or inquiring into the reasonableness of the laws which demand his execution. The French revolution was produced *by the laws of nature*. Who made those laws?

ress of society could be removed; and if full liberty of thought had been accorded, instead of the revocation of the edict of Nantes, in all probability the progression of society would have taken place by the gradual removal of abuses, instead of being arrested until the bulwarks of despotism were no longer strong enough to retain the expansive energies of the population. To suppose that the French revolution could have been prevented by any of the individuals who happened to figure in it, is to suppose that causes are no causes, and effects no effects. But France has still her work to do; and, although none of the past frenzy can be again anticipated, as the causes do not exist to produce it,\* France has yet to shake off despotism,

\* The atrocities of the first French revolution were *French*; the atrocities of the last were *Parisian*. In the former case there was not only insurrection in the towns, but there was the most fearful of all convulsions—a rural insurrection. The atrocities of the last revolution, &c., were very partial. They were confined to a few of the lowest population in Paris; and, no doubt, there are in Paris, at the bottom of society, persons who would do any thing. There is no possibility, however, of instituting a comparison between the frenzy of the late revolution and that of the former. It is perfectly absurd, and only shows how panic and party feeling will blind the judgment and make the tongue rave nonsense.

To those who speak so loudly and so long of the horrors of insurrection, we propound a question: "Which is the worst, the most atrocious, the most base, and the greatest reproach to a nation,

"1st. The atrocities that accompany a political insurrection? or,

"2d. Women poisoning people by scores for the sake of obtaining burial fees?" In the paper, yesterday, we read an account of a woman thus disposing of eight of her offspring.

The first is *French*.

The latter is *English*.

The demoralization going on in Britain is such, that if ever there

and to form a government that shall rule otherwise than by a standing army and a system of officials.

In the convulsions of France we have a third kind of combination; namely, combination to overthrow an evil that presses on the feelings, thoughts, and interests of men. The population suffered from a common evil; and when that evil was *exposed*, they combined to overthrow it. The combination, however, was not of a *high* character. It was a mere reaction under *pressure*. To get rid of the pressure was nearly the sum and substance of the combination; and disunion and licentiousness followed when the pressure was removed.

But there is another kind of combination, and a far more important one for the welfare of the world — the combination of knowledge and reason. Knowledge is credence based on sufficient evidence; and reason is the power of perceiving consequences, and of inferring antecedents. Without reason man would only be a higher kind of ape; as it is, he is a spirit and an immortal.

Man has an intellect, as well as a bodily frame, and this intellect has its laws and its requirements. Observation is its food, reason is its process of digestion, and truth is its circulating fluid, without which it degenerates and dies. Truth makes the mind strong, ignorance makes it weak, and error infects it with

were any thing like an insurrection, it is impossible to predict the extent to which frenzy might be carried. The demoralization of the population is England's greatest danger; and, if not met in time by means of moral and intellectual training, it may produce the direst evils, and make England a manufacturing hell.

disease. Knowledge is not only power — it is *strength* — strength of the mind, health, and life, and strength. To obliterate this strength, therefore, is the object of the despotic ruler. If the people are strong, the despot must be weak; but the legitimate ruler is so much the stronger as the people are stronger. When the rulers and the nation are in opposite scales, the less weight the people have, the more easily are they outweighed; but when both are in the same scales, the heavier they both are the better for both, and the worse for those who are opposed to them. In a free country, where law was absolutely supreme and really equitable, every man would feel the ruler to be a portion of himself, and would lend his arm or his aid to further the ends of justice. The ruler of a free country should be the pure administrator of the law — the first magistrate of *equity*, to whom every man was bound by the righteous bonds of justice, and by the sentiments of reverence implanted in our nature to elevate our race above the creatures that surround us.

In a despotism, superstition takes the place of knowledge, and the fear of suffering helps to procure an unwilling obedience.

The ruler is the wolf, the people are the flock, and the lawyers\* and priests† are the foxes who prepare the flock for slaughter.

\* England, happy in the integrity and mildness of her judges in the 18th century, and in our own times — during the Stuart reigns, was cursed by a succession of ruffians in ermine, who, for the sake of court favor, violated the principles of law, the precepts of religion, and the dictates of humanity." — CAMPBELL'S *Lives of the Chancellors*.

† In speaking lightly of the priests, we do not speak lightly of



When the priesthood lose their influence, an army must be resorted to, and physical tyranny and centralization must do the work of superstition. At all hazards, the people must be kept *down*, or the game of despotism is lost.

The simplest plan of a despotism is to make the people believe that the ruler is a distant relation to some of the deities of the country. A greater or less degree of this method appears to be common in infant stages of society, but a small advance of knowledge suffices to disturb so convenient a doctrine; and this is partly the reason why so dire an antipathy should be manifested by the rulers of various countries to the introduction of the gospel as contained *in revelation*. Russia, Austria, and Italy are little better than pagan countries, and the rulers are partially or altogether believed to have some special connection with the object of worship, and to rule by right divine.\* The

men holding a sacred office. The priest—that is, the sacrificer and the mediator—does *not* hold a sacred office. Every human priest is an antichrist. In the Christian religion there is but one Priest, and his sacrifice is offered, so that there remains no more offering for sin. “It is finished!”

The *only* real Priest has ascended into heaven, and to those who wait for him he will come a second time unto salvation. *All* other priests are antichrists.

The present priests, including the Roman sacrificers and mediators, must be classed with alchemists, astrologers, and necromancers, partly deceived, and partly deceivers. Next to that of becoming the object of worship, (like the Grand Llama,) the *office* of priest is the most wicked that it is *possible* for man to fill.

\* “Emperors, kings, and other superiors have their power from God, because they are the substitutes of God on earth.”

pope, of course, is a kind of partial divinity, from being the high priest of the Roman superstitions; and, in Russia, "God and the emperor" are much on the same footing as God and the pope. Both the pope and the emperor are blasphemously associated with the divine Majesty, and the authority of Heaven is supposed in some obscure way or other to attach to the persons of those worthies. France has passed the theological view of government, and the priest is no longer a jackall to the king. Superstition has lost its hold; and though the women must still have some kind of religion, the men have got beyond the point of believing merely on authority; and as, unfortunately, they have been denied the truth, they have sunk into passive infidelity. Superstition and the ruler are no longer allied in their thoughts, and an innumerable multitude of officials must be called into existence to keep them from indulging in political disturbances.

Mere superstition, however, is insufficient to enslave a people that has commercial intercourse with other

*Ques.* — "How must subjects behave towards their sovereign?"

*Ans.* — "Subjects must behave towards their sovereign like faithful slaves towards their master.

*Ques.* — "Why must subjects behave like slaves?"

*Ans.* — "Because their sovereign is their master, and has power over their property as well as over their life.

*Ques.* — "Are subjects bound to obey also bad sovereigns?"

*Ans.* — "Yes, subjects are bound to obey not only good, but also bad sovereigns." — *The Duty of Subjects towards their Sovereign, for Instruction in Reading, in the Second Class of Elementary Schools.* Milan: 1824.

Such are the deliberate blasphemies inculcated by order of the Austrian government.

nations. So long as the country can be surrounded with a barrier, and free communication prevented, superstition may do its work tolerably well, and a nation may remain in much the same state for an indefinite period.\* When, for a thousand years, the sun

\* We have only to look at Spain to see how effectually superstition eradicates even an aspiration after freedom. Let it be remembered that, a few centuries since, Spain was second to no country in Europe in the extent of her political power. What is she now, and what has superstition made her? "The masses care no more for a *constitution* than the Berber or Oriental; with them this thing of parchment is no reality, but a mere abstraction, which they neither understand nor estimate. The people do not want their laws to be changed, but to have them fairly administered; the laws are good in theory, but worm-eaten in *practice*, by bribery and corruption. Confer a spick-and-span patent Benthamite *constitution* on Spaniards, and they will take it without thanks; annul it, and they will respond by a patient shrug. Their only idea of government is *despotism*." — FORD'S *Spain*, p. 862.

Mr. Ford adds, that though despotism may be odious in *theory*, it never pressed harshly on the nation in *practice*. This is rather a singular way of reading Spanish history; and we would ask, if despotism have not pressed hard, what is it that has pressed so hard? If despotism has not pressed hard on Spain, what was it that burnt 30,000 of her inhabitants, and imprisoned and expatriated an immense multitude of her industrious population? Of course the Roman superstitions were at the bottom of the persecutions, but the despotism was the efficient agent in carrying out the diabolical instigations of the monks and priests. Where there is not a despotism, the power of the priest is annulled. He can no longer procure the death or the exile of those who differ in belief. And wherever the priest is found, there will be found an ally and a supporter of despotic power. Superstition ruined the credence of Spain, and despotism ruined the country. The two walk hand in hand, like the invisible pestilence and the loathsome disease that shows that pestilence to the world.

rises every day upon *similar conditions*, it is by no means wonderful that change should not take place. In the political, as well as the physical world, the *conditions* must be changed before we can look for a change in the phenomena. Change the conditions, and some change or other will be exhibited in the consequent results. For those who have the land and the privilege, *every* change is dangerous; and the invariable tendency of the privileged classes to oppose change is only a prudent exercise of foresight.

One of the most important changes in the condition of a people is free intercourse with strangers. Interchange of thought and opinion takes place, information is given and received, new arts are learnt and communicated, and something analogous to a chemical effervescence takes place between the two people, who are thus mutually excited to a state of social ferment. But not only are nations stimulated by intercourse with others; it appears to be a law of animal development, that the mixture of races produces a higher and better type than either of the originals, and the finest races are those in whose elements the original types have almost disappeared. Races of men may, at the same time, be so mingled as to produce a lower type, and this law also extends to the lower animals; but while two races, already low, may be injudiciously crossed, to the detriment of the progeny, there seems little reason for doubt that the intermixture of national blood, where the races are of a higher character, is conducive to the physical perfection of mankind. The races of western Europe, that now take the preëminence in the world, are complex, and the

result of many amalgamations. The south of Britain, especially, which produces men probably inferior to none on the whole surface of the globe, is peopled by a race resulting from many tribes who successively invaded the shores, and left a greater or less impress on the character of the inhabitants.\* The Spaniard and the Frenchman are also the results of mixed blood; and, though the *kingdom* of Spain has sunk to insignificance from the effects of superstition and tyranny, the Spaniard is a high type of the human species, and only wants *truth* and *freedom* to enable him to play a distinguished part in the destinies of the world. When England and France were as superstitious and as enslaved as Spain, Spain was perhaps the most powerful kingdom in Europe; but since Spain did not progress in freedom, she has naturally sunk into every kind of licentiousness; and the Spanish race, with all its immorality and recklessness of blood-

\* "The Saxons and Normans having sprung from the same Teutonic stock, the mixture of races, aided by the common services and sympathies of religion, became a matter of much greater facility than the same process in other countries. And this mixture we know has ever given the most powerful impetus to the progress of civilization. *Perhaps no race of men ever ceased to be barbarous and stationary without mingling blood with another race.* On the other hand, such interfusion has rarely if ever occurred, without imparting benefit to both sides—energy, knowledge, enterprise, and advancement in the arts of life. These causes combined, as well as others that might be mentioned, gradually gave prevalence to the Saxon language, and ultimately produced the 'Commons of England,' before whose ascendancy Norman feudalism must 'hide its diminished head;' while the '*Englishry*,' whom it so long trampled down and spurned, are now the most illustrious and the mightiest nation on the globe."—*North British Review*.

shed, is a living evidence of what kings and priests can do with a nation, when the nation does not destroy their influence in time. Had Spain established freedom of thought, instead of torturing and expatriating her industrious inhabitants, she might now have been a second England, with wealth and power beyond any other continental country. Freedom of thought is now evolving in Spain; and if a moderate tyranny could be established, to consolidate the disjointed elements of the country, Spain might still progress. But freedom of thought is now necessary; and if any attempt be made to curtail it, the progress of revolution may go on for years and years, until worn out by anarchy, and the credences of the rising generation running counter to the old superstitions, some bold adventurer may seize the reins of government, and exhibit Spain in an entirely new aspect. That the present rulers will continue is almost an impossibility.

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SECTION III.—THE COMBINATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND REASON.

*[Knowledge is Credence based on sufficient Evidence, and Reason is the Power of perceiving Consequences, and of inferring Antecedents.]*

THE combination of knowledge and reason is the great moving power destined to emancipate the world. It is the only ground of hope for the unprivileged

classes, but, at the same time, it is a sure ground of hope, and the more rapidly knowledge increases, the more rapidly will its all-powerful influence be made apparent to the world.

The first great condition of true knowledge is *the Bible*. Without this, man knows nothing. He neither knows what he is, nor what is his destiny; and though he may guess at some of the important truths in which the race is involved, he gropes in obscurity as to the most essential. Without the Bible, superstition and infidelity reign universally.\* But God never made man to be either superstitious or an infidel; and

\* "It will be better to avoid all religious discussions whatever, on which the natives are very sensitive. There is too wide a gulf between, ever to be passed. Spaniards, who, like the Moslems, allow themselves great latitude in laughing at monks, priests, and professors of religion, are very touchy as regards the articles of their creed; on these, therefore, beware of sportive criticism. *The whole nation in religious matters is divided into only two classes—bigoted Romanists or infidels; there is no via media.* The very existence of the Bible is unknown to the vast majority, who, when convinced of the cheats put forth as religion, have nothing better to fall back on but infidelity. They have no means of knowing the truth, and even the better classes have not the *moral courage* to seek it; they are afraid to examine the subject; they anticipate an unsatisfactory result, and therefore leave it alone in dangerous indifferentism. And even with the most liberal, with those who believe every thing except the Bible, the term *hereje*, heretic, still conveys an undefined feeling of horror and disgust, which we tolerant Protestants cannot understand. A Lutheran they scarcely believe to have a soul, and almost think has a tail. . . . One thing is quite clear; that however serious and discouraging the blows recently dealt to the pope, the cause of infidelity, and not of Protestantism, has hitherto been the sole gainer." FORD'S *Hand-book for Spain*, p. 168. It would say very little for Protes-

as soon as either of these forms is stamped upon a nation, every kind of error is let loose, and the erroneous credence in the matter of religion extends to the temporal affairs of the state. There is but one *truth*; and if men go wrong in the most important item, we cannot wonder that they should err as to the moral principles by which they should be guided in their actions towards each other. If they know not their duties to their Creator, how can it be expected that they should fulfil their duties to their fellows? \*

Independent of all considerations of a hereafter, the

tantism if it *did* gain where there is *no evidence*. The process by which Romanists pass to infidelity is very easily explained. Popery is a *positive* credence; that is, it maintains a great many positive propositions. When these are examined, the *evidence* on which they ought to be based is found wanting, and the inquirer properly abandons them, thereby sinking into a *negative* state. He should, however, return to the God of nature until he finds evidence for a *positive* creed.

“From the state of matters in this country, it will not be long in all probability before the fruit of this religious toleration begins to appear. There is already much secret infidelity, and that will now no longer be concealed, so that we shall have an *infidel party*. There will also be a considerable body who hold pertinaciously by the forms, ceremonies, miracles, and worship of Rome, whom you may call the *Romanist party*; and there will be a third, which I trust by God’s blessing may be a rapidly increasing party. Though small in its beginnings, you may call it the *evangelical party*.”  
— *Letter from Italy, Witness*, March 8, 1848.

\* In saying that without the Bible man knows nothing, we do not mean that science or philosophy are to be learned from the Bible. All natural knowledge may be learned without the Bible; but suppose a nation were possessed of all natural knowledge, and yet had not the Bible, what doubts and mysteries would remain to overwhelm the inquirer? Besides, man, as man, is a worshipping



Bible has an eminent effect in regulating the conditions of men in this world. Religious superstition is essentially *tyrannical*. It interferes with men's thoughts and actions in almost every country of the globe, and freedom appears to be scarcely possible wherever it has a decided hold on the community. Superstition is the basis of bigotry, and bigotry is the basis of persecution. Destroy the superstition, and both bigotry and persecution will soon fall to the ground.

The Bible strikes at the root of persecution, by removing the false credence on which it is based; and wherever the Bible gains an ascendancy over the priestcraft of a superstition, we may be certain that, sooner or later, all persecution will disappear, and liberty of

creature, and all history informs us that where the revelation of TRUTH was unknown, men plunged madly into superstition. The Bible saves from this great whirlpool of destruction; and by enlightening man on his nature and destiny, and by revealing more clearly and specifically the wonderful benevolence of the Creator, and the constant interest taken by the Divine Being in the affairs of this world, the Bible enables man to *settle* his credence, and to *classify* his knowledge upon a system unknown to those who have not the truth. When, above all our philosophy, there remains an infinite void or an infinite unknown, we doubt, and speculate, and wander in obscurity. But when revelation opens up the highest truths that involve our race, and teaches what we must do *to be saved*, all other knowledge ranges itself lower down in the scale, and assumes a definite position, instead of floating loosely amidst the vague mysteries of the imagination. Philosophy, however clear, is but the deceitful moonlight that mocks with its illusions; and though much may be seen and known even by the moonlight, the calm and steady rays of *day* are requisite before the spell of the fancy is dissolved, and before the form and color of creation can be seen in their reality.

thought be established. The Bible sanctions no persecution, but teaches men that they are made of one flesh, and that they are personally responsible to their Creator.

Next to the Bible is the knowledge of material nature. An endless variety of phenomena are constantly occurring around us, and these, by a law of our mental constitution, are referred to *causes*.

These *causes* have ever played a most prominent part in the history of mankind, and the fancy has ever thrown around them that mysterious mantle of the imagination by which they were clothed with personality. From necessary forms of rational thought, they became transfigured, each and all of them, into conscious existences, that willed and acted for themselves, and produced the multifarious phenomena of nature. The child asks us, not "What?" but "Why?"\* And infant nations, who never belie the great principles of our nature, whether moral, intellectual, or sensual, whether good or evil, rushed from the exhibition of the phenomenon to the cause creator that produced it — endowed that cause with all the attributes of mind, and filled the world with half material spirits, demons and demigods, and all the vague mythologies of mysterious influences that spring from the unhallowed heart of man, which, naked and shamed, has sought refuge in the dark caverns of superstition. As *man* was, so were the *causes*: fierce warrior deities with the warlike nations — emblems of thought, "sitting on

\* A child never thinks of measuring a phenomenon, but asks, "What *produced* it?" "Why did it take place?"

a lotus leaf, immersed in the contemplation of their own divinity," among the mystic speculators of the sunlit lands—demons of carnage, figured in the tiger fetish of the oppressed progeny of Ham—Molochs, Baals, or Saturns—fates, furies, or destinies; while the classic poesy of Greece and Rome deified the sentiments of the human mind, and pictured them as beings presiding over nature, though steeped in all the vices of mankind.

Still, wherever there was intellect there was *beauty*. False as were the credences, we cannot now turn to them without recognizing the glorious attributes of reason with which mankind has been endowed. Nor can we wonder at the spell of fascination, when we find the mere abstractions of our thought presented in the form of a Hebe, a Venus, or Minerva. Dark as were the times of ancient paganism, there was a beauty of imagination that speaks home to the intellect of man, and leaves a sad regret. Let us not forget, however, that *we* behold, not as actors in the scene, but as the spectators at those gladiatorial shows, where the contest of man with death was the absorbing drama for the onlooker, while the victims in the arena poured forth their blood and perished.

It was reserved for the corruption of Christianity to throw the *darkest* shade. It is said that "the shadow is nowhere so dark as immediately under the lamp;" and the true light of Heaven was converted, not into the lamp that lightens, but into the lamp that casts a shade. Piety died away, and theology took her place. Creeds and confessions were substituted for living virtue. Christians forgot to fix their eyes on Heaven, and deified the symbols of religion.

The wisdom that is from above is *not* a creed, but *a principle of life imbued with truth*; and when the church forgot the life, the truth vanished from the symbol, and left the dead remains of unspiritual knowledge. The shadows were dark before, but now night shrouded in a veil.

Now was the night of degradation. Now was man seen, not in the energies of his pride, not in the brilliant colors of his fancy, not in the heroism of a noble heart, that had framed its country for its God, and rushed to death self-sacrificed — but in the drivelling wretchedness of priestcraft, and in the sensuality of worse than pagan Rome. Now indeed was darkness. Truth had few worshippers — tradition had her hosts. Virtue was gone, and man was content with ceremony. Causes were no longer deities; and all that had remained of beauty was drowned in the senseless legend of the monkish tale.

Causes now were demons and demi-demons. The atmosphere of earth was filled with spirits of malignity. Demons and devils stared from out the ordinary phenomena of nature.\* Tempests had their witches, winds had their wizards, and *saints* were prayed to for

\* "Such were the words which Paracelsus addressed to his contemporaries, who were as yet incapable of appreciating doctrines of this sort; for the belief in enchantment still remained every where unshaken, and faith in the world of spirits still held men's minds in so close a bondage, that thousands were, according to their own conviction, given up as a prey to the devil; while, at the command of religion as well as of law, countless piles were lighted, by the flames of which human society was to be purified." — *Hecker's Epidemics of the Middle Ages*, p. 100.

protection. Now was death triumphant. Death of all that was noble, death of all that was true, death of all that was brave. Now was the reign of ignorance, and now was the priest man's deity. Now was "the heel bruised," and now was truth transformed into a LIE. Lies in the life, lies in the heart, lies on the tongue, lies in the creed, lies in the ceremony, lies in the vow, lies in the church, lies at the altar, and lies to the lips of the last expiring agonies of man. O, mystery of iniquity!

But the *causes* did not fall alone. As the causes fell, so fell man. Man and his deities are linked by a chain that nothing severs but death; for as the object of our worship is, so shall we be, more and more nearly.

While we look to the night of intellect and virtue that followed the teaching of the priest, let us also look to one incident that shows the depth of human degradation. Man had anciently deified *the cause*, and created, according to a necessary law of our nature, a something that should afford an explanation of phenomena. The priest now creates not a cause, but a *phenomenon*.

So long as man takes *the fact* in nature, and seeks to assign a *cause*, he follows the true path; and that path is abstractly correct, however absurd may be the fancied explanation. The priest, however, who turned *every thing* into a lie, forsook even this great principle of our intellect, and took a *cause* and worked a *miracle*. He sought no longer to personify, but to *simulate*. And the vulgar miracles of the papal heresy were *simulated facts*, wrought for the purposes of deception. His bleeding idols and moving pictures, and all the

other stock-in-trade of lying priestcraft, were imitations of phenomena; while wooden virgin Marys and human saints were supposed to preside over the operations of the elements.

To suppose that any thing else than vice, abomination, and *tyranny* could exist with such a system, is out of the question. All the history of man teaches us, that where there is a corrupt priesthood, there is a corrupt people. And if the people are corrupt—if from the king on the throne to the peasant who tills the field, lies and superstition form the sum and substance of theological credence, where in all the world can *liberty* be expected to come from? Does liberty grow out of lies? or out of *truth*? Out of ignorance and vice? or out of knowledge and virtue? And if it *does* grow out of truth, there is but ONE TRUTH; and that truth is the condition of man's welfare, and the only price at which true freedom can be purchased.

It may be supposed that we dwell too strongly and too long on the superstitions of the Roman heresy. Not so. These superstitions have more political influence for the destruction of freedom, than all the other causes that act on the states of central and southern Europe. Read the history of *any* country where Romanism has been the prevailing superstition; read the best accounts of the present condition of *any* Roman Catholic countries—and then say if you can find any thing whatever that can be called even an approach to *liberty*—to an *equitable* condition of society. Take France before the revolution, (and even forget the ameliorating influence of time in softening down the asperities—an influence that makes us look with

almost calm indifference at deeds however dark, provided they are far enough removed,) and ask what Romanism had done for France? See brute carnality pursued *intentionally*, see despotism not even arrested at the *oubliettes*, see a peasantry taught lies by the priest, while the farmers of the taxes ground them into madness and desperation, the state corrupt in every function, the best and the most industrious part of the population expatriated or destroyed, and liberty of thought uprooted by the sabres of the soldiery. When at last (without the aid of what is called *Protestantism*) the very people, who from infancy had been taught to reverence the priest and his mysteries, could no longer believe his lies, what could be expected? When every thing had been so corrupted that France was rotten to the core, and there remained no single bond that could keep the nation together as a society; and when the very light of reason, that professed to teach *nothing*, destroyed the superstitions of the priest, and unhinged the credence of the nation; when the priest was found a deceiver and the ruler a despot, and men's reason told them that it was so, even without the Bible; and when *all* religious credence was swept away in the reaction of the poisoned intellect — what could we expect? And can it be supposed that Russia and Austria have nothing of the kind in store? Will ignorance remain there forever, and teach men that, though they have a reason, they must not exercise it, but be, like the beasts of the field, subject to their master? Some may think that “to-morrow shall be as to-day, and much more abundant.” “God forbid!” must be the prayer of every freeman.

The degradation of the *causes* of natural phenomena entailed some of the most horrid cruelties that have stained the history of the world. God was dethroned from the realm of *nature*, as well as from the realm of *religion*; and when virgins, saints, old bones, and bits of wood became the objects of men's *worship*, witches and sorcerers were the minor deities of nature, and the *causes* of phenomena. The priest, however, had the *power*, and, as he dealt in miracles himself, the witches trenched too closely on his domain, and he removed them by a process more frantically cruel than that by which he himself was afterwards removed by the few insane atheists of France. The terrible crimes that were committed, under the pretext of punishing witchcraft, show us that nature as well as religion was provided with an inquisition by the priest; and the multitudes of sorcerers who were immolated in the middle ages, were as much the victims of nature misinterpreted, as the martyr Christians were the victims of a false theology. Truth, in either case, would have prevented the commission of the crimes.

Not only, however, does popery destroy the elements of *freedom*; it uproots that most pure and most holy of all man's natural sentiments — patriotism. Some have come to speculate about the country that produces most food, most population, most machinery, and most, &c., &c., as if *that* were necessarily the *best* country. Granted, if man were to live forever. But as threescore years and ten are the time of man's days upon earth, he who *has* a country has but *one*. All trade, all fairness, all peace, all good will to all the nations in the world; but yet there is a country for



which something else is reserved. It is not merely the country of our *birth*; that is an accident that goes for nothing in the case of birth *abroad*. It is the land of our fathers, the land of our hopes, the land of our language, the land of our affections, and the land of our heart. It is the land that we should stand with or fall with. Were there ten thousand Tamerlanes ravaging the earth, we might look on as spectators; it might, or it might not, be our duty to interfere.\* But *our* land is the land of our sanctuary, on which foeman's foot is the impress of pollution; and, so long as there beats a patriot's heart, there will be found the patriot's sword. Nothing in the history of the world ever struck patriotism dead, save the blasphemous doctrines of Rome. Search all history for a thousand years, read tales and legends, and records of all that has come down of papal Roman history, and say if you can find one single Roman *patriot*. Ask if there be one man in all that city, and that state, whose heart has beat for Rome, and whose hand grasped a *patriot's* brand on the threshold of his fathers. Saxons and Franks, Northmen, Genoese, Pisans, Venetians, Sicilians, Burgundians, Flemings, Spaniards, Moors, Normans, Europeans, Africans, and Asiatics, all the races that ran to seek a country, or staid to defend one, have left a name in the annals of the age. And where amidst them all is the *Roman*? Rome fought, but not with Romans. She who buys and sells souls, and purgatorial fires, and redemption with a bloodless sacrifice, bought and sold men, and hired the arms of hirelings.

Rome taught men that they might fight here to-day, there to-morrow, and sell their swords for gold. Men

fought because it was their *trade*, and worked for the employer that gave most wages — wretches without a country, fit emblems of their instructor. Patriotism was disbanded, save with the peasant cultivators of the soil, who still could fight for their homes, like the tiger for his lair.

Whatever may be said of the material benefits of countries, one thing is certain — a country where there is no patriotism is not safe for a day. Patriotism is a country's true strength; for where there is no patriotism there is no bond of union. When France was patriotic, and trusted her frontier to her peasantry, all the armies of Europe could set no foot upon her soil. But when men fought for the *emperor*, and not for their country, France was humbled in the dust. Ten grains of true patriotism would have saved Spain, Italy, and Germany from Napoleon; but, alas! "they had them not," and, what is more, never will have, and never can have, till Roman priestcraft is destroyed.

But time rolled on, and night was drawing to a close. Broken gleams of light flickered here and there, to give warning of the coming day. Day broke at last, and nature was emancipated from the mystic folds of superstition. The great turning-point of modern times was, when the doctrine of *constant repetition of similar phenomena in similar conditions* was substituted for the dread of unseen, and too often *malevolent*, agency.

Man learned at last to bend his eye on the phenomenon, accurately to observe the *conditions*, and accurately to measure the *change*. Physical truth was the result of this operation, so simple, now we know it,

yet of such vast importance to the welfare of the world. Superstition here received its blow of death; and, just in proportion as the inductive philosophy (in physical science) was received and cultivated; so was man emancipated from the terrors of unseen agency, and the phenomena of nature were fixed on a stable basis, that invited man constantly to further inquiry.

But what had become of the *causes*? The immense revolution that had taken place in man's view of nature, was accompanied by another revolution that went far to destroy the priestcraft of Rome, and to bring man back to the spiritual worship of his Creator. The Bible had been resuscitated, and some at all events had learned to love the pure beauty of religion as taught by God, and to forsake the doctrines of devils as taught by man. Instead of stocks, and stones, and graven images, and the remnants of the human frame, men learned to bow the knee to Him who sitteth on the throne of righteousness, and to confide in the God of heaven, who had sent his Son for the redemption of the world.

The *causes* were now no longer beings, but *the laws by which the one God carries on the government of the material world*. No wonder that Rome will have no *science*.

But has this view of nature a *direct* bearing on the political condition of mankind? No doubt of it whatever. Those who have advocated the utilitarian theory are true benefactors to their country; and, though we may take occasion to advert to the cases in which that theory has been carried altogether out of its legitimate province, we of course accept it to its

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utmost extent in those matters that come within its range. But what is the utilitarian theory, and what is its connection with inductive philosophy?

Let us suppose men legislating on a *theological* principle, (no matter what,) and carrying out their laws by force. Let us suppose an inductive philosopher beginning at the effects of these laws, carefully collecting the statistics of the things he can observe, and arranging them into an exhibition of *facts*. Let us suppose that these facts (as it is most likely they would) show the *results* of the legislation to have been eminently detrimental to the great body of the population. Suppose he publishes these details. Of course those who legislate on a *theological* principle care nothing about consequences; for if the *principle* be correct, the legislation is a duty at all hazards. Now, what is to be *done*? Of course, if the populace are not quite so certain about the principle as the legislators are, they might begin to suspect a mistake in the rulers' method of proceeding, and perhaps they might weigh the statistics against the theology, and give the preference to the former. This is very likely. Now, what course have the rulers? Either to abandon their legislation, or to *expel the philosopher, and prevent all further inquiries of the kind*. But suppose the inductive mode of judging of legislative acts should happen to procure free course, it is quite impossible that *facts*, mere *facts*, should not tell on the country in the long run, and that reasonings upon those facts should not spring up in every man's mind, and cause him to throw all his weight into every change in which he could see his own, and the interest of his fellows, involved.

But suppose a new light were to break upon the nation. Suppose men should happen to reflect that *facts* come from the operations of the laws of God, and suppose the thought should strike them that God is a *benevolent and a just* God — that he made a *good* world, gave it *good* laws, and that social evils spring from man's injustice to his fellow, and from the *wrong* way in which things have been divided. Suppose the idea should go abroad that God is no respecter of *persons*, but that perhaps the welfare of a peasant is of as much value in the eyes of Him who doeth all things well, as the welfare of a king. Now, suppose to these reflections were joined another or two, that God made man's *reason*, and made man to hate pain and flee from it; and also that man's nature obliges him to live in society, and that societies may make mistakes, as the child does who puts his finger into the flame, and that the pain is to teach him to beware in future. Were such notions to go abroad, it is perfectly evident that the inductive philosophy, when it found out evils and suffering attending legislative acts, would come, backed with the authority of Him who made the laws of nature, and it would lead to the belief that the welfare of the *great* masses of the population was never sacrificed to procure the wealth of the few, without God's displeasure being always made manifest in the suffering that ensued. *Not* that this suffering was a miraculous interference, but the result of the ordinary laws which God has made for the government of the world.

Suppose, however, *one* more principle should be admitted, namely, that "that which is *just* is *beneficial*,

and for the good of the greatest number." Suppose men should reflect that induction requires time and knowledge before it can be brought to perfection, and that God endowed man with an *à priori* principle of *justice*, to enable him to steer clear of injuring his fellow, even where the inductive evidence should not be at hand. Suppose the results of this *justice* and of this *induction* should happen to turn out always and invariably coincident, and although pursuing different paths to reach the same end, yet the end arrived at never was different.

Were all this admitted, (and though it takes many words to tell it, perhaps it might be seen all at one view,) it is plain that the inductive method of examining the *condition* of the country would have the most direct and the most powerful influence on the legislation of the country. Where suffering was considered not the mere accident of chance, nor the work of a malevolent spirit, but the voice of a just and benevolent God, telling men to amend the order of society, and to return to those elementary principles of justice that he had implanted in their mind — surely we can see that the progress of this nation must be very different from the progress of that nation from which inductive philosophy was banished, and where men legislated *for themselves* and pretended to be legislating for God.

Next to a rational view of nature comes a true philosophy of the mind and of the mental operations. It might be supposed that this could have little influence on the political condition of a nation; and if all the great truths relating to man were not so inseparably

linked together, that error in the one usually involves or implies error in the other, perhaps, taken alone, it might be of no great importance. But from some cause or other, speculative errors about *man* have usually involved speculative errors about *God*, and speculative errors about *God* have usually unhinged the whole framework of human *duty*, and obscured the distinction between right and wrong. This subject the reader will find discussed in the first volume of M. Cousin's "History of the Moral Philosophy of the Eighteenth Century," where he traces, with a grace peculiar to himself, the doctrine of "no causes but physical causes" to the "*sensation*" school of mental philosophy.\*

Of M. Cousin's work, it is perhaps impossible to speak too highly, and we rejoice to see so eminent a man, and so candid a reasoner, speaking out for the *natural* principles of *duty*, declaring his honest conviction, that, as a philosopher, he finds a law of justice written in the constitution of man. At the same time, we cannot but hope that those who adopt that philosophy will not confine themselves to the general idea of a just and righteous God made manifest through the glorious works of nature and of mind, but continue in the onward path of truth, and really investigate with the same candor the authenticity of the

\* The doctrine of no causes but physical causes, is said to have produced, perhaps, the most frightful exclamation that ever crossed the lips of man, — "Nous pouvons faire ce que nous voulons, il n'y-a pas de Dieu!" said to have been uttered by the rabble at Arras, as the executioner's cart tracked its way with blood. Fit doctrine to fit deed.

BIBLE. For ourselves we cannot speak as if the Bible were not a revelation, or even as if it were a collection of *doubtful* documents; and therefore we cannot speculate as if there were a question *as to whether God has revealed himself directly, as well as by necessary inference from his works.* Christianity is never to be found in nature, although *religion* is; and THE CHRIST, the Son of the living God, equal and one with the Father, forms as necessary a part of all true acceptance with God, and of all present religion, (now since the fall,) as the most clear acknowledgment of the Creator. When we confine ourselves purely to philosophy, and ask what may be learnt by the unaided exercise of the reason, we do well, so long as we do not advance our results to *the exclusion* of revelation; but when we form a system of philosophy from nature, however perfect that system may be, we suggest that it is not *logical* to predicate any thing whatever about the reality or unreality of a revelation, with only that philosophy for the premises. Nothing whatever is capable of being the premises of the question of revelation, except the *evidence* on which any particular revelation is stated to be founded. And although the attributes of the Deity are made evident through nature, we must never from that leap to the conclusion, that God has *not* made known his *particular acts*, which could never be inferred, as we can infer his attributes. "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and



breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us. For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness *by that Man whom he hath ordained*; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men *in that he hath raised him from the dead.*" — PAUL'S Address to the Athenians.

But what, after all, is the sum and substance of our argument concerning the combination of knowledge and reason? Merely this, that *correct credence* is absolutely essential to the human race, before that race can know and work out its own well being.

The elements of this correct credence are, 1st. The Bible. 2d. A correct view of the phenomena of material nature. 3d. A correct philosophy of the mental operations.\*

\* We do not, in this place, enter on the subject of moral science, having to treat it more specially hereafter. A correct philosophy of the mental operations would of course include the science of equity, but a science of equity there cannot possibly be, so long as there is a *sensational* philosophy; and therefore we have affirmed.

1st. The Bible. There is but one truth, and, if the Bible system be true, every other system must be erroneous, and must lead to a course of action prejudicial to mankind. The question is not as to the necessity of all men becoming, what is sometimes termed *religious*, but as to the general acceptance or rejection of that system of revealed knowledge which is contained in the Bible alone; and, when we consider how vast an amount of information is there afforded us respecting man, man's nature, and man's destiny, we see at once, that if all that information be correct and be rejected, men shut themselves out from the light, and plunge wilfully into vague and hopeless darkness. So far from the Bible being in opposition to the reason of mankind, the Bible is the great emancipator of the reason; the first great influence that delivers man from the empire of passion and superstition, and leaves him free to exercise those faculties with which the Creator has endowed his intellect. Sceptics may frame their sophisms, and point incredulous to its insoluble mysteries; but HISTORY dashes their sophisms into the dust, and shows us the great evolution of freedom and civilization taking place under the shadow of revealed truth, while the mass of the earth's inhabitants struggle helplessly onward in a vain endeavor to deliver them-

that a correct mental philosophy is essential to human welfare. At the conclusion of the volume, we shall endeavor to show how a genuine philosophy may become possible, and possible in such a manner as to cast aside dispute. Philosophy, strictly speaking, can never assume a satisfactory form until the whole of the direct sciences are completed, and then philosophy will become purely *critical*.

selves from the evils that inseparably accompany superstition. No truth can be more certain, than that the welfare of the human race is wrapped up in the universal acceptance of the Bible as the Word of God, and the only true source from which man must draw the first great facts in which all the children of men are irrevocably implicated.

2d. A correct view of natural phenomena. In this, two things are implied: 1st. A knowledge of natural phenomena, (science;) and, 2d. The attribution of those phenomena to their true cause. If God be the Creator of the universe, God is also the physical Governor of the universe; and as such we must regard the occurrences of nature as the results of the laws established by him. And when once men shall really awake to the conviction, that the social evils of the community (poverty and want,\* with the accompaniments of

\* That poverty and want have a direct tendency to produce *crime*, is a fact which may be ascertained inductively in the same manner as any general fact or principle is ascertained and established in the physical sciences. If prevention be better than cure, it is most certainly better than *punishment*, which has proved itself, in the general history of the world, to be the clumsiest and most inefficient means of preventing crime that has ever been employed towards a population. There is a vast difference between the man who is by habit and repute a criminal, and the man who is led to commit crime under certain circumstances of social distress. Almost every man in the world is of such a nature that he would commit crime in certain circumstances; and this very fact should point out the necessity of reforming the circumstances, as well as endeavoring to restrain the offenders by threats of consequent infliction. So intimately is crime connected with the physical condition of the population, that it may almost be said *to fluctuate with*

crime, ignorance, and disease) arise from an infringement of certain invariable laws, no more uncertain in their nature than those which regulate the fall of a stone or the motion of a planet, we may reasonably

*the price of provisions and the demand for labor*; and the only sure mode of reducing it to a minimum, is to remove those political obstacles which prevent the cultivator and the laborer from reaping their natural reward, or which prevent them from employing their labor on the earth, which God has given as a storehouse for food, but which the laws of men reduce to sterility by the common system of landed property. How many thousands of criminal Irishmen might be made useful members of society, by allowing them to cultivate the land, according to the law of God's word and of God's nature, *for their own profit!* Let any one compare the following statement of Irish crime with the price of provisions in Ireland at the respective periods, and deny, if he can, the same inductive relation of cause and effect which forms the essence of all physical science:—

“OUTRAGES. — *Ireland, October, 1847.* — Returns have just been issued (pursuant to an order of the House of Lords, dated June 28) stating the number and kind of outrages reported by the constabulary in Ireland, from the month of June, 1845, to the month of May, 1847, inclusive. This return is intended as a continuation of the sessional paper, No. 279 of 1845. The results of this latest document show a fearful and extraordinary increase of crime in Ireland. Thus the total number of outrages specially reported to the constabulary force in Ireland, during the month of July, 1844, was 552. In June, 1845, the number was 896, and in July, 1845, it was 708. In September of the same year it was 552; in August, 1846, it was 478; while in the following month it had increased to 829. In October, the number of offences again increased to 1482 — (nearly *three times* as many as during the corresponding period of the preceding year;) in November last it was 1761; and in the concluding month of the year, no less a number than 2666 — (upwards of *four times* as many as in December, 1845.) Of that number, 1389 were cases of cattle stealing; 14 homicides, (in one month;) 22 cases of

expect that men will bend their eye on the phenomenon, endeavor to ascertain the conditions and forces that result in good or evil, and thus to discover a natural science of society that may open a new era in the history of civilization. Induction is no less applicable to the phenomena of men than it is to the phenomena of matter; and, although there are disturbing causes that render the study more complex and more difficult, we can have no reason for supposing that the same stability that prevails in the inorganic world, does not also prevail in the social world of men, and entail many effects which are too often attributed to the voluntary volitions of the mind. Not that there are no phenomena in the social world which cannot be accounted for by physical laws—for this would obliterate man's moral nature; but that certain social conditions are for the most part accompanied by certain social phenomena, which may be studied in the same manner as the facts of any other science, and made the basis of social action and of human legislation.

firing at the person; 25 aggravated assaults, &c. Thirty-five of the offences were of an agrarian character. In the first month of the present year, (1847,) the number of offences reported by the constabulary in Ireland was still further augmented, for it amounted to 2885—(1276 in Munster alone.) In May it was 2647, of which number 1446 were cases of cattle stealing; while in the May preceding there were only 69 of these offences reported. The return from which these results are extracted does not come lower than the month of May. During the two years included in the account, (June, 1845, to May, 1847, both inclusive,) the total number of outrages reported by the constabulary in Ireland amounted to no fewer than 29,302, or at the rate of more than 40 outrages every day in the year."—*Witness*, October 30, 1847.

Thus every religion and every political system may be judged of inductively (by an examination of the condition of the people where it prevails) as well as dogmatically, by an inquiry into its own inherent nature; and we may, as politicians, pronounce the utter condemnation of idolatry, on account of its fruits of ignorance, vice, crime, and detriment to the social condition of mankind; while, as theologians, we exhibit its falsity and error, and condemn it because its credence is unsupported, and therefore superstitious. It is true that this view may, by certain classes, be esteemed a low one; but all truth is worthy of attention, much more especially that which affects the social condition of men, because these effects, that may be observed by the natural exercise of our faculties, must be considered as the results of God's laws operating in the world. It is no mean advantage to truth, that she has always the benefit (the common worldly benefit) on her side; neither is it a small argument against any erroneous system, that we may point to its deadly fruits, and show the demoralizing influence of its operation.

But if idolatry may be judged of by its fruits, so may *despotism*, so may slavery, so may restrictive laws, and so may all those inventions of worldly legislation, by which a small benefit is conferred on the few at the expense of the mass of the population. And these effects, whatever their kind, belong to a natural and inductive science of society, the great principles of which remain the same in all ages and in all conditions, however much, or however little advantage may have been derived by a nation from their contemplation.

## 3d. A correct philosophy of the mental operations.

Whenever we approach what is termed *metaphysical philosophy*, we feel that we approach a quagmire, over which a dense mist seems to hold its perpetual habitation.\* The footing is all unsound, or at least suspicious, and the little light there is, is only sufficient to confuse and perplex us. If we attempt to advance, two ultimate and hitherto impassable objects present themselves to view. On the one hand is the bottomless pit of scepticism, and on the other is the commanding but inaccessible height of absolute truth. Some, wearied with vain endeavors to scale the precipice, have at last, as if despairingly, advanced beyond the brink, and sunk into the unfathomable void; while

\* In speaking thus of *metaphysical philosophy*, we do not speak of that genuine philosophy which consists in the enumeration and discussion of the primary elements and propositions of human credence, but of that spurious speculation that endeavors, by a subtle use of language, and of half-formed thought, to uproot the foundations of truth. Let us suppose that every man in the world immediately gives his assent to the *necessary and universal truth* of an axiom, (no matter what.) Some philosophers say, "But your axiom is only a subjective conviction; now prove to me its objective truth." The most definite reply to this objection, and one which the sceptic may fail to get over with all his ingenuity, is this, "Give me a definition of objective truth." Axioms are, it is true, incapable of proof; but why? because they are the standards of all other propositional truth whatever. The idealist, on the other hand, accepts *truth*, but confuses the question of *reality*. The fact we believe to be, that if *truth* and *reality* were fairly defined, and not jumbled together in a kind of mysterious way, both the sceptic and the idealist (the Berkleyian) would at once be convicted of introducing a *new term* into their conclusion, and making a palpable logical fallacy.

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others, startled at the plunge, have flattered themselves that, by some mighty effort of their own faith or imagination, they could compensate for the reality, that could only be obtained by setting the foot on the summit and casting the eye over universal nature.

Between scepticism on the one hand, and the dogmatism of unsupported faith on the other, philosophy has slowly swayed backwards and forwards, leaving man as little farther advanced in ontology as he was five hundred, or a thousand, or two thousand years since.

To suppose, however, that philosophy is the useless jargon that some writers appear desirous of representing, because it has failed to solve the great problem, namely, "How can objective existence be *rationally* substantiated?" is surely to look at history with only one eye. Philosophy *has* failed; that is, the human intellect has failed; that is, man as man has failed; that is, in fact, that after all the mental toil of the greatest, the problem appears insoluble, and seems to teach us that humanity cannot arrive at objective truth by its own unaided efforts; neither, we candidly confess, does it appear to us to be of the slightest importance whether it can or cannot.

Grant that scepticism in philosophy is the ultimate result of all investigation; let us only be consistent, and make that scepticism *universal*, and the bugbear of scepticism disappears forever. Let us write a plus or a minus, a sign positive or a sign negative, before *all* our knowledge, and what difference can it possibly make? Knowledge remains the same in all its relative proportions; and all that man has really ascer-



tained to be true, remains as permanently stable, and as really capable of application, as if ten thousand syllogisms had proven that *knowledge* was *truth*, and that the axiomatic credence of mankind was really veracious. Scepticism, whatever be its dangers, is only dangerous when partially applied, and when we apparently undermine one branch of knowledge by insisting on *rational proof*, while at the same time we admit as much, and perhaps infinitely more, without any process of proof whatever, but merely because we are constrained to believe. When one man shall have demonstrated to another man his own existence, (and the most sceptical of the sceptics admits the existence of the *me*,) it will then be time to substantiate objective existence, by a process of proof that can have no difficulties, when once the proof of the one *me* is furnished to the other. If we will be sceptics, let us be consistent; and let us write our sign negative, not merely before objective knowledge, but before the existence of that *me*, whose existence is absolutely as incapable of every approach to rational proof as is the existence of an external world.\*

\* It is commonly supposed, that philosophic scepticism has some mysterious power to unhinge the very framework of *morals*. Now suppose that, after all, *the whole* of man's knowledge should be proven subjective, what difference can it make? Suppose a subjective man is arrested by a subjective policeman, tried by a subjective jury, and condemned to subjective imprisonment—is the *pain* the less *real* because it is subjective? Or, to extend the argument, suppose the whole system of morals should be subjective, and that there shall be a subjective day of judgment, and a subjective eternity. What difference could the mere mode of ex-

When, however, we take the existence of the *me* for granted, and then insist that other objective existence should produce a proof of which it is incapable, our scepticism is not only dangerous but fatal, and the tangled web of sophistry is made to envelop certain subjects, as if they, and they only, were shrouded in obscurity. To proceed in this manner is no more rational than it would be to take objective existence for granted, and then to reflect on the *me*, and imperatively to demand its rational proof. Rational proof there is none, either in the one case or the other; for the *me* is as really *objective* to all our *consciousness*, as is matter or universal mind. We are *conscious* of mental *phenomena* alone; and the *me* is as far removed from immediate appreciation, as is any other substantive existence that our race admits with persevering universality. Let us only make scepticism (philosophic scepticism) *absolutely universal*, and the foundations of real knowledge are laid anew, and the glorious edifice of science acquires its fair proportions, and becomes the settled home of man's intellect, where he may dwell in peace and safety, having buried scepticism in a grave of its own digging.\*

pression make? If scepticism were *practical*, it would save from terrestrial consequences and terrestrial pain; and, if it cannot do so, it makes the most groundless assumption when it proposes to abolish future punishment. Even if *matter* were only an idea, it is plain that *pain* is to be avoided, even if it *were* only subjective; and consequently if criminality of action brings pain, it is plain that the most certain of all knowledge is *morals*. The *moral* law is abiding, whatever view may be taken of *matter*.

\* There is one argument which appears to us valid against all

For ourselves, we believe that scepticism may be fairly met, and fairly vanquished by the most strict rules of logic. Its stronghold is in the ambiguity of terms, and in the use of terms which it has no logical right to use. Let us, however, without descending into abstract disputations, take it up on *the fact*.

philosophers who admit the *me*, and require rational proof of the existence of the *not me*. Let us grant that all the external material world may come to be viewed by that philosopher as an assemblage of the sensations or phenomena of the *me*. This may, perhaps, be possible; but these philosophers use arguments and *write books*. Now, for what purpose are these books written? Surely not to convince the *me*, for the *me* is supposed convinced already, but to convince some other *me*, that is, some *objective* mental existence which can never, even by the utmost stretch of scepticism, be confounded with the *me* personal. An argument is to convince a *mind*; and assuredly that mind never made a sensual impression on the sceptic. Nothing in the shape of a sensual impression, nothing in the shape of observation, nothing in the shape of phenomenal affection, could ever be experienced by the sceptic of that *mind*, whose existence he takes for granted when he endeavors to convince it. Every philosopher who writes a book or uses an argument, appears to us to admit objective existence in a manner that is not liable to the reply usually given to his admission of the material world. *That*, we have granted, may be phenomenal; but when he acts for the conviction of a judgment by publishing an argument, will it, or can it, be advanced that that judgment is phenomenal? Is it not absolutely and essentially *another me*, perfectly distinct and perfectly distinguished from every thing that the *me* who writes can possibly predicate of itself? We can easily imagine a sceptic viewing men's *bodies* as phenomena, and classing them among the modifications of himself; but when he endeavors to convince their judgments, he thereby substantiates external existence objective to himself, and utterly incapable of ever being reduced to that *modification of the ME*, that forms the essential groundwork of the sceptical philosophy.

Scepticism says, "You have no proof for the objective truth of your subjective convictions." We deny the *fact*, and allege that an argument based on the calculation of probabilities would establish, beyond the smallest possibility of doubt, the objective veracity of the subjective laws of reason. The mathematical sciences are, every one of them,—namely, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, and statics,—purely subjective; every one of their primary *propositions* is an axiomatic truth taken for granted, *self-evident*, incapable of question, purely abstract, and that does not pronounce on the real existence of any concrete reality whatever. Now how comes it, that when these subjective sciences are applied to matter, an entity with which *they* have nothing to do, they are invariably as correct as when merely contemplated by the reason? How, if the subjective convictions and subjective processes of the reason are not correct, can an astronomer predict the return of a comet?—and the comet *does* return, to other men's perceptions, years after he is dead. Scepticism is the greatest imposition that ever fooled man's reason, yet it must be *fairly* met.

Never, perhaps, was the absence of a definition productive of so much fruitless toil, as when men set to work on philosophy. It had been well if philosophers had definitely laid before them the object they were about to pursue, and satisfied themselves that the means of arriving at their end were really within their reach. What is the object of philosophy? What is philosophy? What does a man propose to expound when he teaches philosophy? These are questions usually evaded by some oblique dissertation on the

general form of knowledge, the nature of things, &c., &c., and the definite object to be pursued is never ascertained. For a long period philosophy was *ontology*; that is, the knowledge of being, entirely and exclusively objective in its character, entirely and exclusively subjective in its means of operation. That is, men endeavored to substantiate both the reality and the form of the universe in their own minds, without the connecting link — *evidence* — that renders one form of thought *knowledge*. There was no evidence, therefore there was no knowledge. With such a system the abstract sciences *alone* are possible, as in them the evidence is subjective, and supplied by the rational constitution of the mind.

The Baconian philosophy broke up ontology, by supplying the connecting link that must unite the object and the subject. That link was *evidence*, and that evidence was only possible by means of *observation*. Philosophy now separated into two parts — one of which was *metaphysics*, the representative of the ancient philosophy; and *science*, the new philosophy that arose from the new method of founding knowledge on evidence.

The new philosophy has advanced with wonderful strides, enlightening man's intellect, and dispersing innumerable benefits, which reproduce themselves in an infinity of forms, and hold out hopes of great and permanent advantage to our race. The old philosophy remains much where it was, as regards its nature, but in a very different position as to the extent of the ground it occupies.

At one period the ontological method of making

science (that is, the method of making science *without evidence*) was universal. It was applied to physics as well as to metaphysics, and its domain was supposed to extend over every thing that could become the subject of human knowledge. Not only was there a scholastic theology, but a scholastic series of assertions with regard to the essence of matter, all explanatory of observed phenomena. Alchemy, astrology, &c., completed the circle, and reduced to art the principles of dogmatic assertion. During the reign of this system, it is worthy of remark that diversity of credence and contradiction of statement were just as prevalent in matters of physical science, as they now are in matters of politics and philosophy.

When, however, a new *method* was discovered, diversity of credence and the ontological system retired from all those regions where real knowledge was acquired; and, as the new philosophy extended its domain, the old philosophy was curtailed in its sphere of operation, and restricted to those subjects that have not yet been reduced to scientific ordination. Thus the region of conflicting belief was one of indefinite boundary, or rather one whose boundary was constantly fluctuating and retiring before the advance of real knowledge. The history of real or positive knowledge might almost be termed the history of the retrogression of philosophy; and just as the new method was enabled to substantiate its propositions in such a manner, that all who investigated the evidence arrived at the same unity of credence, was philosophy constrained to abandon its ground, and to retire to those heights where it now enjoys but a precarious authority.

Let us now firmly lay hold of the fact, that philosophy at one period pretended to explain the phenomena of the external world, and that philosophy has now been driven from every part of that region that has been occupied by positive science.

Can nothing be learned from this fact? We think that something can, and it is this: That philosophy, after retrograding from every region of thought to which man may apply his attention, shall at last resolve itself into the science of human thought, and pronounce nothing whatever on any subject that is not merely and exclusively human thought. If we consider knowledge, we shall find that it implies three things; the object, (that is, the universe;) the subject, (that is, the human mind;) and the connecting link between them, that is, *evidence*. Now, if we consider that philosophy has abandoned one portion after another of the object, just in proportion as positive science has occupied that portion, we can see that, if the process continues, the whole of the object must ultimately be abandoned, and the subject alone become the object of contemplation. And if so, then will philosophy teach only psychology,\* that is, the science of mental phenomena, which we can have no reason to

\* Psychology, taking that term extensively to signify mental science. Of course, mental science has its divisions. First, there is inductive psychology, the *observational* part of mental science; and, second, there is the science proper of *thought*. The latter alone is entitled to the name of philosophy; the former is the natural history of mind. All the direct sciences must be evolved *before* there can be a science proper of thought. On this subject, however, we shall remark towards the close of the volume.

doubt may assume somewhat of the same ordination that prevails in those sciences that have the material world for their foundation.

Let us now for a moment reflect upon our argument, and endeavor to seize the point at which philosophy broke away from the path of legitimate inquiry, and lost itself amid the shifting quicksands of doubt, denial, and contradiction.

Let us place both the vulgar multitude and the philosophers before us, and examine their various occupations.

The multitude, in all ages and in all places, have admitted the existence of the mind, the existence of the external world, and the existence of Deity. These appear to be the common facts which those who do not enter on philosophic inquiry admit and act upon as matters requiring neither proof nor specific investigation. They are the common and general groundwork of human credence and of human action; and their certitude is never shaken in the popular mind until some philosopher shall have promulgated some abstract speculations as to the evidence on which those propositions are received. The multitude, then, believed and acted on their belief, taking the three great facts we have mentioned as the most common and ordinary truths, without which the whole economy of thought must be overturned, and laid in inextricable confusion.

The philosophers, however, were desirous of rendering some intelligible account of the phenomenon presented by the multitude, and clearing their minds of mere ordinary belief, endeavored to give a rational



explanation of the theory of human credence. Their object was not to accept these great facts, and thence to proceed to specific knowledge, but to lay anew the rational evidence on which these facts themselves were to be admitted.

This intention appears at first sight to be praiseworthy, and the process may seem not altogether illegitimate.

Let us however posit the universal fact, that before man can *reason*, three substantives must be given or taken for granted, and that two propositions must also be given, involving those three substantives as the terms, before man can by any possibility arrive at a proposition established by rational, that is, by logical, proof. Let men therefore pursue their inquiry as far back as the most subtle intellect can possibly reach, there must necessarily be found at the bottom of all real or of all hypothetical reasoning, three substantives and two propositions, which, if accepted, may lead to real knowledge, and, if rejected, must land us without further difficulty in scepticism, absolutely universal, obliterating all truth, all possibility of knowledge, and all existence of whatever kind or character, subjective or objective.

Such being the case, we may unhesitatingly assert, that, at the bottom of all knowledge whatever, there must be found some substantive existences absolutely incapable of rational substantiation, and some propositions absolutely incapable of rational demonstration. Without these it is impossible for man *to reason*.

Any man, therefore, who admits any rational knowledge whatever, does thereby necessarily admit certain

undemonstrable propositions, and the existence of certain substantives which he has necessarily taken for granted.

The specific difference, then, between real knowledge and philosophy appears to be this: Real knowledge, or positive science, accepts the ordinary belief of the multitude, and, pursuing it forwards, endeavors to determine its limitations, becoming at every step less and less general. Philosophy, on the contrary, commencing at the ordinary belief of the multitude, pursues its course backwards, endeavoring at every step to become more and more general. The ultimate termination of this course must ever necessarily be, either to accept some propositions as primary and unproven, or to maintain a consistent scepticism, which absolutely obliterates the possibility of rational knowledge. To show how this difference is manifested, we have only to inquire upon what terms the primary substantives of the sciences are accepted by science and philosophy.

The geometrician, for instance, accepts *space*, without the smallest inquiry into its nature. His object is to limit, define, and exhibit the relations of spaces. Philosophy, on the contrary, going backwards, might discourse forever on the nature of space, without eliciting one truth that should be of the smallest importance to mankind. The sister substantive of space, namely, *time*, is also accepted by the man of science, whose only object is to measure it accurately; that is, definitely to determine the limitations of its portions. The physical sciences, again, accept *matter*; and without the smallest speculation as to what matter really

*is*, they each, in their several branches, endeavor to determine definitely its various forms, and accurately to specify its manifestations. Philosophy, on the contrary, endeavors to go backwards from the ordinary credence, and to furnish some explanation as to what matter is or is not, for some have attempted to obliterate it altogether.

The two substantives, *space* and *matter*, are sufficient for our purpose. Positive science, accepting space, and pursuing the inquiry *forwards* — investigating first the forms of spaces, and then the necessary relations that exist between those forms — furnishes us with geometry. While by accepting matter, and inquiring only into the forms of its manifestation, and the relations that are observed to exist between those forms, we are, by the exercise of the human reason, at last presented with the sciences of astronomy, mechanics, chemistry, physiology, &c.; where we know not whether most to admire the power and wisdom of God as displayed in the objects themselves, or his goodness in endowing man with an intellect to comprehend them.

Against this, what has philosophy to place in the opposite scale? Starting from the very same point, only pursuing her fancied investigation backwards, what are the treasures she has amassed on her way, and what the results she has presented to mankind? A thousand years of speculation as to whether matter be a substance or a shadow, an existence real or ideal; and, notwithstanding that the most acute minds have devoted no small time to the speculations, not one single hair's breadth of progress has ever been made

towards the determination. Every discussion as to the nature of matter or of space, may be raised to-day as well as two thousand years ago; and, for all that we can possibly have reason for anticipating, may be raised at any future period of man's existence on the earth, with just as much and just as little probability of ever terminating in any other proposition than "space is space, and matter is matter."

We conceive, then, that the moment at which philosophy wandered and went astray was, when it attempted to discuss the objective truth or falsehood of the primary credences or convictions of mankind. These primary convictions, in their general form, are at the bottom of all human *knowledge*; but whether human knowledge have or have not an external, real, and objective counterpart, which would remain if man and man's intellect were annihilated, neither philosophy nor any other natural method can possibly determine. Whether *knowledge* be *truth* is (to philosophy) an insoluble mystery; neither has any reason ever been exhibited to the world for supposing that the means of solution are at all within the reach of man.

But if it be impossible for philosophy to solve the question of objective existence, and if all the various sciences accept, without inquiry, the primary substantives of which they respectively treat, what conclusion must we come to as to the character of knowledge? and what object must we allocate to philosophy to constitute it a possible branch of knowledge?

*First.* All human knowledge, obtained by the natural exercise of the faculties, is real only in so far as it is phenomenal. That is, knowledge, being only a

form of *thought*, exists *in the mind*, and it is beyond the reach of the human faculties to ascertain certainly whether the mental propositions which constitute knowledge coincide with actual and external realities. That they do so, is a matter, not of knowledge, which can be rationally substantiated, but of primary, unproven, and unprovable *credence*.\*

*Second.* If every portion of what is commonly understood by the objective universe be made the subject of some one particular *science*, (which always *accepts* its primary substantives, and inquires only into the modes of their manifestation,) and if ontological or metaphysical philosophy be rejected from every portion of that object which positive science comes to occupy, then can philosophy no longer attempt to pronounce *à priori* upon what is, or what is not, but must confine itself exclusively to thought, and to thought alone; thereby changing its character from metaphysics to a proper science of *thought*. This, then, we believe to be the true province of philosophy, not to inquire into the truth or falsehood of the primary convictions of the intellect, but to observe and record what those primary convictions are, to enumerate them, to

\* The fallacy of philosophic scepticism is, not in viewing knowledge from the subjective point of view, which is in fact a legitimate process, but in supposing that this mode of viewing knowledge entails any consequences whatever affecting morals. Crime may be viewed by the philosopher in its subjective aspect—that is, in the *mind*; and the punishment that follows crime may *also* be viewed in its subjective aspect—that is, in the pain experienced by the criminal. But is the *pain* one single atom less an evil because it happens to be viewed subjectively?

determine the forms of their manifestations, and to pursue with regard to human *thought* the same kind of inquiry that the mathematical sciences pursue with regard to numbers, quantities, and spaces, and more nearly still, the same kind of inquiry that the physical sciences pursue with regard to matter and its manifestations.

One of the most valuable distinctions that has ever been made in philosophy, and one that we believe will ultimately incline mankind to clearer views of the true province of philosophy, is the distinction between the *matter* of knowledge and the *form* of knowledge. This distinction will, we have no doubt, ultimately strike at the root of metaphysical speculation. For what, after all, is ontology? An attempt to construct the universe out of the general convictions of the understanding. Now, let us suppose that the human mind, so far from being an unwritten tablet, formed merely for the reception of impressions, is, as it were, organized up to the highest possible point, so that it universally and invariably stamps a form on those impressions, which form is in nowise dependent on the external objects, but due to the constitution of the mind itself. This form will every where be present in every portion of knowledge. What then? Shall we thence conclude that we may, by some more than usually subtle process of mental analysis, reconstruct a mental universe harmonious with that without us, merely by excogitation? Shall we not rather still adhere to the belief that, be the mind as complex as it may, it could of itself originate not one single iota of knowledge, unless the substantive groundwork of that knowl-

edge were furnished to it from without? \* Observation, psychological or sensational, can alone furnish us with *a fact*, and a fact in one form or other must lie at the bottom of every chain of reasoning not purely hypothetical. Let us grant to the utmost possible extent that the form of knowledge is determined by the constitution of the intellect itself; yet the substantive and concrete element, the primary matter of knowledge, whether relating to the *me* or the *not me*, must be derived exclusively from observation, and never can by any possibility be more than guessed at by the mere metaphysician. Ontology, however, has always aspired to determine the matter as well as the form of

\* In affirming that *observation* is the origin of all knowledge, we mean the *chronological* origin, not the *logical* origin. The doctrine that makes all knowledge to consist of transformed sensation—in other words, the sensationalist doctrine—is perfectly untenable. It cannot be consistently maintained, even in a conversation that lasts but a few minutes. The sensationalist, whatever he may argue, is under the constant necessity of using terms to which he can assign no physical correlative. He *argues* as a sensationalist, and in so doing exhibits himself an intellectualist. He cannot help it—no man ever could. Sensation, however, is necessary to *call the mind into activity*; and thus all knowledge may be said to originate, not *in* sensation, but *through the sensations*. Were there no sensation, there is no reason to suppose there would be knowledge; but when once there *is* sensation, the mind, from its internal constitution, posits things altogether and essentially distinct from sensation, or from any possible transformation of sensation. It is very singular that sensationalism, which is commonly supposed to lead to absolute *materialism*, does actually lead to absolute *idealism*. Instead of substantiating matter, it obliterates it, and leaves nothing but the phenomenon; the substances, *mind* and *matter*, being both extinguished.—See Morell's *Hist. of Philosophy*.

knowledge, and never till it abandons the vain attempt, can we hope to see philosophy regenerated, and reconstructed, as it may be, into perhaps the most interesting of all human sciences. The form of knowledge, and not the matter, is the true object of philosophy.\*

\* In saying that philosophy should confine itself to psychology, we do not mean that it should confine itself to the mere record of what takes place in the mind. This is the *natural history* of thought, and the natural history is only the basis of the *science*. Every branch of knowledge has a natural history as well as a science; and if we confound the two, as the Scotch psychologists did, we must either leave a large number of questions unexplained, or dogmatize through thick and thin, and attempt to suffocate the questions instead of answering them. All knowledge is necessarily divided into *real-ology* and *thought-ology*, (if the expressions may pass,) and we maintain that the knowledge of *reals* is *not* the knowledge of thought, and that the knowledge of *thought* is *not* the knowledge of reals. Now, philosophy may take its choice, either to discourse on reals — God, Nature, Man — or to discourse on thought — perceptions, abstractions, relations; but it cannot be allowed *under the same name* to discourse on both, unless that name be coëxtensive with *knowledge*, and embrace all that can be known. If philosophy be a *peculiar* branch of knowledge, it must, like every other branch, *select its object*, and to that object it must be confined. It is perfectly illegitimate for any science to pretend to discourse on the *subjective* intellect that is in operation. If this be allowed, truth and falsehood are immediately overthrown and blended in one mass of inextricable confusion. Who would allow a geometrician, *as such*, to discourse on the trueness or falsity of the primary axioms of geometry? The only circumstance that renders geometry *possible*, is the subjective truth (necessary and universal) of those axioms, and the circumstance that they are *incapable* of such questioning, and are the essence, the most abstract form, and the universal standard of all geometric truth. If we pretend to make the axiom objective, and to inquire into its truth, we may be philosophers, or any thing else, but most certainly we



We conclude, then, our argument with regard to the combination of knowledge and reason. We mean not that men must combine knowledge and reason, but that the great masses of the unprivileged classes must combine together on the same knowledge, and on the same principles, that they have rationally deduced from that knowledge. It has been said, that "for men to be free, it is sufficient that they will it:" never was there a greater mistake, or one so utterly at variance with the great facts of history. Perhaps no sentiment is stronger in the human breast than the

are no longer geometricians. And so it is with all other sciences whatever, even those that relate to *thought*. If we make thought *objective* for the purpose of studying it, and we *can* only study it by making it objective, we must speak of thought, the *product*, analyze it, classify its forms, and exhibit their relations; but most certainly we have nothing whatever to do with the intellect that is thinking about thought. If we turn from thought, the product, to the intellect that thinks, and wish to know the intellect, then we must make *intellect* objective, analyze it, classify its faculties, and exhibit their relations; but here again, as every where else, we must not confound the object that is thought about with the subject that thinks. The *subjective* intellect can never legitimately be taken into consideration. Philosophy appears to us to wander about without a resting-place for the sole of her foot: first, she speaks of the absolute reality, and then of the absolute idea, and changes backwards and forwards in such a way, that really it requires no ghost to tell us, that questions investigated upon such a methodless principle must ever remain insoluble. If philosophy be as extensive as knowledge, then knowledge is composed of the various scientific and historical branches, with their relations, and there is no *peculiarity* about philosophy. But if, as we imagine, philosophy is a peculiar *branch* of knowledge, it must necessarily select its object, like all other sciences, and if it assume to be the *scientia scientiarum*, then its object is *knowledge* and not *reality*. If its object be knowledge, then

love of liberty. For this men have panted, prayed, fought, struggled, rebelled, and endured every kind of hardship, and every kind of cruelty. And yet they are not free. To be free, it is first necessary that men should know wherein true freedom consists; namely, in the absolute supremacy of equal and impartial law, made without respect of persons or classes, and administered with uprightness and regularity. Nor is this all. True freedom is the very highest point of political civilization; and to suppose that mere *will* can ever lead to that point, is to suppose that men may

to knowledge it must confine its discourse, every speculation about *reality* being altogether illicit. Thus, if philosophy profess to treat of God, it is theology, and must never attempt to discourse on the *idea* of God. All speculations about absolute *ideas* are (however interesting, and however useful) *illegitimate*; they have no more business there than speculations on the *idea* of substance have in treatises on mechanics. And if philosophy select the idea, and not the reality, as its object, it may discourse on absolute ideas, but must refrain from discoursing on theology. This mode of distinctive investigation is the great first principle of method, and the great means of the progression of knowledge; and when the day comes that the separate branches have been completely investigated on a principle of independent inquiry, and the sensationalist has exhausted the world without, and the philosopher the world within, and the Christian doctor has attained to a perfect knowledge of Scripture, the three regions may again blend into *one*, and show the wondrous harmony of the universe — of that creation which came spotless from the hand of the Lord, but has so long exhibited the discord and diversity of sin. Whether that day may come ere the new heavens and the new earth shall be the place of man's abode, we know not, nor have the means of ascertaining; but that the constant progress of man's intellectual perception is towards that final *unity*, we can learn, as certainly as we can learn that the political progress of men is towards a condition of *equality*.

overleap the conditions of their nature, and reach the goal without the struggles of the race. True freedom, however simple in its theory, is the highest, and probably the most complex, form of combined society. It is the whole body of society acting on the principles of knowledge, and carrying truth into practical operation. *Will* can never achieve this.

True freedom supposes *a condition of society* which is incompatible with ignorance and error — a condition negative in its principles, positive in its institution and establishment — a condition that has never yet been attained, even in a tolerable degree, by any nation under the dominion of superstition, and never yet completely attained even by the most enlightened states, — a condition to be attained not by one great tumult, but gradually evolved and perfected with the lapse of years. It is the result and ultimate end of a great progress, which makes its way with knowledge, sometimes advancing with peaceful steps, sometimes overturning the barriers that stand in the way amid the din of revolution. It is the condition of society where *will* is excluded, and law is made on an objective reason, which convinces man's judgment that it is equitable. It is a condition first to be defined in its abstract form by the man of thought, and then to be striven for by the mass of the population; a condition that supposes great advancement and infinite benefit to mankind, but a condition that must be purchased, and purchased only on those terms which are prescribed by the laws of man's constitution.

The political history of our race teaches us that

there are three conditions of society involving a cause on the one hand, and an effect on the other.

The causes are Knowledge, Superstition, Infidelity.  
The effects, Freedom, Despotism, Anarchy.

Knowledge and Freedom.

Superstition and Despotism.

Infidelity and Anarchy.

Such are the conditions of our nature. Man may make his election of the cause, but God has determined the character of the consequent.

No fact stands out more prominently from the condition of the various nations, or from their history, than that those conditions, and the great actions of men in the figure of society, depend upon *their credences*; that is, on the convictions of their intellect; that is, on the propositions they hold to be true. What makes one nation press ardently forward in the pursuit of liberty, while another sits dead and stupid under the iron rule of the despot? *Thought*, mere thought, impalpable and invisible thought, a something which can neither be seen, felt, nor handled; but which fixes man's destiny, raising him if correct to the dignity and energy of freeman, dooming him if erroneous to vice, degradation, and slavery. The history of the world has to be re-written on a new principle, and this unseen element has to be exhibited as the cause of the condition of the nations. Climate, circumstance, and race may all go for something or for much; but, far more influential than either, is *credence*.\* What

\* Mr. John Macgregor (who, by the way, takes upon him to call a far greater man than himself a *canting hypocrite*—Oliver Crom-

makes Africa slumber on in her barbarous dream of semi-brutality, as if her sons were forever doomed to claim kindred with the beasts of the field? Her credence, her bloody superstitions, her errors of thought. And what makes Asia the perpetual home of despotism, of cruel exaction and licentious tyranny, of fabled wealth to the ruler, and grinding poverty to the culti-

well, to wit) begins his dissertation on the "Natural Resources, &c., of the Nations of Europe," with the following passage: "The geographical position of a country has always been admitted as of the first importance in regard to its prosperity and power."

Mr. Macgregor also informs us, "that the science of statistics is that of *truth*;" but we will undertake to affirm, that the science of statistics never did, and never can, lead to such a doctrine as Mr. Macgregor's. Will any man in the world rank the geographical position of England as so very superior to that of Turkey? or that of North America to that of South America? or that of Prussia and Holland to that of Spain and Portugal? Yet Turkey, South America, and Spain, are going to wreck and ruin; although Turkey was very powerful at one period, and Spain was the first kingdom in Europe. And is the geographical position of Switzerland, without even a seaport, so very superior to that of Ireland? Yet Dr. Bowring's report on Switzerland would lead to the conclusion that the country was *prosperous*, and not desolated by hunger fever. Mr. Macgregor himself states, "with, however, nearly every natural element of power and advantage for commerce, there is scarcely any country in Europe or Asia so ill cultivated as, or where industry is farther in arrear than in, Asiatic Turkey."

The prosperity of a country does *not* depend on its position, but on *the character of its inhabitants*, on their credence, their knowledge, their institutions, and the freedom of their government. The geographical position of the United States has not altered since 1776, yet since that time the country has made a progress unequalled in history. Suppose North and South America were to change *inhabitants*, would the *position* be of any imaginable consequence? Position, indeed!

vator of the soil? Asiatic superstition; that is, the common and every-day thought of the millions who inhabit Asia. And what has fixed the destiny and determined the present position of the countries of Europe? Credence. Why is Spain in a constant struggle between despotism and anarchy? Because the mind of Spain is struggling between superstition and infidelity. Why is Italy worn out? and why is she the home of all that is little and despicable in the eyes of Englishmen? Because her credence has ruined the mind of the population. And why, with every advantage of earth, ocean, and sky, are the fairest portions of the earth, the shores and islands of the eastern Mediterranean, inhabited by degenerate races, who dare not strike one blow for liberty, but lie groveling in vice, without a thought for the regeneration of their country? Because their credence has degraded them. And why is Russia a vast conglomeration of slave plantations, with one great slave owner for a master? Because the minds of Russians are enslaved by the greater despot — superstition. And why is England the mightiest of nations, with a power and an influence that are felt in every quarter of the globe? Because the mind of England is the most enlightened, and because knowledge has made her powerful. What makes Turkey's weakness and England's strength? Not climate, not geographical position, not any physical advantage to which so much of the difference is usually attributed — but *credence*; the credence of England is correct, and the credence of Turkey is erroneous. Sooner or later men must learn the great fact, that the social and political condition of a

nation is absolutely dependent on that nation's credence. Correct credence is knowledge, and knowledge alone is capable of regenerating the political condition of mankind. Change the credence of a nation, and you change the whole current of its future progress. Let the most darkened and benighted spot on earth, the far-away South Sea island, where the fierce idolater could feast on his captive victim, and the unhappy mother could think it no crime to destroy her newborn offspring; where man was, if we may so speak, a demon worse than a beast of prey; let that spot be but visited by the knowledge of the true God, the first great element of truth — let the truth be but received — let the idolater *change his credence*, and you have changed the whole order of society. Even let the truths of the gospel descend sparingly but into the hearts of a few, if the truth obtain an intellectual assent with the population, instead of a perpetual record of crime and abomination, we shall see man's reason emancipated, and the whole figure of society transformed, as it were, beneath the miracle-working hand of the Most High.

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SECTION IV. — THE USE AND OPERATION OF THE COMBINATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND REASON.

WE now turn to the *use* of combination. Why should men combine, and for what object should they combine?

*First.* There are certain evils which belong to the race of mankind, and which afflict humanity more or less in every quarter of the globe. Some of these evils are of such a nature as to appear under circumstances of extreme aggravation in certain conditions of society; while, in other and better conditions, they are kept under some beneficial restraint by the direct intention and continued effort of society. In the existence of these evils is to be found the reason of combination; and the object of combination is to remove as much as possible, or at all events to diminish, such of these evils as affect the political condition of men, or the condition of men in society.

The first great master evil, and the one to which most others may be traced, directly or indirectly, is the innate corruption and depravity of man, which makes him prefer falsehood to truth,\* vice to virtue, and the

\* In saying that man prefers falsehood to truth, we do not mean that man's *intellect* prefers falsehood. The intellect, were it not impelled in a wrong direction by the sentiments, would naturally seek truth, and truth only; and, were it left unbiassed by the will, would form its propositions regardless of all save the evidence before it. From the complex nature of man, however, and from the corruption of the moral portion of the mind, it happens that propositions altogether unfounded are received as true, apparently for the purpose of filling up the general scheme or chart of knowledge, which must be filled up either with truth or falsehood, but, at all events, filled up. Hence all nations, at one period or other, have had a false religion, and a false scheme of ethics. Whatever metaphysic difficulties assail the question, it is an *historical fact*, that the human race has preferred, and still does, throughout the greater part of the globe, prefer, falsehood to truth on the subject of religion and morality; and a false religion is the source from which



gratification of passion to the enlightened and rational exercise of his natural faculties. Whatever view may be taken of the theological question of natural depravity, we hold it an historical fact of the very first magnitude, and of the most indubitable veracity, that the human race, as such, has always, and in every known region of the earth, "done the things which it ought not to have done, and left undone the things which it ought to have done." With regard to man's *nature*, we shall enter into no disputation; but, with regard to men's *actions*, we view them through the common medium of history, and we hesitate not to see the practice of injustice more or less prevalent in every country of the earth, and, at the same time, to accept that explanation of the fact which is furnished in such plain terms by the words of divine revelation. History informs us that the actions of men are wicked; and surely there can be no absurdity in giving credence to Scripture, when it informs us that their hearts are so likewise. With the depravity of the heart, politics has no concern; but so soon as that depravity comes to manifest itself in action, and to appear in the form of fraud or violence, the necessity of a system of politics is immediately substantiated. Men are wicked, and therefore inclined to do wrong; but they are also rational, and may combine systematically to prevent the wrong from being done.

Among the evils that prey upon humanity, there are some which men inflict upon each other. These may

error on almost all other subjects flows as naturally as water from a fountain. There cannot possibly be any hope of political regeneration so long as a nation adheres to a false religion.

generally be reduced to the class of violence or of fraud; and the prevention of violence and fraud is the first great end of political association. The possibility of violence and fraud naturally originates some kind of government, the character of which appears to be determined much more by the condition of the population as regards knowledge, than by any direct intention on the part of the rulers, or of any body of men whatever.

The evils that would arise from the unrestrained passions of mankind form the general groundwork or reason for the establishment of some rule, order, or government, which the mass of the population, for the most part, acquiesce in, whatever be its character. When a government is established, we have the more or less perfect formation of a state; that is, of an association of individuals supposed to be acting together for their common advantage. [It will be altogether unnecessary for us to go back to the formation of governments amongst nations scarcely emerging from barbarism. The character of such governments is a matter of little or no importance, neither would any change merely in the form of government be attended with any particular advantage. The first great necessity for such nations is the acquisition of knowledge. Give knowledge, and civilization will follow of its own accord, just in proportion as that knowledge is more or less complete, and more or less generally disseminated. We confine our remarks to those nations that have undergone some considerable process of consolidation, and arrived at some definite form of constitution, such as the nations of modern Europe; in each

of which we have a government varying in character, according to the moral and intellectual condition of the population.]

The ostensible reason for the existence of a government, we suppose to be "the necessity of preventing individual fraud or violence." Were there no tendency in the individual to fraud and violence, the first great end of political association would cease to exist.

If, then, the government be established for the prevention of fraud and violence,—that is, for the prevention of injustice,—what is the use of that other combination of which we have spoken, namely, the combination of knowledge and reason?

1st. The progress of mankind is a progress from ignorance, error, and superstition, towards knowledge.

2d. Governments being established in the earlier stages of society,—that is, during the reign of ignorance, error, and superstition,—have always, and in every known case, been more or less despotic; that is, have systematically assumed powers to which they were not justly entitled.

3d. The progress of political society is a progress in which these unjust powers have been gradually curtailed and abolished, in proportion as the nation has progressed from ignorance and superstition, and advanced towards knowledge.

The use, then, of the combination of knowledge and reason is (*not* to combine against individual injustice, this being the province of the government, but) to reduce the powers of the government and the laws of the country within those bounds of justice beyond which they cannot be other than despotic.

The first great fact that we learn from history with regard to governments is, that they are all (whatever be their form) despotic in their character during the earlier periods of society, and that they lose their despotic character only when the nation progresses in knowledge, and combines for the advancement of its liberties.

In all the countries of Europe we may observe the powers of the government undergoing a gradual but sure process of curtailment; while, on the other hand, the liberties of the people are expanding in a corresponding ratio, and becoming systematically established by law. In Russia, the process exhibits only the first faint symptoms of commencement; while in England the process is tolerably complete, (as regards personal liberty;) the interval between these two being filled up by the other European countries. The progress of liberty, then, is an *internal* progress, by which the internal constitution of the country is altered and amended.

What, then, is the combination of which we have spoken, as if it were capable of working out the great evolution of liberty and justice?

It is the combination of the nation, or of the enlightened portion of the nation, against the laws of the nation, and against the unjust powers of the rulers.

Liberty is advanced not by the warfare of one nation against another nation, but by the warfare (physical or moral) of the unprivileged classes against the unjust laws, and against the unjust privileges that prevail within the nation itself; and this warfare can only be carried on efficiently by the mass of the population

combining to extort those measures that have been theoretically shown to be right, or those measures that on good grounds are presumed to be beneficial.

The common notion almost universally adopted in the earlier stages of society, and still prevalent in some of the countries of Europe, is, that the ruler rules by his own will, as if he were the lord or supreme director of the nation. Instead of laws being made on an objective reason that establishes their *equity*, they are the expressions of the will of those who happen to be in power; and the gradual destruction of this doctrine, with its evil consequences, is the result of knowledge disseminated throughout the population.

When we look back on the history of England, or of any other country that has made considerable progress, we see that all the great changes that have taken place in the political condition of the population have been preceded by changes in the *theoretic credence* of the population, and that the amended order of society has resulted directly from a new and more correct order of thought. And we may also see that these beneficial changes have seldom, if ever, originated with the rulers themselves, but have been extorted from them, sometimes by force, and sometimes by the moral influence that the man in the right has over the man in the wrong.

Without alluding to the explosion of the "divine right of kings," &c., (which enabled the rulers to practise flagrant iniquities without being brought to judicial trial,) we may refer to two modern instances of the combination of knowledge and reason, by which the people of Britain obtained changes of vast ex-

tent, by a moral power which overcame the will of the rulers and of the privileged orders, who were linked to support the abuses. We refer to the emancipation of the negroes, and to the repeal of the corn laws.

We have selected these two instances because they represent two great classes — of evils on the one hand, and of argument on the other.

The laws of Great Britain declared that it was lawful for one man to possess another man as his property; and this principle was carried into practical operation by the seizure and reduction to slavery of vast numbers of Africans, who were thenceforward viewed as mere laboring animals, denied education, denied religion, and denied those rights of family which Nature has established as the first of her social laws.

In this negro slavery we have a vast system of fraud and violence, established and continued by authority of the British government; that is, we have the power which had been conferred on the government for the purpose of preventing violence and fraud, turned altogether away from its legitimate exercise, and made the instrument of supporting a system of glaring injustice and flagrant iniquity. We have that greatest of all political evils, injustice, established and maintained by law; that is, in fact, *the despotism of false law*.

Here, instead of the government and the law being the means of *protection*, they give systematic countenance to the injustice; and, by legalizing crime, they deprive the man who is oppressed (the negro) from endeavoring to recover by his own effort the natural rights with which the Almighty had endowed him.

And how was slavery abolished? What were the efficient means that led first to the abolition of the traffic, and afterwards to the authoritative declaration, that slavery should no longer be countenanced by law; that is, that the system itself must cease in the British dominions? Was it by the natural mode? by the method which Nature teaches, when she tells us to resist every attack upon our liberty? Alas! the negro knew little about liberty, and his ignorance was, perhaps, as much the true cause of his slavery as was the color of his skin. What was it that abolished negro slavery? It was the moral influence of knowledge, reason, and religion. The trade had been sanctioned by long use; the interests of the wealthy and powerful were linked to maintain it; the laws of the empire had declared it legitimate, and the government was opposed to its abolition. More than this, not one single man who had the means and the opportunity to make himself heard on behalf of the negro, had one farthing of pecuniary interest in procuring the negro's emancipation. Those who argued had no suffering to impel them, save the suffering of just and generous hearts; no interest to lead them on, save the interests of humanity and the good of the oppressed.

What, then, were the motives and the means that led to so great a political change as the emancipation of a race from slavery?

*First.* Certain individuals learnt to think aright on the subject, and to give utterance to their thoughts. The battle was then commenced. On the one hand was reason, involving the principles of natural equity; and on the other was *the despotism of the law*, the

power of the government, and the pecuniary interests of the wealthy and influential.

Sooner or later, correct thought makes its way, and the more rapidly and surely, the more a nation has abandoned superstition.

The theoretic argument or credence adopted by the advocates of liberty was, "That man is made free by God, and can never be made rightfully a slave by man." The argument in its most essential character was one of mere *justice*, not of economical benefit or prejudice, profit or loss. A moral agitation was commenced, the few were transformed into the many, and the progress of opinion (of *credence*) was such, that every possible argument that could be adduced on the opposite side was brought forth from the lying chambers of selfishness. Every thing in the shape of an argument—every thing that could be made to pass for one, though halt, lame, or blind, was pressed into the service of casuistry, for the purpose of perpetuating injustice.\*

\* "The question now is only the continuance of this abominable traffic, which even its friends think so intolerable that it ought to be crushed. Jamaica has imported 150,000 negroes in the course of twenty years, and this is admitted to be only one tenth of the trade. Was there ever, can there be, any thing beyond the enormity of this infamous traffic? The very thought of it is beyond human endurance. It is allowed, however, that the trade is infamous, but the abolition of it is resolvable to a question of expediency; and then, when the trade is argued as a commercial case, its advocates, in order to continue it, *desert even the principles of commerce; so that a traffic in the liberty, the blood, the life of human beings, is not to have even the advantages of the common rules of arithmetic which govern all other commercial dealings.*" — *Pitt's Speech*, April, 1792.



The theoretic credence, however, gained ground, and was powerfully aided by a more accurate knowledge of the enormities that Britons practised on Africans under shelter of British law. Authentic information was obtained and disseminated, and at last a great combination of knowledge and reason was brought to bear against the iniquity. Political justice, however, is a plant of slow growth; and years of debate, of contest between truth and falsehood, were necessary, before even the trading in human blood, the buying and selling of man, who was made in the image of the Creator, ceased to receive the sanction of the most enlightened and freest state in the world. And here we cannot fail to remark one circumstance that has almost invariably accompanied every political change which had for its object the destruction of an injustice. We mean the outcry about the *evils that would follow*. No sooner has any one, more enlightened or more impartial than his neighbors, insisted on an act of justice, (which, after all, let it never be forgotten, is only *the refraining from injustice*,) than all the evils in the category are immediately prognosticated, as if the doing of God's will were to let loose hell to ravage the earth.\*

\* To Mr. Alderman Watson belongs the unenviable honor of having presented this kind of argument in a form that may serve as a model for those who seek to prevent change, and as a type of the argument by which economists have so often endeavored to evade justice, by advancing the most glaring absurdities and the most unblushing lies. "Mr. Alderman Watson said, that the natives were taken from a worse state of slavery in their own country to one more mild. The abolition of the trade would ruin the West

When the emancipation of the African was spoken of, and when the nation of Britain appeared to be taking into serious consideration the rightfulness of abolishing slavery, what tremendous evils were to follow! Trade was to be ruined, commerce was almost to cease, and manufacturers were to be bankrupts. Worse than all, *private property* was to be invaded, (property in human flesh,) the rights of planters sacrificed to the speculative notions of fanatics, and the British government was to commit an act that would forever deprive it of the confidence of British subjects. These evils at home were, of course, to be accompanied by others abroad much more tremendous. The West India islands were, of course, to be ruined past all possible hope of recovery; the blacks were to insurgé and to destroy the white population; a moral hurricane, ten times more dreadful than the winds of heaven, was to sweep across the Caribbean Sea; blood was to flow like water; the emancipated slave was to celebrate the first moment of his liberty with rape, rapine, and murder; evils unheard of and inconceivable were to astonish the earth; the very heavens were to fall. And why? Because British subjects

Indies, destroy our Newfoundland fishery, which the slaves of the West Indies supported, by consuming that part of the fish which was fit for no other consumption (!); and consequently, by cutting off the great source of seamen, *annihilate our marine.*" — *Debate, H. C.*, 1791. Such were the arguments used, and successfully used, in the British House of Commons, for perpetuating a system, the cruelties of which have probably never been surpassed, whether we consider their severity, their extent, or the length of their duration.

were no longer to be permitted by British law to hold their fellow-men in slavery on British ground.\*

With regard to the emancipation of the negroes, we have two remarks to offer.

*First.* The legalizing of slavery was *positive*, the emancipation *negative*.

This distinction we hold to be of importance, as it helps to point out how far legislation is legitimate.

To emancipate a slave is merely to refrain from exercising that power which keeps him in bondage; and when the question of emancipation arises, the question

\* To show how correct credence *progresses*, even where we least suspect it, we have only to turn to Fox's speech, April, 1791. After a noble appeal for the suppression of the *trade*, and a full declaration of the natural rights of man—after citing the doctrine of Christianity, that “high and low, rich and poor, are equal in the sight of God,” and the fact that slavery has ever disappeared before the progress of Christ's religion—after bursts of noble and generous eloquence on behalf of the negro—he concludes by falling into the common snare, and stumbles at the evils that would follow the *emancipation*. The *trade* he would suppress; and so far his credence was correct; but he had not progressed so far in correct credence (although necessarily flowing from his own principles) as to advocate the suppression of slavery in the West India islands. Mr. Fox said, “that if it were asked whether they meant also to abolish slavery in the West Indies, he would candidly say he was sorry he could not go so far. It was possible for men to be slaves so long as to make it *dangerous* all at once to give them liberty,” &c.—that is, dangerous to refrain from oppressing them by force; for the moment the positive and forcible oppression is withdrawn, the man becomes free. What Fox, however, could not see to be correct, the religious community of England saw more clearly; and for half a century a great combination of knowledge, reason, and religion maintained a contest that finally resulted in the purchase of the emancipation at the expense of £20,000,000.

is not one of performing a positive act, but of *refraining* from performing a series of positive acts, by which another is deprived of his natural liberty.

Every moment that a negro is kept a slave, he was so kept by the positive power of the British law, backed by the British arms; for had the negro said, (as he had an undoubted right to say,) "You wish to oppress me, therefore I stand on my defence," the strong arm of the law would immediately have appeared against him, and reduced him again to slavery.

The law was a positive enactment armed with power, and the moment the law ceased to exist, the negro was emancipated, not by the law, but by nature. The law may make a slave; but it is beyond the power of the law to make a freeman. These laws were of course made by human legislators, and the question arises, "Has any human legislator, or body of legislators a right to reduce any individual whatever to slavery?" "Clearly not," is the answer now given by Britons; and if so, then could there never be *justly* a question of *gradual* abolition, for gradual abolition only means, "Shall we continue positively to exercise our power for so many years to come for the purpose of keeping men in slavery?" The only question that can ever be legitimately taken into consideration, with regard to slavery, is *immediate* and *total* abolition, and so of all similar cases where injustice is established or systematically perpetuated by law.

*Second.* The people of Great Britain were taxed by force for the purpose of paying the planters for their slaves. Theoretically, the Commons imposed the taxation on themselves; but nine tenths of the population

have nothing to do with the election of members of Parliament, and, so far as they were concerned, the taxation was *ab extra* — forced on them by a government which they had no voice in electing. We maintain that this act was one of downright injustice and oppression, whatever may be said of its magnanimity.

The planters knew perfectly well that they never had a *moral* right to the slaves, and consequently they could have no moral claim to compensation. Now, the slave laws were not enacted by this generation, and it is admitted that those who enacted them had no possible right to do so. The payment of the twenty millions, therefore, resolves itself into this, “The law of Britain will not cease to lend its aid and its arm to perpetuate slavery, unless the people of Britain pay an immense sum to the planters.” The only course that was really legitimate was for the government of Britain to declare that it had no possible right to make or keep men slaves, and at once to expunge the statutes, letting the planters take their chance, at the same time protecting the negroes, as British subjects, born on British ground. A few years ago, the French law authorized gambling houses. Now, will it be maintained that the keepers of those “*hells*” had any just claim for compensation against the laboring population of France? (Or the keepers of those other houses which the law still sanctions?) It was a just, and, as the world goes, a glorious thing for Britain to abolish slavery as it did; but most certainly the laboring man of England, who pays five per

cent. on his tea, sugar, and tobacco, to pay the planters, is as surely oppressed and defrauded as was the negro, although not to the same extent. No man in the world, and no association in the world, could ever have an equitable right to tax a laborer for the purpose of remunerating a man-robber; and, although the measure is now passed and done with, we very much question whether some analogous cases will not be cleared up by the mass of the nation ere many years pass over the heads of Englishmen. When the question of landed property comes to a definite discussion, there may be little thought of compensation.

The other instance of a great and successful combination, in which knowledge and reason triumphed over the law, the government, and the privileged classes of the country, was recently exhibited in the repeal of the corn laws.

The case of the corn laws appears to have been this. The seller of the raw material being the official governor of the country, enacted a statute to enhance the price of the manufactured product, thereby obtaining for himself, in his private capacity, a higher price from the manufacturer for his raw material.\*

The seller of the raw material was the land owner, and the raw material sold (or rented for a longer or shorter period) was the productive power of the land.

The manufacturer and retail merchant was the farmer, the article manufactured and sold was corn, and the consumer was the mass of the population.

The farmer, in taking a farm, has three great sub-

\* See note A, Appendix.

jects to consider: 1st. The quantity of produce. 2d. The probable price of produce. 3d. Amount of rent.\*

The first question which the would-be farmer has to answer is, "Can he make a profit by taking land from the land owner, and selling corn to the consumer?" This question he has to answer by a comparison of the whole expense with the whole value of produce. And first, in current agriculture, (that is, agriculture divested of the extraneous expense of draining, building, &c., which come under the head of improvement of the farm, and not mere cultivation,) a given farm is estimated to produce a certain average *quantity* of grain. This quantity is the first item to be considered, as it is the basis of all future calculation. A certain portion of this quantity is requisite for consumption, and the remainder is *marketable*. The marketable portion, being the real merchandise which the farmer buys and retails again, must always be assumed at a certain value *in the terms of the price paid* for it. Whatever price the farmer pays for his marketable corn, he must expect, on the first principle of commerce, to receive a *larger* price (in the same terms) from the consumer. This larger price is the whole ultimate

\* The expense of producing (exclusive of rent) we do not take into consideration, as that on any given farm is not subject to such fluctuation as either to "make or break" the farmer. Experimental farmers may, of course, ruin themselves by a bad investment in labor, &c.; but the expense of *improvement* should be distinguished from the expense of current cultivation; and we believe that the latter expense may, in the matter of the corn laws, be assumed as a fixed quantity, although, in reality, varying with the value of money where money wages are paid, and with the value of produce where the laborers are fed.

object of the farmer, and, provided it is sufficient, he is satisfied. To him it makes no possible difference what the *real* price paid or obtained is, provided the proportion between them be such as to leave a sufficient balance in his favor. What he wants is *profit*, and, provided he makes a sufficient profit, it matters little to him how that profit comes.

Our object in making these remarks is to show that the absolute amount of rent paid by the farmer is really a matter of indifference to him. If all the rents in the country were suddenly to be doubled, or increased tenfold, it would not injure the *farmer*, provided the price of his marketable grain were to increase in such a proportion as to leave him the same real profit. His condition would be exactly the same as at present; he would be neither richer nor poorer, nor would he know the difference, except in the nominal value of his rent and produce.

The fluctuating quantities on which the farmer depends are price of grain and rent. Assuming that he has calculated or estimated the average marketable quantity of corn for the currency of his lease, he then depends on the relation between his rent and the price of grain. If the price of grain be high, his rent may be high; if low, his rent must be low, to leave him a sufficient profit, which is all he has to contend for.

This, then, appears to have been the essence of the corn laws. At the price at which corn would be sold in the English market, provided that market were open to all the world, the farmer could only pay a certain rent for land; but, provided all foreign competition was excluded up to a given point, the farmer could



afford to pay a much higher rent for land, and yet derive the same real profit.

To a country, however, that produces quite sufficient corn for the consumption of its inhabitants, a tax on foreign corn is of little moment; and it is only when the home produce is insufficient, or barely sufficient for the demand, that the influence of the tax is felt, and then its operation is neither more nor less than starving the inhabitants into paying a higher price than Nature would have supplied them at.

When, however, we turn to the class by whom the corn tax was imposed, and find that, so far from being disinterested legislators, they were in reality the land owners — the wholesale merchants of the raw material — the tax assumes another form, and becomes, in fact, a tax to produce more rent through the pressure of starvation. Not that people would in reality starve, but that they would escape the pressure of starvation by giving *more* for food, which more would pass through the pocket of the farmer into that of the land owner.

The ostensible reason advanced (and perhaps sincerely by some) for the imposition of the corn laws, was the encouragement of agriculture; that is, the putting money into the pockets of agriculturists. But the laws were found at last to be eminently detrimental to the farmer, (on account of the fluctuations of price,) as well as ruinous to another class of which we have not spoken; namely, the manufacturers and manufacturing artisans of the country, who now form the largest portion of the population. The farmer was deluded into the idea of obtaining a high price for

corn, and naturally gave, or stipulated to give, a high price for land. The evil was unseen in its real malignity, until it pleased God, in the bounty of his providence, to send such abundant harvests, (1835, 1836,) that the corn tax was defeated. The farmers were then reduced to sell at a natural price, while they had to pay a taxation rent, and of course they felt the weight of that system of legislation which attempted to amend the order of Providence, and on which, with all its nice adjustments, the landed legislators had desecrated so wisely.

The low price of corn at that period let the manufacturers into a secret; they obtained great sums of money, and with the money obtained what was of more value to the country — they obtained *knowledge*. They were taught that their commercial prosperity depended, in a great measure, on the low price of corn in Britain; and a very cursory consideration may explain how this happens. Let us suppose that there are five millions of the laboring population, who have a gross income of from 10s. or 12s. to 30s. or 40s. per week. The laborer, out of his income, has to provide the three great requisites — food, shelter, and raiment; and, even at the best and most prosperous of times, his earnings are not much more than sufficient to procure these in decent abundance. Now, let any supposition whatever be made with regard to the rise or fall of wages, and the rise or fall of the price of corn, it is evident that the manufacturers of Great Britain must be injured by a *high* price of corn. For, first, let it be granted that wages rise with the price of corn, (which is certainly *not* the case,) then the expense of manu-

facturing increases on account of the increase of wages, and the foreign market is supplied with *dear* goods — that is, (for in commerce it is much the same thing,) the foreign sales must decrease on account of the rise in price. The difference of a few pence may stop the sale of a certain description of goods; and stopping the sale stops the manufacture, the manufacturer's profit, and the employment of the artisans. But, second, let us ask how the home market is affected by a great rise or fall in the price of corn, while wages remain nearly the same, as in reality they do, with the majority of the laboring population. Let us suppose that wheat is at 40s. per quarter, and that a laborer's family consumes 4s. worth of bread per week. He then has the remainder of his week's income to dispose of in the purchase of his other requisites. But let wheat rise to 80s. per quarter, and he must then expend 8s. per week for the same quantity of bread that he previously purchased for 4s. We have here a difference of 4s. per week; and the question is, What does the laborer do with those 4s. when bread is cheap? The answer is very simple — *he spends it with the manufacturer*. He wants a coat, and a hat, and shoes, and hose, and shirts; and his wife wants a gown and a bonnet; and the children want frocks and pinafores; and the bed would be the better for an extra blanket or two, and some sheets. Nor is this all: the little furniture of his home wants replenishing; the knives and forks are too few, and the children exceed the spoons. The plates and dishes which were broken in the dear times could not then be replaced; but now, when corn is cheap, visions of a new set flit

before the imagination of the thrifty housewife. Perhaps even a clock is purchased, and it is most likely that some addition will be made to the little stock of books. The laborer is at ease in his circumstances, because he has this little revenue of 4s. a week to come and go on. It is true, he must lay it out carefully; but then how different to have it to think about, instead of having it screwed out of him by a crying pressure for food! When he has it, he feels himself a free man; he has a new social and domestic existence; he is a buyer from choice, not from necessity; and the family deliberations as to *how* it shall be spent, give a new interest to the hours he spends at home. All goes on merrily, and old England is worth all the countries under the sun.

Let us take even a moderate estimate of this 4s. a week, and we shall see how vast a sum it amounts to in the course of a year. Suppose that five millions have it to spend, and that those five millions spend £10 with the manufacturers. Fifty millions sterling arising from the difference in the price of corn! Had the corn laws operated according to the intentions of land proprietors, and kept wheat at 80s. in the year 1836, there can be no doubt whatever that they would have deprived the laboring population of fifty millions' worth of goods, and the manufacturers of fifty millions' worth of sales, as directly as if those fifty millions had been wrested by violence from the laborer; but this is one of the facts which the indirect system of taxation is employed to conceal.\*

\* Since writing the above, we have seen the following notice of

The repeal of the corn laws was effected by a great combination of knowledge and reason — such, perhaps, as we might look for in vain in the history of any other European country. Certain individuals found that their lawful interests were seriously injured by the interference of the enactments, and they resolved to make an effort for the abolition of those enactments. Of themselves they were utterly powerless, and all their individual exertions would have been ineffectual to achieve their end. They had, however, knowledge and reason on their side; that is, they were in possession of certain facts, which led by necessary inference to the conclusion, that the corn laws were eminently prejudicial in their operation, and that, therefore, the corn laws should no longer be allowed to exist. Con-

the “prosperous state of the kingdom,” A. D. 1836, in Wade’s excellent “British History, chronologically arranged:” —

“At the close of the past, and commencement of the present year, the United Kingdom exhibited unusual signs of internal contentment and general prosperity. With the exception of partial depression of agriculture, all the great branches of national industry were unusually prosperous. In the great clothing districts of Yorkshire and Lancashire, the times were never known to be more favorable. In spite of the great development of the cotton trade, it still continued to expand, and its utmost bounds seemed illimitable. It was the same with the woollen manufacturers of Leeds and Huddersfield, the ‘stuff’ manufacture of Bradford and Halifax, the linen manufacture of Barnsley and Knaresborough, the blanket and flannel manufactures of Dewsbury and Rochdale; they were all thriving. Even in the silk trade of Macclesfield, Coventry, and Spitalfield there were no complaints, no more than in the lace trades of Nottingham, Derby, and Leicester. The potteries of Staffordshire continued prosperous, and the iron trade in all its branches was unusually flourishing.”

scious that they had truth on their side, they came fearlessly before the nation, and staked their cause on the power of truth to convince the mass of the population. They lectured, and published, and spoke, and argued, all for one specific end; namely, to communicate knowledge to the nation, and thereby to make the nation change its credence on the subject of the corn laws. The truth gradually prevailed; that is, was generally disseminated; that is, the same knowledge was received by a larger number of individuals, who naturally drew the same necessary inference. A great combination was formed, such as must ever remain one of the historic glories of Britain and of Britons. It was essentially a combination of knowledge and reason; and well-grounded argument was the only weapon with which it maintained the contest. Far more was involved than a mere change in the economical laws of the kingdom; it was a contest between the two great classes of British society — the unprivileged laborers and the privileged land owners. The privileged classes, almost to a man, were against the change; and they also, on their side, endeavored to establish a combination — a combination of class interest, in which the only available argument was *the pecuniary interest of the order*. The exertions made by the anti-corn-law party to convince the judgment of the nation were prodigious; and never had any political agitation so much the appearance of *instruction*, and so little the appearance of exciting the passions. Instead of the vague harangues of noisy and designing demagogues, there was the sober communication of information which would have been interest-

ing and instructive, even had it been altogether unconnected with the great practical consequence. The nation was convinced at last; and notwithstanding all the influence of the aristocracy, and all the unwillingness of the government, the laws were repealed, and as there is every reason to suppose, abolished forever.

In these two cases (the abolition of negro slavery and the repeal of the corn laws) we have an illustration of some of the great principles which are called into operation, whenever the social condition of the community is ameliorated and rendered more consistent with the dictates of reason and religion.

1st. The only action that is a political crime, is a forcible, fraudulent, or licentious *interference* of one man with another. Such actions, and such actions alone, is it competent for any legislature to prohibit, unless with the free consent of all who are to be affected by the law. Where there is no *interference* there is no political crime, and consequently nothing which the legislature can *justly* prohibit.

2d. Both the slave laws and the corn laws were *à priori* enactments, to prevent men from doing actions which were in nowise criminal. They were positive enactments to restrain and diminish the natural liberty of men who had infringed no law of equity, and who had in no respect injured their fellow-men by force, fraud, or licentiousness.

3d. The legislators of the country were, in their private capacity, extensively interested in the maintenance of the unjust laws; and thus, in opposing their repeal, were using their official influence for their own personal advantage, to the eminent detriment of their

fellow-subjects. Those, therefore, who were interested, either as slave owners or landed proprietors, were (according to the principle that a man ought not to be judge in his own cause) incompetent to sit in deliberation on their repeal.

4th. The institutes of nature, as established by God's providence in the world, teach us that a man should labor for the advantage of himself and of his family; but all slave laws are attempts to controvert this principle, and blasphemously to overrule the order of nature, as established by the divine Being. All slave laws *make freedom criminal*, and thus establish an artificial rule of morality, which gives entrance to every kind of political error, and consequently to every kind of political licentiousness.

5th. To transfer corn from one part of the world to another, according to the necessities of the inhabitants, so far from being an act which requires restriction or prohibition, is an act which every man has a natural right to perform for his own commercial advantage, and which no legislature is *competent* to restrict or prohibit, unless it be admitted that the legislature stands in the place of the divine Being, and that all the ordinary acts of life are to be performed only on its supreme permission.

6th. Both the slave and corn laws were enactments to restrict or prohibit men from performing actions which were naturally proper, profitable, and legitimate; that is, to prevent the negro from laboring for his own advantage, and the trader from engaging in legitimate commerce; the repeal of those laws, therefore, did not consist of any positive enactment, but of the removal



of legislative interference from actions which in themselves were naturally legitimate. The abolition of those laws, therefore, *was only to allow things to remain as they were established by nature* ; and when the world discovers that God has constituted nature aright, men will have arrived at the first and greatest principle of social science.

7th. The abolition of the slave and corn laws was only attained after a long and arduous struggle ; and though horrible iniquities were committed under the sanction of the former, and great national detriment was produced by the latter ; and though the nation was long convinced of the propriety of repealing the unjust and injurious enactments, the country was for years compelled to bear the sin of the injustice, and to suffer the national detriment, because the legislators refused to remove restrictions whose nature was infamous, and whose fruits were evil continually.

8th. The legislature of Great Britain, so far from taking the initiative in the repeal of the slave and corn laws, offered every possible opposition to the wishes of the nation ; and it was only when the pressure from without became so imperative that further resistance might have been dangerous, that the deliberative assembly of the freest state in the world declared that it was not a crime for a man with a dark skin to enjoy natural freedom, or for a trader to import corn without being subject to a tax so enormous, that it usually operated as a prohibition.

9th. The slave and corn laws were at last repealed, by a process which, we doubt not, will ultimately achieve the repeal of every law which restricts or

prohibits actions not naturally criminal — *the wiser and better part of the nation combined against the legislature*; on the one hand were knowledge, reason, and religion; on the other, prescriptive privilege and the will of the legislator.

10th. The two cases which we have adduced represent two great classes of cases, against each of which a particular argument is employed. The abolition of slavery was a question of *justice*, (equity;) the abolition of the corn laws a question of *benefit*, (economy.)

The argument of justice, however it may be extended and illustrated, may always be summed up in this, "Refrain from interfering by fraud or force with another;" and, although no precept can be more in harmony with the dictates of natural reason and with the injunctions of divine revelation, it must be confessed that this argument is among the least powerful to influence men, or to induce them to form their conduct aright. History teaches us, that it is not sufficient for men to know that an action or an enactment is unjust to induce them to abandon the action, or to abolish the enactment; for this they seldom do until the evidence of the evil fruits of the injustice are so superabundant, that no mere sophism can be longer held as an excuse. The argument of justice, instead of being the most practically influential, as it is the most morally valid, is seldom of avail until backed by a knowledge of the economical evils that never in any one case fail to accompany injustice; and though the voice of God and the voice of universal reason may ever be heard proclaiming,

“Do not unto others as ye would not that others should do unto you,” it is not until some summation of evil consequences has convinced men of their error, that they abandon their course of lawless selfishness, and allow the constitution of society to remain on the natural footing established by the Creator. And in this we may see the reason why the political progress of mankind has been so slow, and why an extensive knowledge of facts must accompany an admission of principles, before society awakes to the necessity of remodelling their constitution, and returning from the systems established in barbarous ages, to the more simple and equitable system which the eye of reason may read in the constitution of harmonious nature. It is ever immutably and irrevocably *wrong*, that any man, or any body of men whatever, should constrain another man, not a criminal, to labor for the advantage of any save himself and his kindred; yet half a century of agitation was necessary before England withdrew her oppressing arm from the negro; and then the negro was only emancipated by wresting his price from the population of Britain.

The argument of justice may thus be pure or mixed; pure, when it confines itself to the dogma, “Refrain from interference,” — mixed, when it collects and exhibits the evil *consequences* of interference. For the operation of the pure argument, all that is necessary is, to ascertain, on good evidence, that there is interference (constraint, restraint, compulsion, or evasion) by force or fraud, and the dogma is in itself, taken alone, a good and valid reason for the

cessation of the injustice; for no man, and no majority of men, can possibly, under any circumstances whatever, have a right to interfere by force or fraud with another. But though the pure argument is morally valid, it is seldom or never effectual; knowledge as well as reason must be brought to bear on society, and the practical consequences of injustice must be made apparent, before the mass of men are stimulated to clamor for change. Thus, though the reduction of man to slavery, next to judicial murder, be the highest political crime, the population of Britain—perhaps the most religious, the most humane, and the most just population ever assembled together—could not be brought to emancipate the negro, until the horrors of West Indian iniquity had been portrayed in all their blackness, and until the detestable nature of the system had been so exhibited that men's feelings of humanity revolted, and the abolition became a matter of moral necessity to the nation. The argument of benefit is of another kind. The argument of justice proceeds upon the principle that certain actions may not be done, whatever be their consequences. Grant that slavery was beneficial, in a commercial sense, to Great Britain; that the negroes were better fed and better clothed, &c., in their state of slavery than in their state of freedom, (if such a state be entitled to that name;) grant that all the *physical* advantages were in favor of slavery; yet can slavery never be otherwise than contrary to the law of God, a system of injustice detestable to all good men. Let the consequences be what they may, no man can justly make or keep another man a slave;

neither would any consequences whatever justify the deprivation of that natural liberty with which the Creator endows all men alike. The argument of benefit, however, assumes that the action itself is indifferent; that is, that it has not in itself any such moral character as will enable us to pronounce at once whether it ought or ought not to be done. Let us grant that a tax upon the importation of corn were *beneficial* to Great Britain, and that all the inhabitants freely consented to the imposition of the tax, there is nothing in the tax itself to prevent such imposition, (morally,) but it must stand or fall entirely and exclusively according to the *consequences* that are found to follow in its train.

The main argument advanced against slavery was, that it was unjust; and this argument was impressed on the population by a relation of the many abominations that accompanied the system. The main argument against the corn laws was, that they were prejudicial to the country. They had been established ostensibly for the benefit of the agriculturists; and it was proven, by a superabundance of facts, that they were in no wise beneficial to the cultivators of the soil, while they were notoriously prejudicial to all the rest of the population, except the thirty or forty thousand individuals who hold the nation's land. As a measure of national economy, they had wrought only mischief; they had embarrassed trade, impeded manufacture, repressed industry, and made the laborer pay dear for his food, while they operated at the same time to diminish his employment. In every respect they were bad; and because the nation was convinced

they were bad, the legislators, who are ever the last to promote beneficial changes, were ultimately obliged to abolish them, and to leave the supply of the national food to that natural course which is ever found the most beneficial in the end.

Such were two modern instances of the combination of knowledge and reason — spirit-stirring exhibitions of the energies of a noble people warring for the abolition of injustice, and for the emancipation of legitimate industry. Nor, however invidious may be deemed the comparison, can we refrain from asking, what form these agitations would have assumed in any other European country? What country in Europe could have presented the spectacle of a calm and resolute combination of a large portion of the inhabitants against the laws of the land? What country in Europe could have carried on so much agitation without a breach of the public peace, or without riot and confusion? In France, there might have been a revolution; in Italy, a secret combination, bound with oaths on death's-heads and cross-bones; in Russia, an assassination of the autocrat; in Spain, an insurrection only more wicked than contemptible; but in no country, except Great Britain, could such great changes in the law be procured, by the mass of the population first ascertaining what was correct, and then patiently waiting till the power of truth had convinced the legislators that the desired change was good, and for the benefit of mankind. France, notwithstanding all her revolutions, has yet to learn the practical operation of a *moral power*; and until she masters this most essential element of peaceable

progression, the sword must be the umpire between the rulers and the ruled.

Notwithstanding the length of our argument concerning the combination of knowledge and reason, we shall not consider it too lengthened, if it in any wise contributes to elucidate those means that must be put in operation for advancing the political progress of mankind. It is the greatest possible absurdity to suppose that all the changes that take place in the political condition of societies are only portions of a routine which, when fulfilled, is to commence again, and again to present the same phases, and the same or analogous phenomena. No; the political progress of mankind is a passage to one definite end, to an ultimatum, to a condition that requires no further change, to a stable system of law that does not demand perpetual deliberation, but only perpetual administration; and the great question for the political world is, "What is that end? What is that system? What is that ultimatum?" What, in fact, is the political condition of society that controverts no principle of reason, and sins against no precept of religion? for this, we may rest assured, is the ultimate end towards which all civilized societies must progress.

No man for a moment can hesitate to pronounce, or to prophesy with unlimited assurance, that the negroes in the slave states of America will ultimately obtain their freedom, and that the serfs of Russia will ultimately be emancipated. The future history of Russia may be read in the present history of France and England; and this, not on account of the propagation of

French or English ideas, but because the substantive element—*man*—is the same in both cases, and his progress in every country in the world must be characterized by the same abstract phenomena, whatever may be the concrete or real occurrences under which the abstract principles happen to be developed.

The progress of the European nations is a progress from serfdom and lordship towards freedom; that is, a progress from inequality towards equality. And although some of the newer states appear to overleap many of the intermediate steps through which the older societies have passed, it must not be forgotten that the newer states have merely borrowed from the older, and adopted such improvements as the new foundation of a state rendered possible under the given circumstances. Thus the North Americans did not, by their declaration of independence, advance themselves from a condition of semi-barbarism to a highly equitable system of political rule; but having to found a new state, they adopted the best principles which had been gradually, and during the course of many centuries, developing in Europe; at the same time making such further progress towards equality as the occasion of commencing a state naturally afforded opportunity for.

The real history of political progress commences only at that period where the maximum of disparity between the various orders or classes begins to be systematically diminished. From this point (which is chronologically different in the various countries) there is a natural course of progress, different in the out-



ward circumstances of its manifestation, but essentially the same in its abstract characters, in every country that achieves civilization. The essence of this progress is the gradual emancipation of the rights of the serf or unprivileged laborer, and the corresponding diminution of the privileges of the lord. Now it may be observed, that the great revolutions which take place in the earlier portions of this progress are physical force revolutions;—changes brought about by the sword, because there are no other means sufficiently powerful to effect them. Nor is it difficult to see why this must be the case. In the earlier stages of society, force and privilege rule — not reason and equity; and as those who have the privileges will not abandon them, those who suffer the oppression must resort to the only influence whose authority is acknowledged. Were the privileged classes to admit reason as the umpire, there would be no necessity for force revolutions; but as the changes come to be necessary, they must be achieved by such means as will affect them, however undesirable it may be that such means should be necessary. We can have little hesitation in asserting, that the changes brought about in the political condition of the people of France by the first French revolution, were imperatively necessary; that is, that the condition of France was such that those changes must take place, independently of the mere will of any individual, because such changes were the necessary consequences of such a condition. The means, to a certain extent, might be within the control of the actors; but the end — the change in the political condition of the people — must have followed from the

operation of those general laws that regulate the political progress of mankind.\*

When, however, a nation has made some political progress, and its despotism has become relaxed; or, in other words, when some degree of liberty has been attained by the mass of the population — a revolution by physical force (which is always attended with lamentable evils) may be obviated or rendered unnecessary. Where liberty has made a real progress, *knowledge* must have made a real progress; and where knowledge has progressed, reason becomes as powerful an agent as force, and one which ought ever to be chosen, if the alternative be in our choice.

To conclude our argument with regard to the combination of knowledge and reason, we lay down the following propositions: —

1st. On the sure word of divine prophecy, we anticipate a reign of *justice* on the earth.

2d. That a reign of justice necessarily implies that every man in the world shall, at some future time, be put in possession of all his rights.

3d. That the history of civilized communities shows us, that the progression of mankind in a political aspect is, from *a diversity of privileges* towards *an equality of rights*.

4th. That one man can have a privilege only by depriving another man, or many other men, of a portion of their rights. Consequently, that a reign of justice will consist in the destruction of every privilege, and in the restitution of every right.

\* See note B, Appendix.

5th. That, under the supreme direction of divine Providence, man is the agent employed in working out his own political well-being.

6th. That man cannot work out his political well-being unless he knows wherein that well-being consists.

*Knowledge*, therefore, is necessary to enable man to work out his political well-being.

7th. That men must *know* correctly before they can *act* correctly.

8th. That the political well-being of mankind involves two things — correct knowledge and correct action. Correct action is *knowledge carried into practical operation*.

9th. That the political regeneration of mankind is dependent on the acquisition and promulgation of political knowledge.

10th. That in the laws which should regulate man's political action, there is a truth and a falsehood, as much as there is a truth and a falsehood in matters of geometric or astronomic science.

11th. That the political condition of men can never be what it ought to be, until men have acquired the requisite knowledge; that is, until they have perfected political *science*, and reduced it to the same form and ordination as any of the other sciences.

12th. That, with the perfection of political science, there will necessarily follow an amended order of political action, and consequently an amended condition of society.

13th. That political knowledge is divided into two distinct branches. *First*. A sensational branch which

furnishes us with the facts of man's condition, and the actual results of human action. *Second.* A rational branch, which furnishes us with the principles that ought to regulate human action.

The first is political economy; the second is politics, or the science of equity.

14th. That the actual political condition of no country in the world is the practical illustration of the propositions of political truth. Consequently, that the actual political condition of every country in the world requires to be revised and amended.

15th. That improvements in the political condition of a country are made exactly in proportion as the truths of political economy and political science are reduced to practice.

16th. That in every country there are privileged classes who have more power or more property than they are justly entitled to, and unprivileged classes who have less power or less property than they are justly entitled to. That the *difference* between these two classes has been undergoing a gradual but sure process of diminution. This *fact* we learn from history.

17th. That the further progress of the diminution in the difference between the privileged and unprivileged classes, may be surely anticipated as the continuation of a process that has already been going on for centuries.

18th. That the absolute equality of men in all political rights is the ultimate end of political progression. That so long as there is not absolute equality of political rights, there is the constant element of

further change, and consequently good reason for anticipating further change.

19th. That while a single individual may or may not determine his actions according to his knowledge, (for man is erring,) the constitution of humanity *in the mass* necessarily determines, that wherever knowledge is obtained, systematically ordinated, and generally diffused, an amended order of action will invariably result.

20th. That the theory of political *progress* is,—

1. The present condition is felt to be grievous, and seen by the intellect to be partial and unjust.

2. The present *condition*, when translated into *language*, furnishes a proposition which will not bear the investigation of the reason, and which is consequently rejected as superstitious or erroneous.

3. With the condemnation of the proposition, of which the present condition of society (at any given period) is only a real exemplification, there necessarily follows the condemnation of that condition, and a desire for change is necessarily generated.

4. But, in course of time, a new proposition is discovered or suggested, and this proposition, if it will stand the investigation of the reason, is posited as *true*, that is, classed as a portion of *knowledge*.

5. The proposition which is *true*, is then translated into a practical rule of action, and from this practical rule of action there would necessarily result a certain *condition of society* different from that condition which had been condemned as erroneous.

6. The new condition of society is then posited as an end to be attained, as a thing to be striven for, in a free country by the power of well-grounded argument

and social combination, and under a despotism by the power of the sword and the convulsion of revolution.

7. But as the old condition necessarily involves the interests of *some* parties, (placemen, slave owners, land owners, for instance,) the transition from the old condition, which was erroneous, to the new and amended condition, is always the cause of a social struggle between the partisans of the old condition and the partisans of the new.

8. This social struggle may assume two forms, according to the nature of the question in dispute, and according to the character of the political institutions of the country where it takes place. (1.) If change be sought in a country where there are no legal and constitutional means whereby the masses of the population may obtain that change, the sword must necessarily be resorted to, and a physical force revolution, so far from being a *crime*, is one of the highest political *duties* of man.\* (2.) If, on the contrary, the change

\* We must distinctly reiterate that we speak only of *political duty*, whose *only* rule is the *law of justice*, as developed in the propositions of political science. Man's *religious* duty we do not profess to teach. Politics has this world, and this world alone, for its sphere of action; and the sword (that is, *compulsion*) is the instrument whereby all should be compelled to adhere to the strictest rules of equal and even-handed justice. Justice neither gives nor forgives, bears nor forbears. Religion, on the contrary, introduces a higher and a divine principle of action, which may enjoin a man to refrain from the forcible assertion of his rights, and rather to bear an ill than to redress it by the sword. Man, as man, is universally bound by the laws of justice, and may universally carry those laws into operation; but man, as a Christian, is bound by the laws of Scripture, and must regulate his conduct by the precepts of divine revelation.

be sought in a country that has attained to liberty of discussion, a free press, a tolerably extensive representation, &c., (that is, where *deliberative judgment* and not mere *will* rules,) the sword (always an evil, though sometimes necessary) may be superseded by the moral force of truth. Knowledge disseminated will *convince* the masses, and when the masses are convinced, they will *combine*, and when they combine, the change, sooner or later, will follow as a necessary consequence.

9. We have said, however, that the *nature of the question*, as well as the *character of the political institutions*, may determine the character of the social struggle. A country may be possessed of much freedom, and yet there may remain some questions which moral force is incapable of deciding. The interests involved may be of such magnitude, or the questions may entail such radical changes in the very constitution of the state, that no legal means whatever may exist for bringing about the change. When, therefore, the mass of the population have resolved that the change shall take place, and there exist no legal means for effecting it, or when those in official authority positively refuse to make the change, even when its necessity is apparent to the nation, the sword must be the umpire as between two parties who have severed all political connection, and are openly at war.

10. But even where a temporary appeal to the sword may be requisite, because there are no other means capable of removing the barriers that stand in the way of political *progress*, the sword is the mere *instrument* employed to effect a change which could not be effected without its aid. Where knowledge has ex

hibited the malignant character of the present condition, and reason has shown how that condition may be amended, the change *must* come as a necessary consequence of man's constitution. It is not in the power of man to prevent it; for he is as much bound by the laws which regulate his intellect and his actions as he is by the laws which regulate the condition of his bodily frame. Knowledge does *necessarily* produce change, as much as heat necessarily produces change; and where knowledge becomes more and more accurate, more and more extensive, and more and more generally diffused, change must necessarily take place in the same ratio, and entail with it a new order of society, and an amended condition of man upon the globe. Wherever, then, the unjust interests of the ruling classes are required to give way before the progress of knowledge, and those ruling classes preemptorily refuse to allow the condition of society to be amended, the sword is the instrument which knowledge and reason may be compelled to use; for it is not *possible*, it is not within the limits of man's choice, that the progress of society can be permanently arrested when the intellect of the masses has advanced in knowledge beyond those propositions, of which the present condition is only the realization.

21st. We posit, finally, that the acquisition, scientific ordination, and general diffusion of knowledge, will necessarily obliterate error and superstition, and continually amend the condition of man upon the globe, until his ultimate condition shall be the best the circumstances of the earth permit of. On this ground we take up (what might in other and abler hands be



an argument of no small interest, namely) *the natural probability of a millennium*, based on the classification of the sciences, on the past progress of mankind, and on the computed evolution of man's future progress. The outline alone of this argument we shall indicate; and we have no hesitation in believing, that every one who sees it in its true light will at once see how the combination of knowledge and reason must regenerate the earth, and evolve a period of universal prosperity, which the divine Creator has graciously promised, and whose natural probability we maintain to be within the calculation of the human reason.